

William E. Parker lecture, Visual Studies Workshop, April 1971, reel 2:

Parker comments made during the reading of texts are set in ().

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Transcribed by Bob Martin

There is a perfect manifestation of the archetype that concerns human ethics and human response and behavior whether it is individual or collective and we find emerging in our time this great, it is almost like the archetype has come so close to the threshold where we are willing to even entertain the possibility that people in the city can say, "I wasn't responsible for that man's crime, and another says yes we were *all* responsible." Suddenly the archetype of function, identifiable function in response to an event has now become, do we share in the destruction or do we not. Cali is even coming closer. Maybe there are unfair images but I am saying, look at the response, the wave of variables. Maybe you won't agree with this but I was talking to Jim Hunter last night how, the first response is, should one man be the scapegoat. The second level may be, if you should decide that we should need a scapegoat, and through public opinion he is granted clemency, now actually this is getting into another level, then what do we do with the backlash of people who will say 'but who is guilty?' etc., etc. There is an archetypal structure operating concerning human identity and how it functions. Am I responsible or am I in a field? Do I provoke other responses on the part of human beings, am I a part of the structure of everything?

Student: Would it be something as specific as the whole idea of the scapegoat in primitive mythology, that kind of thing?

Well that is the level of proof. If we were to say there is a level of proof for Jungian psychology, now it has extended into, as we said with the history of ideas, that we look for proof not necessarily in discrete units that show the direct influence upon one another but the way the mind behaves. And mythology is one of the major structures for Jungian psychology to support many of the archetypal themes: whether it is the hero... then we find its manifest expression in the widest, most divergent cultures. Of whatever the motif might be in the cycle of the hero, but of this particular structure. Joseph Campbell, Heinrich Zimmer, Erich Neumann have all dealt with the structure of *mythologins* as they speak of it in which varied cultures seem to go through the same kind of psychical behavior as well as archetypal behavior and they structure in art and literature certain manifestations of them.

Student: Someone like Eliot for instance, does he accept the idea of the archetype? I get the sense from him that it is just a sense of a cyclical repetition of the mythological idea rather than an idea of an archetype.

Well, no, as a thinking type his poetry is structured deeply around the idea of analyzing prototypes and then re-feeding them into his, well the Wasteland is the preeminent example, attaching the bibliography, and saying this came from this source, and this

came from that, but Eliot is a major spokesperson for the archetypal theory. He never expressed this in his work, and Northrup Frye, the literary critic who gave a great deal of attention to Eliot, and Maud Botkin...The response of Jungian psychology has been greater in literature than it has in any other medium—if we treat literature as a medium. And Herbert Read was a popularizer of the whole concept of archetypal foundations for art, the book, *The Forms of Things Unknown*. Probably one of the greatest series that Read ever did was the series of interviews with great artists of the twentieth century. And in certain educational concepts, childhood education. Eliot though is a good example of where in writing concerning cyclical themes, the dead and dying king, the loss of identity in the land: there again is another manifestation where he deals with that whole earth archetype in its various manifestations. Death, regeneration, re-structure, resurrection, the whole cycle is brought to bear. He did this on a highly, I don't know what to call it, thinking level. He used history and fragments from literature to provoke the idea on an analytical basis. I would not suggest that Eliot is supremely inspired, his poetry is certainly not spontaneous, it is highly analytical. But nonetheless, part of the cycle theory is based upon the idea of the archetype. Its continual re-manifestation in different guises, different forms. Nothing new under the sun, so to speak... I don't know if I mentioned this to anyone in this group or not, but there is a very peculiar expression of an archetype in our culture, (laughs) if you heard me say this before just stop me because in a way I feel like it's just like a stock story, but it seems to me to be a very living evidence of the way an archetype manifests itself in our time. And I can't remember the date, it is now in a book called *The Living Symbol*. It is by an analytical psychologist named Edward Whitmonk. So if you want to explore this more thoroughly, read his interpretation. It started as a result of some conversations with him in which I was asking him about a peculiar phenomenon that emerged. My wife was teaching in a high school in Florida when we were living in Jacksonville, Florida, and there was one of these little homecoming things, with a football game, and there were skits beforehand, and we were sitting up in the bleachers and thoroughly enjoying them, and there was one which seemed particularly appealing...This group went on the stage everybody started clapping and you could feel them whispering to one another, and they were saying, "Watch for it, watch it happen." And then of course being somewhat intuitive I forgot about what was happening and began to think of the possibilities (laughs) you know I often lose out on experience. But there was this one vignette during the course of the skit in which a group of girls lined up on one side of the stage and the group of boys went to the other side of the stage, and they did this rather subtly, they were facing one another, and the men turned around, and bent over, and they started singing this song, "Gotcha, gotcha, gotcha, I am getting you now." Now this was very early, it's the game called "mooning" or "gotcha," the exposure of the buttocks, particularly on the male, I mean I don't know of any evidences where the ladies have been doing this {laughs} and some of us... {laughter}... How many of us are honestly familiar with, I mean you've heard about gotcha and mooning. I think most of us had. It is funny, this was in the early 60s and even *Look Magazine* came out with an article. {*The Tense Generation*, by Samuel Grafton, *Look Magazine*, August 27, 1963} Talking about synchronicity and when something is in the air, they had an article called "The Anxious Generation," with these photographs by Art Kane, with these slippery looking diffuse images {laughter}...And they commented on, they said one of the manifestations of

anxiety in our youth is this childish game of mooning or playing gotcha, and they gave a few illustrations about the girl {laughs}...talk about peculiar things to do with your time, I began to collect things like police reports and journalistic articles, I have the greatest collection of manifestations of gotcha and mooning. {laughter} I swear I do. Like, young man put in jail for 33 days for terrifying woman at drive-in, she came to bring the tray, cigar, etc., It is pretty terrible, obscene material, {laughter} And there were examples of two reported deaths as a result of this: one was a lady in Wyoming, and a lady was driving her automobile along some stretch of land and she looked up and saw through the rearview windshield of a car with these two exposed buttocks and did not particularly respond. And when she realized what they were she literally crashed into the side of an embankment and was killed...From the reports those people were coming to trial, I don't know what happened. I didn't follow that through. At the Waldorf-Astoria the young man dressed in his tuxedo who suddenly dropped his tux and proceeded to "get" the entire debutante ball. (laughter) Or whether it was the kids in South Carolina who got the girls' school bus everyday as they walked out on the balcony of their dorm. Hundreds and hundreds of examples. Well I just kept little note files and I would drop these things in as I found them and there was a proliferation, it was almost as if it were a rite of passage. It started at least in America, now there are other sources, it passed into the United States. And even *Look Magazine* confirms this so if you doubt my plotting of the passage of this you can certainly read it there and there are other sources as well. It seemed to find a major manifestation in California. Now I am not talking about the archetype I am just talking about the evidences, {laughs} And it started in California and it passed through the West, upper Midwest, strange enough it jumped across the East and went down into Florida. And it just so happened that this...was absolutely right on target because it was saying that it now seemed to be occurring in the Southeast and particularly in Florida. And there it was, living evidence in this little skit, and then seemed to pass up the East coast and had a real proliferation in New York and strangely enough it became a major manifestation in student work. When I was at Pratt, I want you to know the idea of buttocks in painting and in photographs was getting to be ridiculous. Sophomore design: some professor would have a box-like structure and you look into it and see photographs, and there is supposed to be a continuum factor, and you would look in there you were being "got." {laughter}. And I would collect films so I would have all these visible evidences of the popular expression of "getting" or "mooning."... What I wanted to know was, this is what prompted me, now this is either an extension of exhibitionism, we can get rid of it, as we call it an *apotropaic* gesture, to wish it something very specific. It is almost like that question of where does the energy come from. We would be very satisfied if we had an answer, and I'd like to know and you'd like to know. By the same token we would have been very satisfied to have, and has happened, there have been innumerable interpretations that sprung up and said this is an extension of the concept of offense, you are showing your ass: the whole reference to the buttocks is an image of offense. You are making an ass out of yourself, etc., and not necessarily talking about a donkey...extensions into rituals that imply that this was some kind of very personalized neurotic behavior, a kind of sublimated exhibitionism. Rousseau exposed himself to those girls and now we have the twentieth century so that they are afraid to do that, so they expose their buttocks, and therefore it is infectious, it spreads, and people begin to engage in it because it is a neurotic ritual

and neurosis have a profound appeal. And that was not satisfying to me. I read these things and I finally decided it was just not enough. There were several court cases where the exhibitionists charged could have called for a period of time in a juvenile hall or detention home, or even on adult levels, going to jail for six months for indecent exposure. Or being sent by court order to a clinic for psychiatric evaluation, but many of them received, just by virtue of these “just-butt” stories, that wasn’t a pun was it? {laughter} a reduction to an excuse. One day I happened to stumble upon something. I was looking through a book of Roman wall reliefs. They were fragments and many of the examples are not integrated into any total structure, they are simply fragments. Just as for example we can pick up *National Geographic* and find out that we now have linkages to the Amarna style, that were buried as rubble underneath temples, so we will surely find linkages relative to these fragments that I am speaking of. But this particular one shows the peculiar image of a gigantic head of Aphrodite, she is extraordinarily beautiful in the typically idealistic sense, an imitation of the Greek Aphrodite, falling... very idealized head, rather marvelous structure of the adipose tissue so there is a soft contourism. And lo and behold above her head there is a tiny figure, in a fool’s cap headdress, holding a little wand and a staff, and you won’t believe it, (laughter) he is in posterior pose, turned around above the head of this woman, this Aphrodite figure, with his trousers down, and it is as though he is sitting, it is removed, they are not conjoined, but he is sitting above the head, and the phrase below in Latin says, “he who defecates knows what this means.” {Laughter} Now that is pretty raw. {Laughter} Now I don’t know what it means, but that was the first link to say now here we have the manifestation, at least, of the exposure of the buttocks relative to a female figure. And the idea that the cryptic line does not necessarily have any visual evidences of defecation but simply says he who knows about the nature of the buttocks knows what this is. So I decided the next step to do was to look up the etymology of the word, “gotcha.” Look it up yourself you will be struck by the parallels. Got/you becomes ‘gotcha’ I guess you spell it g-o-t-c-h-a, at least that is what I arrived at, it is the typical spelling. You know I really got turned off when I would ask somebody, and I did, I interviewed a couple of people who had gotten caught doing this, and I’d say, how do you spell that word? And they would look at me as if I were some kind of freak {Laughter}. What are you trying to do, play a poor man’s Truman Capote {Laughter} on a less serious crime? And then too I decided, and this was a very easy task, because the idea of mooning: why the orbs of the buttocks, but that was a very easy parallelism and very rich also. But actually the moon we associate in mythology with the concept of the maternal, but at one time was bi-sexual. In other words the moon had a paternal side and a maternal side, thus the man in the moon, etc. And there were very ancient concepts concerning the moon as being an eye. There is a very crude expression for mooning and gotcha called “redeye” and we all know what that refers to. At any rate, there is also the idea of the seeing aspect, or the getting aspect. Well gotcha in its etymology refers back to a number of rituals: follow it for yourself, and if you are ever interested I will send you my material, but somehow for the moment it interests me. But there were certain rituals called the *Gotchean* pot in Scottish rites. It is a vessel that is filled with dirt and it is planted in the fall just prior to winter. And the vessel is often shaped in the form of the posterior and it is planted into the earth and then of course in the springtime that exact spot must be rediscovered. The pot is dug up, the pot is broken, and the old earth is sprinkled on the

new so to speak. And this is a magical way of fertilizing or affecting the new earth in its plenty. It is also inferred in certain rites as being a way of getting the earth to be productive, 'to get' is not to just fertilize, it means to possess it, to give it an energy where it is now under the control of some other dimension. There was a remarkable series of parallels to the idea of sitting upon something. If you follow the whole parallelism and etymology of our word, to sit, or to get, it comes from certain German words: *besitzen*,... or the seat of the home. To possess earth, if you follow it all the way through to its most ancient rituals, and many are quite obvious and are not obscure. There were certain rituals not only in Greece but also in Egypt where to possess a territory one circled it: round and round, decreasing the size of the circle until one reached the center and then one sat upon the earth at that point. And by the act of sitting upon the earth one possessed it. The idea of traveling around the King, you know the great {victory} stele of Naram-Sin, of Naram-Sin scaling the mountain top and the warriors are underneath him and he is hierarchically larger in size and then you have this conical mountain and above it are the planetary images, sun and moon coming together to join in a sort of *hierosgamos* junction. Naram-Sin is going to the top of the mountain to literally sit upon the mountain and possess it. And you have one example in Egyptian sculpture of the pharaoh. Isis is known as the seat or the throne. She wears a little seat upon her head and the pharaoh is often shown as a young child adult. He is child-like in structure but adult in the face. He sits upon Isis, the chair, in order to possess her. It shows where Egyptian theology was transforming from the realm of the Great Mother into the realm of the paternalistic projections of the *pharaoh-nic* rule. There are innumerable images of this idea of ritual possession, particularly with this idea of the male sat upon the female and the earth was considered feminine. To show you a parallel in Biblical literature, and I think it my most fascinating one, it is the whole sequence of Moses going up and down the mountain to get those tablets and coming back down and finding out that people are playing hanky-panky. He breaks them in a fit of anger and he keeps going back up. The tablets are developed and he finally comes back down and he has his effect. You remember the images that he is highly illumined. He decides that he has performed this great task and he wants to go back up to the mountain, this is in Exodus 13-3 if you want to follow the whole sequence through, it is kind of an exciting image, but he goes back up to the mountain top and makes a request to see God face to face. Hey Yahweh, let me have a real view of you. And he is informed by a voice, we don't know how, but we assume certainly not through a visual presence, "Sorry, if you were to see my face you would be shattered asunder. But if you will hide into the cleft of the rock." Basically into the realm of the nest of the mother, the earth mother, matriarchal, it doesn't have to have a physical association, hide within the cleft, meaning the recess of the protective matter. "I will pass by and ye shall see my trailing glory." And we have basically the paternal aspect of Yahweh passing by Moses, and we have in the original Hebrew psalm, "He sees his girded loins pass by." And basically God "gets" Moses. {laughter} Through exposing his buttocks, and the interesting thing is, you see there is an example of the paternal aspect of Yahweh exposing himself. If we follow the historic advent of the Great Mother, Moses is still before all of the revelations series: the ten commandments and so on become a profound expression of analytical, thinking-oriented, paternalistic doctrines. Before that people are behaving on very sensual levels generally associated with the earth. I don't

mean sensual as in sex, I mean the feminine. And as a result, he is still in a feminine state, hiding in the cleft of the mother, and God “gets” him by basically exposing his buttocks to him. So anyway, God “got” Moses. {laughter} And there are examples...if you read...studies on ancient Egyptian civilization or EA Wallach particularly, you will discover that there were rituals where, in the war between upper and lower Egypt, to be victor was not based upon simply who decapitated the most male members of the community or what have you. But victory was only consummated upon the expression of a ritual, and often the women of the conquered city-state would have to line up flanking one another along the Nile, and the conquering males would get in a barge and they would pass by, and turn and lift their tunics and expose their buttocks to obtain or possess the land. In other words it was ritualized on a human level. What they were really doing was sitting on the property of that conquered city-state and possessing it. Hundreds of parallels, so many that you can't deny them, but this idea of the association of possession with the loins or the buttocks. Now what in the world is going on in these prankish little things of buttocks in windshields and in the Waldorf Astoria, and the drive-in? Well, Whitmont, in the book that I mentioned discusses this and amplifies it. The closest I can come to say is that there must be something that says the manifestation of the archetype itself, the provocation for man to expose himself in such a manner, would have no bearing upon a ritual in the twentieth century. In other words we cannot justify any overt conquering of a city-state or what have you, there is no viable ritual in which we can say this is acceptable. In fact if anything we can say predominantly the books of courts would have laws against this under the category of exhibitionism, indecent exposure. So as a result, why does it seem to manifest itself both as often impulse, why does it manifest itself as humor. Why does there seem to be a lack of consciousness on the part of people who found themselves in trouble as a result of getting caught? When asked the question why did you do this, {laughs} “I don't have a clue. Well it was sorta fun.” No real viable explanation that would seem to show a source. The theory is that perhaps in terms of the concepts of anima/animus function. Now as I said women's liberation is a *manifest* example of the emergence of the animus archetype—the anima function is not only a very inaccessible level but it is also still an archetypal function. It is visibly evident, and how anyone can deny that, it is like a living empirical proof of the manifestation of an archetype coming closer and closer to the surface now affecting new canons of behavior, and rightfully so. By the same token, perhaps there was an inferior level in this one but not the only one, the single example of the exposure of the buttocks toward the male trying to assimilate the anima. To obtain the feminine within himself. And unfortunately he projected it outward through a very crude ritual behavior that has very ancient sources and origins. In other words, to possess the feminine intrapsychically there is the speculation that the male group is basically, confraternal, and has a result, not having access to the feminine side of the masculine nature and that has nothing to do with physical gender. It is psychological functioning. There was a need for this kind of sensibility to be developed, particularly in age categories, pre-30, there is some meaning to all of this business. Since there were no avenues, no rituals through which this kind of anima function could be mediated, the archetype simply came through a very subliminal and very archaic form of expression, that is in play-skits, and self-exposure and so on. And that in essence we might say there is an example of an archetype that lost its purpose. It is dubious whether or not any anima function was

gained. And certainly in the last three or four years there has not been any kind of manifest function. But that maybe the idea is that following patterns, now this would be an example, where did those patterns come from? It isn't that somewhere in the past, from Judaic literature, or from ritual practices of the Egyptians, that this made a little imprint upon the mind and the little picture was there or the action was there and it passed through tradition, through racial strains. It is as though, obviously the archetype is one way that man might project possession of a contra-sexual force within his psyche: not physical sexual but contra-psychological. The force within his mind was to engage in a physical act that would enable him to possess the spirit that he sought. We would say that man passed beyond the idea that he would possess this polar opposite within his mind. He gave up childish rituals, so to speak. Then they return, it is as though any individual would have the same set of conscious possibilities for being affected by that archetype. And as a result the idea of the exposure principle emerged. And we might say that if anything it expressed the manifestation of an archetype of possession: to get you. What is being got? Well it is certainly an inappropriate way for a young man to expose himself to a woman. At least we would assume that would be the inappropriate way. It is sort of {laughs} going about it backwards. {laughter} But it is certainly appropriate for us to at least consider the possibility then that some other energy or force was operative. Some other quest was operative. If we are to take it as any more than simply something that was foolish. It was collective by the way and it wasn't...

Student: But it was a way for someone to gain points within their peer group. There are a lot of interesting variations on, like we had a thing with gotcha. Was if someone made anything like this, they'd put it over here or over here, and if you looked down on it, he'd say, 'I gotcha' and he gets to punch you, you know, those kind of games.

Well, possession: I possess you now so now I get to hit you, right? Isn't that the same principle? You could amplify it and say the possession principle is not necessarily to obtain it or hold it but to have power over it.

Student: A sense of the... like touching someone and they're not being able to do it back at you.

That is right, they are vulnerable, then they can't resist. If you take *mythologins* like whether we believe the historicity of Alexander cutting the Gordian Knot. Robert Graves, poet, critic, makes a big thing out of this in a book called *The White Goddess*. He says the beginning of ego-aggression emerged when, and he doesn't really care whether you accept it as fact or metaphor, but he says we find the manifest myth and basically the manifest historical reflection, upon the city of Gordias being captured not by Alexander conquering the group, but that supposedly at their city gates they had this knot. There are interpretations that it wasn't rope, it was perhaps stone, or if anything it was an intricate interlace of like an animal material like leather...and that Gordias had the principle that anyone who could untie this knot, has our city, we give up. And you can imagine that is a very interesting symbol. We appeal to potential conquerors to use your wits to get us because we are vulnerable, you can beat us by sword or rock or whatever

it may be. And Alexander said, "Nonsense" and cut right through it, or shattered it or broke it or whatever he did. And Graves says that this is the point in which aggressive-ego consciousness no longer followed ritual. And then he gives a number of evidences to point out how this same principle applies even up to the present day. We no longer use our wits to figure out what is affecting us or what is protecting us, or what have you. But that we often find ourselves engaged unwittingly, and often they are on childhood levels. The idea of authority, possessive rule, on very peculiar, you know, king of the mountain, or whatever it may be. Maybe the whole point of this is that archetypes still manifest themselves in social behavior. It may be interesting that we don't have enough rituals. There has been considerable speculation that maybe we ought to have some rituals that allow us to psychically murder rather than physically murder. That one of the reasons for the advancing crime rate is that we have no rituals in which we can stab spears into the earth and say we got rid of the demon or what have you. I personally accept this as one of the most viable ways of approaching the problem of increasing crime rates because of the loss of ritual and the projection that man will behave reasonably is simply nonsense. I mean if it is, I don't see any evidences. It is phenomenal to me that in the entire history of mankind, at least in our time, that we have the possibility of establishing a commission to study or develop inquiries into the sources for crime, not upon criminal behavior, you follow me? That is a pretty slow uptake for civilized behavior to begin to worry about sources rather than manifestation. Well, anyway that is at least a hint towards one manifestation on a fundamental level. And there are others. Unless you have other questions, we'll stop now and bring this up in the...

Break

I'll just launch into something and we can see how it evolves from that. There may be other things relative to some of the discussion this morning that may still want to reemerge. I thought that if we could apply certain concepts, particularly of the archetype, to a photographic work, and one that is almost innately suitable to receive the projections of the theory. I have been concerned with Jerry Uelsmann's work for some time on this level, there have been a number of things written. Now an almost archaic essay that I wrote in *Aperture* on Jerry's imagery. I would almost redefine a number of levels that I had discussed there. And I have done further work in preparation for a magazine on Jungian thought, *Spring*. It is a publication which deals with various explorations and particularly a new interest in analyzing works of art and their relationships to archetypal fields and impulses. I chose Jerry's work because as I said I think the imagery is highly literary and as a result there are immediate possibilities of seeing metaphors that go quite beyond the photographer's intention. In other words you can make comparative relationships, almost suspending the artist for a moment. But on the other hand I think it would be deplorable, I think many of you have read John Moore's commentary on photographic criticism, whether or not you agree with it, he did make an interesting statement relative to archetypal criticism. He said one wonders if such an approach could be applied to photographs that did not seem to enjoy the presence of such literary imagery. So that prompts me to state that indeed it can be, and I'd like to in this session deal with a form of... highly literary symbolism and then

perhaps in the next session take an argument opposing the process of interpretation at least to give you a really sound alternative chosen from Arnheim, and then in turn to works tomorrow that we have to deal with the formal aspect, the archetypal formal aspects rather than necessarily subject aspects. And in order to introduce the subject of Jerry's print called *Turtle Blessing*, I'm sure most of you have seen this...it also appears as the frontispiece to his catalog to his most recent exhibition at the Philadelphia Art Museum with the toning that appeared. Let me just pass this around. As you are looking at this I'd like to call attention to a Robert Heineken print, and as I introduce you to Jerry's work I'd like to introduce you to something I received in the mail the other day, and others may have received this, I'm not quite sure what Bob's purpose was, either to make us conscious of a particular recent Life photograph superimposed over this cosmetic ad. A lovely figure looking curiously like Ali McGraw and then the image of the young Vietnamese soldier carrying the severed heads. And it is screened in a kind of subtle, diaphanous, obscure image, and one not only frontally but also in the verso, including the fact that there is a kind of bleeding through in the page and you get this very definite imagistic parallelism. Head, bleed, decapitation: heads being held by a figure. Now, it is not to demean the Heineken work, I want to use simply as a way of creating a contrast between two forms that have highly, well, the subject matter introduced provokes a response. Very definitely, and we cannot have that response without referring to the subject matter-portrayed: either the young man holding the two severed heads against the figure of the woman, or in Jerry's case, the various structures, and it is perhaps more complicated than to simply name the structures, but I'll come to that momentarily. But we have information given by the visual form that goes quite beyond the idea of formal intent alone. I think we would be hard pressed to discuss Bob's screening, I assume it is an offset litho, isn't that what it is over the print, the screening of the print on top of the pre-existent ad that we don't find a strong interest in symmetry, or the idea of overlapping, or some concern with formal aspects. Basically I would classify Bob's work as highly semiotic: that is, it is a sign. It is basically a signal to some kind of association, sympathies, pro or con, whatever it may be, I don't think that we necessarily begin to delve into the complexity of the subject matter presented in the print, either the overlay print or the existent advertisement print itself. That is, one finds themselves looking at the object, either saying, well, what a curious paradox...I've seen three of these arrive in envelopes with American flags, it says build your future wisely, safely, US savings bonds, etc. It comes from the place of earthquakes, and so on. At least I would assume that might be part of Bob's thinking... I was cheated out of my American flags... but anyway, it is conceivable that Bob would want to link together various sign systems that cause you to respond in more or less—after you project upon the work you then introject: you begin to contemplate, is this the paradox of America, the paradox of the war. Beauty on the one hand, ugliness on the other, the head associated with some sort of physical reality that we can experience and enjoy and the other that we find abhorrent. In other words, at least in my view, there is no way to start becoming involved with the manifest subject matter itself in trying to make some type of parallels to it. Or finding sources. Now you may disagree but I am just pointing out the fact that it would not strike my fancy to begin to explore and find some type of archetypal parallels. The use of a figure carrying severed heads against the head of the woman: it is what it is. It is a very positivistic statement. It is a prompter

to cause either sympathies or reactions or what have you. In short it might even be considered propaganda. And any of you who are familiar with Bob's work, particularly the magazine works, are quite conscious of the fact that they are very moral documents. That is he does intend to teach a lesson. I call them little books on ethics... You'll find how this connects in just a moment, there he goes waxing on about Bob Heineken now before I get into Uelsmann. Bob went out and bought about forty magazines of similar format size... and took them back to his studio and disassembled them. That is removed the central staples and reassembled pages from the magazines without any alteration. The first example was he reassembled the pages and screened in the center, in the same manner as this one being passed around of a pin-up girl type. Almost as though in the middle of *Time* magazine you too have your Playboy image, but it hovers on the page. He had tried many where he would screen a certain image of the porno shot, but not so obvious, on each page of the magazine so that you began to read titles of articles and so on as referential to the figure that was imposed upon the page. The last one I think was the neatest was where he didn't impose anything: he just reassembled the pages. And as a result you began to get curious interrelationships, like one of the more overt pornographic magazines often appear to be pure and moral compared to some of the advertisements for United Airlines, or for Saran Wrap, and so on. He would have a typical advertising image juxtaposed against a very exposed image of a woman and you would find your mind responding to the image of the woman as being much more objective, much more rational, literally a much more as a kind of objective realism, detached from any kind of subtle level of imagery or what have you. And the Saran Wrap with the shrimp and lobster tucked into the crevice of a slice of cake and saying these two do not interfere with one another became a kind of reference to a number of activities and habits of younger people today, etc. Well, anyway, for whatever that's worth, I am getting caught up in my own illustration, (laughter) but the point is that Bob's imagery does tend to become semiotic. That is there is a definite sign system. It is a signal to a specific kind of meaning. Now what the person does with that meaning, according to his particular sympathies, following the witnessing of the image, is another thing altogether. We might suggest that the real exploration of the content of a Bob Heineken, and I am talking about these recent magazine series, might take place in the observation, or discussion, or analysis of the observer's response rather than the form. It might be that the real viable content level is to be found in the perceiving agent rather than in the form itself. However Uelsmann's work beyond maybe its technical fascination seems to continually strike, or offers the potential for striking, levels of consciousness that are not so immediately accessible, and not so much based upon the general reactions of a group of individuals as individuals. That is, there is often a very collective response that occurs in relation to his work. Now, what do I mean by that. Let's take for example the background behind *Turtle Blessing* and ask ourselves, we have to start asking questions like, does Jerry intellectualize this image?... Now I find personally, and this is going to be first on a personal level and then I'll try to objectify it. That Jerry's work has the potential of becoming either highly provocative based upon certain archetypal, literary, plus formal structures, many of which he does not arrive at through reading or through exploration in data books on symbols or what have you. If he succeeds he succeeds marvelously. If he fails, they are miserable. When his consciousness or when his intention often tries to interrupt this juxtaposition of images,

it often becomes very pointed that he did refer to something. Now I could point out certain images where I feel that occurs. And we have discussed it quite overtly and it doesn't make any difference to him whether I think that or not, so I have the right to say it. It isn't a question of trying to say that the work is demeaned by the statement that when he is very conscious of what he is doing the work fails, or when he is not conscious the work succeeds. I simply insist that this is a possible way of at least presenting an avenue to the approach to the work as an expression of an archetypal idea. Now this particular work typifies the kind of approach that Jerry develops in all of the work that has dealt with the montage or combination printing principle. That is he creates a vocabulary of motifs. Virtually, not necessarily distinguishing how they will be put together. He has approximately 20 to 25 photographs of the turtle in various positions and various dimensions. Many of you might remember, and this might be interesting for someone in the history group to explore, you know that *Figure in the Landscape* exhibition, Bob Fichter uses the turtle image. It either flies or it is crawling and of course they were both in Florida at the same time and I suspect that they both visited the St. Augustine alligator and turtle farm and they both probably took these shots. Now this turtle appears simultaneously in both of their images. In fact there is one shot, in the Fichter shots from the *Figure in the Landscape*: the image of the turtle proceeding forward is very similar to this except we have a slightly tilted plane where we see more of the shell itself. So Jerry would take an image like the turtle, he would find the print of the image, and as you notice these are not identical so these are actually three figures that are one wood sculpture. In the Lightner Museum ...in St. Augustine, Florida, which prides itself on the world's greatest collections of buttons. And it has the most phenomenally peculiar bizarre images, they are just in every corner. And I guess this is one of the favorite areas where Jerry goes to collect these motif images. The landscape is basically, part of this appeared in an image called, *Small Woods Where I Met Myself*. It is a sand image plus he used it to screen over the series of the girl in the landscape, three figures, particularly that central...where you see it is not leaf structures but a kind of grain/sand like quality. The rocks... have appeared in several: there is the one of the woman beneath the two trees, the rocks appear on the outside. At any rate, it is a collection of varied motifs that he keeps on file and then proceeds, when he goes into the darkroom to work, he begins to select. He will perhaps start with a basic image, print one unit, and then one motif begins to trigger the possibility of the use of another motif. There is no pre-determinative drawing. As many of you know in many of his recent works he is using the idea of exposing through a positive paper and getting a negative, etc. So there are a whole series of combination techniques that for Jerry are basically mechanical. At least he states this. And watching him work, not necessarily hanging on his elbow in the darkroom, but watching a series of prints develop I found that there are definite controls in the way he approaches this but that is not the mystery to Jerry. Even to the point where perhaps he is one of the photographers whose typified by generosity in saying, you want to know how I do it, sure, here's how, he even writes in *Pop Photo*: 'now tape the cardboard' {laughter} as if to say the technique is not the point of my interest. He does consider, quite overtly he has stated that quite often the reprinting of works is a labor, not negative, he enjoys it, but it is that initial darkroom experience where he has often quoted in the alchemical discovery. But what interests me is the way in which after he has arrived at a series of motifs, how does he bring

them together? What prompts their interconnection? There are no really overt answers forthcoming from Jerry...Now let's take another example of a print where he would be. Now this print of this wall with the cloud structure on it. Definitely influenced by Magritte, and he has overtly identified his association with Magritte: rocks in the sky, floating trees, things out of proportion, the clouds being seen through something that would otherwise be a physical barrier. This is an example of a high degree of what I will call for want of a term, intellectual intention. Very definitely intended to be a pastiche, or often a variation upon a pre-existing form. The apocalypse image, many of you know that figure in negative reverse, going across the landscape, the rock, the boulder that is plummeting through the sky...and the girl lying in the landscape with the rock covering above. Magritte's *Castle in the Pyrenees* was a definite concern of Jerry's and he has overtly identified this. However, there are many images in which he cannot for the life of him find the slightest degree of, there is no clue as to why these impinge upon one another. How he arrives at their usage. It isn't as though he decides a predetermined sketch: "Aha, now I am going to have a circle, square, trapezoidal, rocks, turtle." He doesn't say here are the motifs I have, how do I put them together. If we can at least believe in the polarities, then there are those in which we can *definitely* see the intention... He has one that shows a typical rural Floridian shack, with an unpaved roadway, and there is a leaf in the roadway in silhouette where we see the vein structure, and there is an oil tank, one of the old gas or oil tanks to the right, and then there is an opening in the sky, a circular motif that has clouds in it. He will comment and tell you that this is all about conservation and the concern with the spoiling of the landscape. Here this sky was once pure, now it has been infected by oil refining and gas industries and so on. I am not so sure that we can always trust his expressed intentions. What I will trust, I mean I personally do, is when he has no answer or no possible theory, because he does seem to provoke an interest in having a linkage, you know, how I did this. In many cases he cannot explain how he arrived at the juxtaposition of the varied motifs. It is after the fact that he would often see a literary allusion in the work itself...But there are many images that Jerry develops where he is not only at a loss to discover a concept that is pervasive in the entire work, at least as he views it, or he just doesn't quite know why he has selected the motifs to interpenetrate or relate to one another, and this was true of *Turtle Blessing*. He calls it that simply because of this structure of a trinitarian group, the hands are held open, he sees this as a kind of blessing. Which in reality is not so much a blessing as it is the idea of an announcement of order, or of reception. It is not so much a blessing. And then obviously the turtle, well, turtle-blessing. So the sources for the subject are rather banal, there is nothing mysterious about that: we get turtle-Christ-blessing. Now before I go on with this, how would one then view this? I grant you there are innumerable levels that we could discuss the print from, or respond to it or try to analyze it, let's say from technical levels and so on. And I would only beg your indulgence by saying suspend that for a moment because I don't think that is all there is to the work. At least if we want to get involved with the imagery. But then how does one respond to the imagery? On what basis do we establish any connections? Is there some logical connection between the turtle and the figure of Christ? Or the fact that this image takes place in a kind of, at least by implication by the disposition of the subject units in a subterranean, cavernous area. It is as though this trapezoidal motif we are looking at, this aperture, this crypt

opening, that takes place in the upper part of the image is also receiving a high degree of illumination as well as the turtle below, almost as if it is being lit from underneath, although we know it isn't. But why is the event taking place, by implication, with rocks above, opening in the rocks, and then we have this event taking place within the recesses of the earth. I don't think that one could claim that this is taking place in a landscape view, a planar figure ground structure that disposes itself according to linear or aerial perspective. There is no principle of overlapping that would imply this position into recessive planes of foreground, middle ground, background. Basically it is a very obvious image of, something implies a view above terra firma or above the earth and the other implies a view below, or at least if we see the implication. We can also might ask ourselves the question, why the use of the circular disposition and against the elongated rectangular format? Is it for the purpose of reconfirming the symmetry? Implied to the structure of the entire image, the added disposition of above and below, right and left, or are there other factors? Well, I would assume that a person could respond to this photograph on any number of levels, technically, or just getting fascinated in the idea of how he put those things together. But what about the possibility of meaning? Now all I can say is that I can't deal with the meaning it might have to you, or to others, I can only really deal with that myself. But at least an exploration, you know AD Coleman considers this one of Jerry's remarkable prints. He ponders its juxtaposition of subjects. Now for what it is worth, I am not using this as an authority, there is one human's response. Others may find it uninteresting. But now let me ask you a question: what would we do as we look at this, is anyone interested, now this sets up the question: assuming that, this escapes the question (laughs) assuming that one might be interested in the subject matter itself, how did they understand it, or do they need to? That is the first question. How do they understand it or do they need to? Can they just enjoy it as a kind of fantasy image? In a number of remarks, Jerry was commenting on the fact that he was gathering remarks on this print, that he finds that people respond to it in the most peculiar ways. Some people see it as a very negative image, morally bad, and that generally comes from people who are very strongly concerned with the association of the image of Christ with creatures and so on. Some people find it a very numinous image. They say my god man, that is holy. They see it as emanating all sorts of religious affect. Others are not particularly plussed by any one of those factors, which are obvious extremes. Some are very interested in the fact of, why did you use these particular motifs: why turtle with the Christ figures? How do we get involved in the subject? How do we find ourselves engaging what this means? Perhaps we can turn to the photographer. And there is no answer. You will get that answer about turtle blessing and Christ, he will tell you about the background of the print where he arrived at the motifs and how he put it together, and he'll say I love this photograph. He speaks of it on very enthusiastic terms as being one of his favorites, and then that is it! I am interested in that but I am not necessarily that much further into the subject or the subject's provocation. That is what happens to me, almost as in the Heineken print... That is, what happens to me after I observe this, what is it I begin to ponder after I have seen this particular juxtaposition of images? And then going back to my question, how does one interpret this, what would you do with it? Does anyone have an idea? Or would you be willing to suggest anything, how would you respond to this, or would you? Maybe I should ask that. Anyone?

Student: I see a part of a female body. I see that in most of his stuff. That goes back to Mother Earth, which is a turtle shell. I don't think he can get away from his own central hangups.

Ok, now wait a minute, you gave me three things: where did you see the female figure?

Student: Down below...the two gravel parts are legs.

Did you arrive at that now just through your perception, as you say I can't get away from...

Student: I've seen a lot of his pictures, I put a couple of shows together at the... museum, I've seen hundreds of them and it keeps hitting me really hard.

But you haven't necessarily gotten involved with say looking up images, that seems to be a perception that you see in his work.

Student: It's graphic.

All right, it is graphic. Very good. It is excellent because there are absolutely a number of, a confirmation of responses that a number of people do get involved with Jerry's work as being highly personal.

Student: I saw the show in Philadelphia, I thought the whole show was so blatant, to me, it was boringly repetitious, but then you can take that and say well he has got the circle symbol which is an earth image, and it brings you into the earth, and it is all there...

Ok, now, here is the point...Often his work is boringly repetitious and I don't use that as a negative comment in the sense that it seems to center around the same archetypal motif. And the variations are not extensive, they are very close to one another. And thus as I said that I think often the reason why a particular motif can become less personal: it is a highly subjective...less powerful than one that might be at the early stages of a motif developing.

Student: How come he never handled nudes?

He did in some of his earlier works but they were often shadowed and very much subdued by either the overlaid grain aspect...Let me stop for a moment and say here is what I think you are doing: you are presuming, and I am not criticizing you, (student inaudible) but when you ask why doesn't he deal with nudes.

Student: I am asking, why doesn't he?

Well I am trying to answer it. I don't know why he doesn't. I think we have to deal with it because it is a strong value judgment that has appeared least in other levels, it may not be your intention, but it has occurred that these are highly expressive of Jerry's personal hang ups. That has been a constant criticism of these works. I think it is only natural that they should be because they are highly personal, but yet, and again one has to measure it against the man. I don't know, it depends upon what one knows about him and so on. I think that we might find that we can trace this back according to the personal psychology of the individual photographer. I don't know, it hasn't been done, I don't know what we would come up with, or what we would arrive at as a series of motivations or what have you. All I could do is speak of my association with Jerry and simply indicate the fact that I doubt whether many of the images are inaccessible to him, as if they are guarded *sublimational* images. He does indeed see a great deal of the sexual imagery. I suppose just as overtly as Stieglitz saw the sexual imagery in his own work. But I think we are left with the possibility that if we follow that whole cycle where he first started into the overtly sexual, erotic motifs. At least as he sees them implied, so you're right on target as far as his own observations. They started with the advent of his marriage to Marilyn. And those first early photographs of the hand digging into the earth with the ring and called, *On Marriage*. Here's the male reaching for the earth, the ring on the finger and so on. They are like illustrations of personal attitudes. The whole series of the woman in the landscape: they follow a very distinct sequence. They reach a point in which he is quite conscious of the illustrative bent for these things: here I have this feeling, I am very happily married... therefore I do this photograph. That would show a definite expressive intent connected to a personal dimension. However, as we look at the development, I think this is a key image of the recent work, we have to ask ourselves have they quite gone beyond his own personal behavior? And even if they are covert symbols of some interior dimension, some interior psychological dimension. It may be that again we are dealing with images that go quite beyond his personal life, his personal psychology. In essence an archetypal image might be indeed the most deeply personal expression yet also the most objective one. If we see it, not you necessarily, but if one sees this imagery, then perhaps he has constellated an image that seems to be collectively communicated or received. At least it seems to be an image that is viable to a number of people rather than an individual. Gary, your point one step further, at the Philadelphia Museum, there was considerable argument when the curator of Indian Art...in the preparation for the exhibit the director...wanted to have a series of Indian sculptures put in amongst the photographs and she insisted these works have nothing to do with the kind of imagery of India, and they are not mystical. They are highly analytical, they are very rational. It is as though he invents these out of a superior act of consciousness, he knows about these images...but those works did appear as you know if you saw the exhibition they were in the middle of the room or around the room, and Jerry himself, when coming to see the exhibition, when he first arrived there was a bomb scare and everyone who got there in ten minutes had to leave the building. He found out later that he wasn't at all responsive to the idea of these sculptural forms being in the midst of his work. Mainly because he didn't see the connection. Now there is just a vignette, or at least a motif, that he is not necessarily seeing, as what he is often accused of, direct connections between images. If they are there, for Jerry, they are there, and often they are something to be pondered. But what are we left with

though if we follow what we might call the idea of psychological interpretation? We are left simply that these would have no other amplification, or they would not appear in other works of art except as they were expressed by a personal individual. In other words if I follow through with the idea of the personal sexual hangup, what am I left with? That the image is unique to Jerry Uelsmann, right?

Student: No.

Yes I am. Well then what am I left with?

Student: You are left with those hangups. They are pretty universal in a sense. They are his, but they could be just as much anybody else's.

All right I will accept that. Then we are left with a collective hangup. Maybe it is 'hangup' that is bothering me because...

Student: But it is everything, it is not one or the other, you are saying it is this or it is that, well it is all of it.

Ok so you are saying it is universal, collective.

Student: It is all of them, you've come at it from three viewpoints. What I am saying is that every one of them has some validity on some level.

Now what are the three? That escapes me.

Student: You started taking apart his archetypal imagery, then you went to personal hangups, then we had universal hangups. The turtle is an archetypal image, but it is also a sexual image.

All right, granted, but let me say this, good, this is clarifying so that at least I understand what you are saying and you understand what I am saying. The point isn't to necessarily identify something as an archetypal image or to say that it is universal. As I said, I was having a disagreement with your word 'hangup.' I would say it is an image that has appeared in varieties of cultures, expressive essentially of sexual imagery, very much as you have stated associated with earth images. Also it shows a kind of polarization between the transcendent image, the spiritual...beyond-the-earth image, plus the *chthonic* itself. But that does not explain the unit ideas that are within the work as being either of Jerry, of collective cultures; broad, wide, universal. And does not explain necessarily how the imagery reappears at varied moments in time as expressive of a kind of psychological dynamic. To carry the archetypal image further would be that we would have to find a source for what provoked it. Why were images of the turtle used in various cultures? You follow me? Now why? Why were they used? It is not that they were used, that does not explain the archetype. It is basically why were they used? Or upon what sources provoked the use of a particular motif? Turtle, Christ, or what have you. And obviously we can begin to speak of almost any image as having an archetypal

or universal quality: the turtle representative of earth does not necessarily explain the reason for the turtle's appearance as a representative work, does it?

Student: I know of instances where he has the sources.

Give me a couple. I mean you are right.

Student: The turtle of the world is...the turtle's back. Swimming in a sea of...

Exactly. That is all true and excellent... But isn't it possible that even after we know that material we have to deal with why. Why did it appear to the Egyptians as an image of the world? Why does it appear to Melanesian primitives, the turtle as an example of a woman's sexual apparatus, etc., etc. It isn't to necessarily identify the relationships, the comparative evidences of where the turtle or the Christ has appeared, but more or less why. If you were here this morning I said that archetypal images are not in themselves pictographs or motifs that reside in the mind but they are based upon certain energy provocations. And what we try to do is simply say, comparatively, we may discern the presence of this motif or that motif, but then we have to ask ourselves, what is the difference in their dynamic: why are they there, what do they represent and so on. Cirlot's *Dictionary of Symbols*: let's just look for a moment. I would consider that this tells us nothing, although it tells us a lot relative to what we have even said. I don't know if it's under turtle or tortoise: turtle: this is your little handy dictionary (laughs) It is very good by the way, it is JE Cirlot, probably one of the most poorly edited books, and graphically it is abominable, but it is based... on an approach to symbolism that is not reductive. That is deals with more philosophical ideas that are prompted by certain images. And it very definitely pays its debt to the studies of Jung. But there is considerable introduction of information on the turtle and I will read you sections on it. It says, "The turtle has a variety of meanings all of which are originally related: in the Far East its significance is cosmic in implication, as...observed, quote, the primordial turtle has a shell that is round on the top to represent heaven and square underneath to represent the earth. To the Negroes of Nigeria it suggests the female sex organ, as in fact taken as an emblem of lubricity, or fluidity, etc. In Alchemy it was symbolic of the *massa confusa*, the original prima material, the mass of confusion out of which things emerged, basic physical components whatever they might have been; chemical, material, whatever. These disparate senses have nevertheless one thing in common, in every case the turtle is a symbol of material existence. So everything that has been said is confirmed by Cirlot's gathering of images. And that material existence is called *chthonic*: which means earth basically. It even sounds like it if you say the word, Ch-thon-ic. In every case the turtle is the symbol of material existence and not of any aspect of transcendence. For even where it is a combination of square and circle, it alludes to the forms that manifest in this world, and not to the creative forces, nor to the origins, still less to be a radiating center. In view of its slowness...implies natural evolution as opposed to spiritual evolution which is rapid or discontinuous to a degree. The turtle is also an emblem of longevity. An engraving in the...depicts a turtle holding a pair of outspread wings, in one hand and a turtle in the other. The counterbalancing of one with the other would suggest that the turtle is the inversion of the wings, that is

since the wings signify elevation of spirit, the turtle would denote the fixed element of alchemy, although only in its negative aspect. In short it would then stand for turgidity, materialism, etc., etc...An explanation of the turtle as in Morot's painting of Orpheus with their disquieting negativeness." And there are other images of the tortoise and further amplifications. Now we read something like that and we have basically a definition of comparative type and meaning. We can say that, just on this one motif, obviously we are not dealing with the whole thing so far, at least circle, square, the idea of the association with the earth, chthonic, materialistic, the association with the female genital organs: all of these things we at least confirm beyond our own responses. At least we find literature that deals with these images as they are expressed in varieties of cultures. And yet I ask you to at least consider the possibility that that is not necessarily an archetypal analysis, that is a comparative analysis of imagery. And what we might find...it is as though we have comparison one, comparison two, comparison three. And we might find an interesting simultaneity or relationship where they all provoke the same kind of imagery, whether on personal levels or collective levels. But this does not express necessarily the dynamic that would inform a particular usage. Let me show you another example that perhaps comes a little bit closer to the idea of where a culture, in other words this would excuse the idea of simply making a comparative judgment to why a culture did use the turtle as an image. This is from a Metropolitan Museum bulletin from February 1966. It is a commentary on Egyptian turtles. I am not going to take the time to start reading you the whole article. It is not that lengthy but it does give you some of the most extraordinary introductions to certain extant hieroglyphic writings that reveal to us the reason for the turtle's existence: what was it felt to be, what kind of animal, excuse the word, but personification, did it constellate? Here are just a few fragments: "An aversion to river turtles in Egypt might be explained on many grounds: the animal is carnivorous and rose grows to so formidable a size that it is capable of inflicting serious wounds if not handled with great respect." A typical, rational, positivistic cause and effect relationship. By the way the turtle was basically considered to be evil in Egypt and considered to be something as representative of the undifferentiated form of matter. You know, oozy, slimy da-da-da. Something that is not physically palpable or capable of being contained. It says, "Even relatively young specimens, whose carapaces have attained only a fraction of the maximum recorded diameter of four feet, are capable of catching and devouring water fowl. Our own native species of Trionyx, at any rate, have sometimes incurred the hostility of farmers for this reason. The predatory nature of an animal would hardly explain its exclusion from the Egyptian diet." This was written as a discussion not only of the small amulet turtles but also larger carvings... This is five and seven-eighths inches, serpentine, this is a Proto-Dynastic turtle. And many of the theo-amorphic identities that are true of the Proto and Pre-Dynastic periods are gods now manifest in the animal form. And as a result, the turtle is one of the basic images as a carrier of a highly religious content. And so they range all the way from something less than an inch all the way up to five to seven inches. It says, "The predatory nature of an animal would hardly explain its exclusion from the Egyptian diet, however. In the Middle Kingdom various parts of the turtle were prescribed as remedies, although for external use only, and there is no reason to suspect its flesh was ever avoided for medical reasons. It was true that an outbreak of salmonellosis was traced to one of the Nile turtle's American cousins last year, but this hazard does not seem to

have been encountered, or diagnosed, elsewhere. The actual motives for the turtles' disrepute were apparently far less rational. In the first place, the ancient approach to the classification of fauna was totally pragmatic, like that of the English railway clerk who consulted his regulations to determine whether a passenger's pet was in a category requiring payment of a fare, and concluded that it went free because: "*this 'ere turtle is a hinsect.*" For the Egyptians a turtle was, only slightly more plausibly, a fish. This connection may seem more innocuous than would its correct classification as a reptile, particularly since tombs in the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms contain scenes of daily life representing fish being caught by net, hook, or spear, as well as the preparation of fish and fish roe. Fish were clearly regarded with some disfavor, however, for no mention is made of them in the offering lists of the same tomb, and hieroglyphics representing fish are often avoided in inscriptions located near the body, on the coffins, and in the burial chambers where the coffins were placed." ...Now this is an example, why, if the turtle was negative, yet eaten? And associated with fish that were harpooned and caught, but why would they not appear in those magical rituals of eschatology, last things, why would they not appear in the offering ceremonies, why did they not appear in association with literally the spiritual identity of the deceased, the Ka. And the author goes on to say an association with fish is admittedly not quite sufficient to explain why a Middle Kingdom coffin text should go so far as to say, in a spell protecting the deceased against the distressing possibility of having to eat excrement in the next world. 'If you tell me to eat this then Re will eat turtle' (a quote from one of the hieroglyphics) "It must have been, more specifically, the shadowy and secretive existence of Trionynx, the large Nile turtle, the secretive and shadowy existence that brought it into opposition with the powerful sun god, Re, who was obliged to pass beneath its dark domain on his perilous nightly journey. In much later times, when this opposition had greatly intensified, the animal's name was written as though it meant, quote, the mysterious one, unquote. The river turtle is, in fact, one of the most furtive creatures of the Nile, quite apart from its ability to retract its limbs more or less completely between its carapace and plastron. Its most striking feature is a long double-tubed nose, which, like the snorkel of a submarine, protrudes only very slightly above the water in order to breathe. And even this clandestine emergence is only occasionally necessary, since a gill-like apparatus in the throat enables it to remain submerged for as long as ten hours at a time. Although relatively shallow depths are sometimes preferred for warmth, an equal preference for darkness keeps it out of sight most of the time, and, like the crocodile, it is nocturnal. By the New Kingdom the sun god's hostility toward the umbrageous turtle was even more strongly formulated in the phrase, "May Re live and may the turtle die." The example in this passage in Figure 3" (refers to a hieroglyph illustration) "is interesting because it is, to my knowledge, the only representation of the turtle that is wholly in profile. An amusing touch is provided by the two pairs of very human legs that support a high-domed carapace like that of the land tortoise. One is reminded of Andrew Marvell's salmon fishers who hoist up their leathern boats and like antipodes in shoes, have shod their heads in their canoes. In view of the sinister reputation acquired by the Middle Kingdom, it is possible— although difficult to prove— that even the earliest representations of the Nile turtle, dating back to predynastic and proto-dynastic times, had magical significance and were meant to ward off evil. Tombs of this period frequently contain flat schist palettes..."

This goes on literally, to discuss the varied symbologies of the turtle and even the idea of scarification, that is the destruction of certain animal forms compared to bust figures and so on, the pecking out of the eyes was to destroy the point of identity. The eyes were associated with identity. One did not need to destroy the entire figurative bust itself, but to destroy the magical aspect, the turtle is often destroyed by marking or striking across the basic symbol of the world itself, the kind of net-like pattern that appeared on the structure, or even often destroying its head. Now, this again carries us at least one step further than the idea of where an image appeared and what it may have meant basically as a sign-system. Or as one aspect of the sign-system. At least we are informed that it's as though man, in projecting a concept of polarization: sun/earth. The descent, the great cyclical passage of Re. Horace in the sun chariot being reborn daily from not only the lap of Isis but also from the Netherworld associated with the feminine. There is this continuous cyclical pattern. That is the emergence into the world of light, the reengagement of the world of darkness, and, now granted we are not discussing the source of that particular religious belief, although one can, we could discuss that. But let's say that we are talking about the way this religious belief was projected upon natural form. And obviously sun became associated with light, and obviously the turtle was the best candidate, in association with the fish, for becoming the best example of the Netherworld, the underworld, darkness.

Student: Was there a religion that worshiped the turtle?

I know of no religion prior to this that worshiped the turtle exclusively. In fact I don't know of any religion that would worship any animal as a singular deity. The Egyptians did have therio-anomorphic identity, that is, animals were gods, and the turtle was indeed worshiped as one of the varied gods that existed.

Student: ...Re conquered the turtle...

Exactly. In other words the conflict was between obviously light and matter. You can trace this whole conflict between the idea of the world of light and the world of non-light. We can deal with it just on that level. We also have a very temporal sequence that the sun is not eternal, but it must go through the process of destruction and regeneration, daily. We can take this kind of concept and carry it a step further to the idea of the conflict between spirit. And spirit not in the religious sense but spirit, floweth where it wish, (laughs) etc. Spirit and matter. Or the physical and the non-physical. The concept of something being highly non-corporeal and something being very corporeal: palpable/non-palpable. The early Greek concept of the conflict between logos and eros that later extended even into Christian thought. Logos the word, associated with the upper reaches, with the heavens, with revelational knowledge. Eros being associated with the chthonic, basically with the feminine. The conflict is between two planes of experience: basically between the material and the spiritual. Between the chthonic and the heavenly. And we have the capacity of extending beyond simply comparative imagery and similarity of usage to the dynamic that would cause an individual or culture to constellate this form, and I would suggest that at least in this one illustration given—there are others if you want to read further about this—this book by Jung called

Mysterium Coniunctionis, number 14. It is the last major work, the last two volumes are swan songs, like *The Undiscovered Self* is a very brief paperback and so on. But this book is a study of alchemy and it deals with the idea of the psychological types that I mentioned this morning: thinking, feeling, sensation, intuition and how they are expressed in various images throughout man's past. It also deals strongly with the idea of the *tetra-morph*: the idea of a four-part symbol that is generally, well this gets complicated...It deals with the concept of the mandala. And this is simply a later term to describe any circular motif, or any motif that has been divided into four parts. Now this is a typical mandala that we have here, it is a quadra...type motif. The sanskrit word mandala basically means magic circle. And this image not only appears in Paleolithic art, it appears constantly in Near Eastern art. It becomes extremely evident, certainly through the entirety of Christian art, and even appears a great deal in works today such as those by Kenneth Noland, or even Stella has used this motif, and deliberately. And that is through intellection, purposive, admitted: I am using the mandala as the structure for this work, and not just dealing with form and color, or shape and color. But that in Christian art, generally, the four-part motif contains at its cardinal points, opposites, or basically a group of highly individuated motifs that would show different dimensions of whatever is happening in the center. And generally the godhead appears in the center, or emerges from the center. Some of the most profoundly beautiful experiences of the mandala that we have seen, for example the Ravenna mosaics in Italy. The transfiguration...where the figure of Christ, the small head bust is right in the center of a cross motif, and dozens and dozens of images where the godhead generally is considered to be residing in the center surrounded by polar representatives of, let's say, accompanying secondary saints, deities, or what have you. Jung mentions...he is talking about an alchemical thought: "In the Clementine Homilies, second century AD, Adam is the first of a series of eight incarnations of the true prophet, the last is Jesus. This idea of a pre-existent seer may spring from Jewish or Judeo-Christian tradition. In China it is vividly represented in the figure of Pan-Ku. He is represented as a dwarf, clad in a bear skin or in leaves. On his head he has two horns. He proceeded from Yin and Yang, fashioned the chaos, and created heaven and earth. He was helped by four symbolic animals: the unicorn, the phoenix, the tortoise, and the dragon." And you might notice that the unicorn, the phoenix, and the dragon are all highly mythological creatures. The tortoise is the only one that is real. In this case we have actually the tortoise representing chthonic, material forces: earth. Being in assistance to this dwarf god, but we have in other cultures the tortoise being the negative, evil, aspect: a representative of darkness, of dissolution, of containment from which there is no release. We would have to become involved in the kind of dynamic that informed the culture in order to understand exactly how they projected a particular level of content upon that motif. Summing up: to name the tortoise as being an image of lubricity, or the female genital organs, or to say that it is an expression of chthonic or earthly aspects is to simply define that it has an appearance, it has a universal dimension as far as its appearance. Then of course we would have to go back one step further and find out the dynamic of the culture that would use it either positively or negatively. The transfer of tetramorphic imagery in Christian art, for example, we know the sources in Sumerian art, and other forms of near eastern art... that prompted the constellation in the Book of Ezekiel as well as the Book of Revelations, of Christ being surrounded by the four

beasts. And the beasts are: one is a man, Matthew is the winged angel. Now there are certain identities with creature level, but nonetheless it is figure. Mark is the lion. So wherever you place them, Matthew if they are opposites it makes really very little difference. Luke is the ox, and John is the eagle. Now you have animals that, one is really imaginary: the winged angel figure. It is almost like the opposite of the turtle being the real one in the other tetramorphic image. Whereas the other three are existent animals and they obviously express in their characteristic identities certain types of behavior: an eagle flies, a lion does this, etc., etc. What we find again is the concept of a four-part structure, the center representing basically the godhead itself. Christ in a mandorla, in an almond-shaped form often expressing judgment surrounded by the tetra-morph, the four saint figures... There is an example where we say the idea of surrounding a deity with four animal figures or combination animal/man figures is not necessarily unique to one culture.

Student: In terms of cultures, how would creatures like dragons and unicorns which don't have an existence in real life, what kind of cross-cultural, like the unicorns and dragons also existed in English mythologies and so on.

Yes, but they extend all the way back to Assyrian art: you have the horned beast is much earlier than medieval art. The horned beast has a rite of passage that goes all the way back to Paleolithic cave painting. There is the so-called unicorn image, is it Altamira or Lascaux, I can't remember. Anyway it is in this book if you want to look it up. But it is distinctly an animal, a creature, and after all, the measure of Paleolithic cave paintings is the high degree of mimetic portrayal: twisted perspective, careful rendering and modeling of body parts. So the idea of the magical creature who combines varied dimensions, of course in that case in medieval literature the horn itself becomes an aphrodisiac, or a curative. So there are associations with some part of the animal. The combination: the chimera, is basically a combination of parts. There are those marvelous Babylonian reliefs where it has the tail of a monkey and the ...of an eagle and a lion, a mane of a crocodile and so on to bring together various attributes. The animal becomes representative of the entire universe. It not only carries within its body structure earth, but also sky...

Student: But dragons are not just conglomerates of other creatures. Like most of the stuff you've discussed so far, even like the turtle, there is an existence in real life for it, and connections can be made along those lines that different cultures all have contact with the same animal and develop their own ideas about it. But I was curious when you start mentioning these creatures that have no concrete existence, but apparently are cross-cultural and have existed almost as long in terms of the symbology as the...

Well they have, and the point is that there is a point at which the idea of assimilating parts of several creatures to one beast is indeed a magical act. It is to make one beast stand for the individuated identity such as turtle, meaning, in Egypt, something negative, and in Oriental literature something very positive. It also has negative manifestations in eastern art as well.

Student: I see in the unicorn and the dragon, real things that remind me...I could easily...

In other words you are taking the Positivist view that it could be the observation of an animal and then someone invented the form from it. Well I don't think that is not debatable, certainly. What could have been seen that could have prompted the unicorn?

Student: A rhinoceros.

Rhinoceros, obviously.

Student: There are certain deer that have horns.

Exactly, certain deer. After all, I don't know what one does with those elephants and rhinoceroses in Bosch, for example, the late Gothic painter. In other words I don't deny at all that they are not based upon preliminary or primary sources, but nonetheless the animal that is measurably there in the image is certainly imaginative.

Student: {inaudible}

Find one I'd like to see it. {laughs}

Student: Are the meanings at all related across cultures? Do they stand for similar things?

Yes, in many cases they do. In other words, the images can be transferred directly and have a similar symbology, or they can become infected with new ideas, new projections. Let me get back to the central point: the idea was simply pointing out that it is not necessarily the comparative imagery in saying it has appeared in other cultures, but it is to try to find out basically what did it mean and why was it used. So we are right back at the point of looking at Jerry's work and maybe asking ourselves could this conceivably be more than just personal. Is it more than just an individuated dimension. That is, does this have meaning that goes beyond Jerry Uelsmann's, using your terms again, hangups. And if so, does it become evident on that level because Jerry knew about some of these references, or does it become evident because he is constellating an archetypal foundation that maybe now emerging in our culture. What I would ask is why the turtle in this image?

Student: He lives in Florida.

This is marvelous. You are a complete logical positivist: the world is explained away by fact. No, you are, it's great, but the irony of it is that, he lives in Florida, you bet your life, and he went to that alligator and turtle farm and there it was, turtle, click. Now that is not a point of argument, it is a fact. It is, but I can't understand how that can necessarily become the... it doesn't dismiss the question I asked.

Student: It doesn't occur to you until you take it and then you say oh wow.

You say oh wow, and then I come back with my question again like a repetitive.. you are quite right, he saw a turtle, it is in Florida, he photographed it, but why should that turtle be used in this manner in this particular time of man.

Student: You mean this time now?

Yes, the twentieth century. Why? Is there a difference? Because if you took even just the hints we dealt with so far, the imagery is quite banal, isn't it? You've got the spiritual plane, Christ in the realm of the heavens. You've got the turtle below and the sex symbol. The image of the chthonic and the feminine, the earthly... We have got all these factors. We've got a mandala, we've got a four part structure, the three trinitarian image, the fourth aspect is recognized as a quaternary is the turtle: we've got every one of these traditions. But I still insist there is a different meaning in this that informs an archetype than simply those images.

Student: It is funny...when I was in the service I saw people driving in a tank...

They liked it, they liked getting inside that turtle. {laughter}

Student: Yes, that is the closest I could come to it. I saw these things, there was this tree, and all of a sudden the tree wasn't there, and this big huge...

This thing (the tank) had taken over. The earth had taken over. Yes, maybe so, it could be.

Student: But maybe when he saw these things he was triggered.

I don't think so. Not that he was triggered, but I think we were, I honestly do, I think this is where we go back to that... I know that you have got to deal with them on your own individual level. I would suggest to you that Jerry... I know we are using an inappropriate term, it is as though we were visited by unit ideas that he himself would not be able to become cognizant of, to intellectualize, or to present as a dogma. And he constellated something that we are concerned with, and what I want to know is, and all I am saying is the only level to deal with this iconography, perhaps we begin with the comparative relationships. Then we look at different ways that cultures have used these motifs, but then we ask ourselves why the particular constellation in this manner? Why does it have an effect?

Student: To me the only thing I see is that it looks like it.

It looks like it? It looks like what?

Student: (Laughs) You know, it looks like it. (Laughs) To me it looks like it.

I'm going to get you up here, and I'm going to listen to you (Laughs) You leave me with great vacuums: it looks like it. Well you ought to see what is going through my mind {laughter} But I think that is what you mean but I am not sure.

Student: Well I am not sure if he is using these motifs, but is it not like the mandala was used in periods of crisis, and I don't know if the turtle or anything like that was or is used in such a manner.

Well, I think it is. You know I mentioned this image, and I do have the larger photograph of it and that is why I struck that parallelism. Where is that catalog? Could you pass it up for just a second? The one that Nathan held up, this occurred almost simultaneously with, if you notice the dates, let me find the date on this one... the *Turtle Blessing* is 68, and the other slightly predates it but nonetheless is part of a series. Nathan, you don't remember what page was on do you? Front, middle, or back?

Nathan: Back.

Here it is, this is 1969, it is called *Apocalypse 3*... This image, pass this around so everyone can get a glimpse of it. But they are basically of the same series. In other words he developed a conscious concern with trying to point out, remember this morning I was talking about where does conservation and ecology and so on come from. Jerry postulated a direct concern with the idea of the apocalypse being the destruction of natural forces, etc. And he began to develop a series of images that dealt with waste, land destruction: that one of the strange figure-like form and that magnetizing, it looks like some kind of instrument with a disc on the end of it with claws, is another one that parallels that series. So at least we have no explanation but at least it came or emerged out of, what I will call, it is not his term, this whole series of conservation images. At least as he now professes it. *Small Woods Where I Met Myself*, I postulated that that was a remarkable example of the idea of trying to discover identity, the furtive figure of the female who sees her reflection. It is in a series. There is an empty area in one section of the work and then there are negative reversals in others, but he sees them as completely in association with the figure to the landscape, following the theme.

Student: I have a question: you made an interesting statement before that having gone through all of these other studies into symbols what you are left with as an alternative is that this is just a banal recreation of that, or...

Recreation of it.

Student: Or is it of some significance and suppose it is the first?

It can be, and as I said, I was implying that, and I distinctly believe that there are a number of examples where Jerry has inquired further, as a result of other people writing on his work, has ended up with some real bust (laughs) banal images. But on the other hand, I think there are unit structures, as he goes through a cycle, a series, because

there are many of these that are serial, and I think that most of you would recognize that by looking at a series within a particular date. The same slice through walnut appears, or the sand dollar, or the figure in foreshortened perspective, etc. The figure walking on the walls, one side negative the other side positive. Then he will do others of a similar nature. He will do Sydney Gerard, the psychologist, the same kind of perspectable intent. Many of them are definitely based upon, he discovers something, he hears about it, he reads about it, and as a result what seems to emerge does not seem to have the same affect. I feel certain that this work did not emerge out of any preliminary reading, of art bulletins, or alchemy, or running to JE Cirlot's symbolism on turtles, or what have you. By the same token, Bob Fichter could be very definitely, and ask him, he will speak to you on this subject, he works with distinct and discrete units of information that he wants to become propagandistic.

Student: What about any random factors? In one sense, Uelsmann is trapped by a certain kind of formal structures, he very often has horizontal and vertical breaks, because of the way he works, and also within the way he works, if he goes into the darkroom with a series of negatives taken at another time and then begins to piece them together, how much of the success could be attributed just simply to random behavior? If you try enough combinations...

I think I see what you mean. In other words, what if he had to accommodate in that particular area of the structure, let's say he had the choice of between the sliced walnut or the sand dollar or the piece of fruit or the lotus, or any of the imagery in his style, he has hundreds of little contact prints that he is flipping through. And many of you who know Jerry know that this is a fact. Going through and discovering, so it maybe that he would arrive at a combination that this perfectly fit the space as it were. I am not so sure that necessarily becomes a random determination, it can be a formal accommodation, but often the imagery he suggests he bases predominantly upon the fact of whether he feels the images impinge upon one another in some peculiar way: leaves him with questions. However I think that is debatable. There are a number of examples of Jerry's work where we feel that the motif chosen perfectly fits the space or the graphic plane. It may well be that the idea of the symmetry factor here is more intentional than some kind of accidental construct. One of the obvious factors, if you take out this circular motif and leave the darker printing against the light gray then you end up with a very strange asymmetry that occurs in the rocks overhead. This whole thing is thrust on a diagonal then. I am certain that that might have been a very conscious, he thinks in terms of, let's say through the 50s and early 60s, this idea of flat pattern, graphic design, very conscious determinants as to what will relate to one part of the plane and so on, Jerry is very much...

Student: This kid I knew in Pennsylvania studied with Jerry for a couple of years, when he was first getting started, and symmetry is a conscious concern...

Oh absolutely.

Student: Because this was discussed and all of the students that came out that year were also very concerned with symmetry.

I don't know whether the RIT experience or the Indiana experience then prompted that but most of the works that he responded to in the early development, not so much Arthur Siegel's, that one print that we keep seeing over and over again, supposedly triggered Jerry. He has a very strong design consciousness, and a very traditional graphic design, you know balance factors, etc. Somewhere in the background you might suggest that all of those texts on continuity, balance, rhythm, and so on were terrible influential on him.

Student: But also too when you flip a negative you get symmetry.

Yes, automatically.

Student: So I wonder how much of a method— they are all interacting — So sometimes I wonder how far you can reduce things simply through the method or the process involved.

Well I would suggest to you that perhaps if we want to be as concrete as possible, maybe the ideas of symmetry and the organization of balancing units and so on, are very intentional. You say random, or do they emerge out of technique, well after all the flipping of the negative or the print, whatever it may be, he evidently is quite satisfied with that balance. It is not to say that he could not create complete asymmetry, agreed? It may not be necessary of selection but it is also not a simplistic accommodation either. He is happy with that kind of balance factor. Symmetry is a hallmark of his work. Even asymmetry is only apparent at first glance, then when you study it you find out that the symmetry has now moved to the diagonal, or something of that nature and it really isn't asymmetrical at all... axial compositional structures. I certainly wouldn't reduce it to the idea that it is the easiest way to get the print. Because he has made decisive choices there and certainly his earlier works are anything but symmetrical, the straight photographs, we haven't seen many, but I know some of you have visited with Jerry and you have looked through earlier work, and I would say they are not typified by symmetry. If anything but: very sequential, very much involved with the bleed, the environment continues off the picture plane, there is a window on the world, you sense something happening beyond the plane edge. It is only with the development of the multiple printing technique that he introduces symmetry specifically. That seems to me to be a choice. Is that part of the complexity of meaning as something? And I wouldn't start commenting on Jerry's symmetry as being some... to comment on the mandorla structure as being suggestive of some deeper seated psychology, I wouldn't. But I will insist upon the fact that he does have a strange way of constellating unit ideas that seem to have a parallelism to the past and then re-emerge in our time, particularly through him, that seem to be reflective of certain concerns that we have today. And I was just curious to know if one could even take the leap to determine, and I don't think one has to do this very imaginatively, to a degree almost hovering around the obviousness of the imagery. But I think that we would have to end up with the question:

are the sets of archetypal provocations, through Jerry, so obvious that he simply is doing a retake on the past, a retake on other images, or is he constellating imagery that is unique to the past, as well as unique to our own time, and if so, what is it?

Student: Robert {Fichter} used tanks and turtles in his photographs.

He sure did. That is fascinating. In fact I thought when you said that about the tank, and didn't the turtle appear in the one with the tank?

Student: Yes.

That is incredible, isn't it? That is what Panofsky would call synthetic intuition. He says that the idea of experiencing iconology, the ability to interpret symbolic experiences... that the talented layman is perhaps more successful in this pursuit than the erudite scholar. What he means is that the less informed we are perhaps the better able we are to see connections.

Student: One ramification of that, you knew about Re and the turtle through your readings, and I knew it through reading Agatha Christie's mystery story.

Right, right, that is true, that does appear. And now so what? {Laughter}

Student: And so what until it comes together...

Yes, but all I am saying is, fine, you got at it in one, but I don't think that one will have to construct, the archetypal doesn't have to be constructed on, saying that we have Re, and we have the turtle, and so on. I am still left with that question and everyone seems to be...quickly, I thought I threw you a real bomb by saying well what does it mean, after we said all of that, is that the end of it? Try a few steps further rather than subjecting me to giving the didactic analysis of what this work means. Or maybe it doesn't really make a damn bit of difference.

Student: In the face of what you said, it just reads. If you work from the outside in, you have the rocks, you take that as being the surface of reality, then go one step further into that and you have this circle, which sets up that four-part relationship with the three figures representing the spirit or logos, overriding the world principle, the physical, the erotic, the natural. And the focus on that is a focus of the dominance of the logos, and because it is in the spotlight it is also in the square, you have to take that as a personal insight into again what is beneath the surface of reality. And what it seems to be is the realization of a unity or the realization of coherence of perhaps cosmic forces operating through nature.

That is very beautifully expressed..But that still does reside on the level of interpreting specific meanings relative to each motif and their integration, quite adequate. That would be more or less an iconographic interpretation reflecting upon sources: the minute you use terms like chthonic, or the spiritual, or what have you. And that level is

quite accessible, as we approach the form we can find units compared to other units, but I don't think that really deals with the dynamic that is operative here as far as an archetypal level. And I just want to fish around for a little bit more before I wax into my interpretation, for what it is worth {laughs}.

Student: I'll just say one more thing. The way the photograph is structured, you would have to assume that the purpose of the photograph is to express Uelsmann's insight.

That is very good, now you are coming closer to at least what I feel strongly about, that we will have to ask ourselves about the analytical structure of this. Now this could have conceivably been developed as a set up, could it not? You could really invent something and then photograph it.

Student: But not so completely.

Well I think it is more the idea of the steps that are involved, the fact that he has to use units in sequence...I can't remember the sequence but I have it written down. I know the background elements were done first, and then I think the Christ figure with this opening which is part of the original structure where this was placed was next. The turtle plus the illumined circular motif...There were definite steps in the constellation of the image and I think that is a very revealing part: that it was constructed and not simply one manifestation. Not a series of multiple negatives, definitely a step by step construction, and there is something in that. The way it is not an immediate constellation of a subject, it is a serial putting together of motifs, simple-minded as that might sound, I think we have to deal with that as part of the meaning. That is was constructed, fabricated, put together with unit relationships, as opposed to the idea of finding it fully constellated as a total gestalt, in advance. Simple-minded unit number one we have to deal with, what is another one? What is another level that might contribute to its meaning?

Student: I'd like to go the other way with the idea of the accident perhaps being a way for archetypal energy to manifest itself. There are some people that would hold that traditional photography is very safe, and therefore will not lead to new kinds of rendering of these energies in terms of what we are talking about, and they would like to see something like Jerry's, which was 5 or 10 years ago considered great experimentation. And the thing is it leads to accidents, maybe because it is new or not understood, are not tightly controlled by the person working. And it might just be that the final form that this takes is partly an accident because he could be playing around with a number of things and then reach one that he will recognize as being where he should be.

That implies the idea that it is not so much a highly analytical structuring, step by step, but that he does manipulate and then suddenly there is a synapse between himself, his observation of rightness, the goodness factor as the Greeks called it, the fabric that works, the gestalt where the units fall into place, etc., and that perhaps he is just simply perceptive to when they do work together. I think that is possible, but nonetheless he had to work in units to arrive at that concept.

Student: Does Jung deal with the idea of accidents in art?

Indeed he does. That comes under the category of synchronicity, which we might refer to as accidental relationship. But he talks about the importance of spontaneous discovery and that analytical intentions are often very disturbing to the idea of creativity. Something emerges of its own life. I was thinking also of another area which you might want to think about before I offer at least a possibility of interpretation. In collecting this vocabulary of motifs, Jerry does talk about the idea that they seem to have, when he begins to work with them, they seem to have interconnections that he could not have presupposed. He was asked this question last year in Iowa and he had a rather long discourse on it. We agree that you have this vocabulary of motifs, but are you sure you don't go out and respond to things by virtue of their possible relationship to other things? And he said, well, and I wish I could remember exactly the way he expressed it, it is quite possible that now I am influenced by what I have done, and therefore I do see things as having a potential capacity for relating to other things. But he said I don't necessarily use them immediately, and in time I either, one, forget the interconnecting principles as I might have thought of them, or two, I take a broad range and I am not that concerned with their potential. He spoke quite openly and directly about the fact that he does see in certain motifs the possibility for using an image, but this again shows that the emphasis cannot be just upon technical concerns. The mystery of the photograph is not on that level. That he does indeed see forms relative to certain patterns of intricacy, as opposed to patterns of simplicity. And that he has definitely responded to certain motifs because they had variable surface qualities and so on. Did anyone hear Jerry, it was on that Saturday before everyone left, and he sat with that group and talked at great length about this. He does admit that there can be a type of pre-association with the structural motif that he might photograph, but he said, again, the wide latitude of numbers does not predispose him to know exactly how that motif is going to be used. It is a highly at-random selection process of testing and trying. In his work there are innumerable prints that are not, trying multiple levels before he would ever arrive at the final print. In this case there were at least fourteen different motifs that appeared in the lower part of that photograph, and finally the turtle does, and that is it, he knows it works. Now can it be just a formal accommodation or can there also be a gestalt, a psychological, symbolic gestalt that seemed to settle in his mind. I would think that one would have to start dealing with the idea of plenitude: I mentioned this on the article I wrote on Jerry and I think it still has enough validity to be extended well beyond what I've written about it: that plenitude implies that any motif is heuristic, it spills over. And it does not have singular identity. Remember this morning I was talking about Jung's concept that every unit is involved with energy to the degree that its affect is still potential, and there is still a closure factor. That is there are certain forms of the world that are closed in terms of affect. It does not deny their energy, it just means that their constellational form is resulted from the limitation of affect, affect meaning transformative ability. Affect not just being the way it affects us, but how it can be transformed or made variable. Jerry has professed a great deal of concern about the fact that he likes to see relationships that occur between varied motifs, just as he puts them side by side. There was a period three years ago in which he began to develop a

series of just simply serial strips: a motorbike next to a peanut, next to an overstuffed chair, next to a tympanum of a courthouse in South Florida. And they were just one after the other, and he was just testing out the kind of, quote, plenitude: now that isn't his word, (laughs) it is actually a Platonic word, and Aristotle. I mentioned this today at lunch, talks about the extension of forms into one another. That there are not gradations or boundary lines between forms but they shade off into others, but Jerry does speak of the fact that look what happens to this motif: the peanut shell when I put it next to the bicycle, when I put it next to the figure, to the face, whatever it may be. You get this astounding change of context, just on the simple level of what happens to the value contrast, put something light against a dark ground, put something dark against a light ground, there is variation. What happens is it is not just on structural, formal affects that the level of identity changes, but you also find that the peanut may become very animated, literally it begins to look like Weston's pepper, an erotic image or whatever it may be. At another point it appears to be like a dead peanut...you feel it weighing against the table, and it is just there. On another level, the surface of it, and I am talking about with the image juxtaposed against, you begin to involve yourself in the tactile sensation, you want to crack it open. And it is interesting how he has become very involved in the potential plenitude, the capacity for spilling over or affecting another image or it being affected by one it is juxtaposed with, by virtue of association. So a lot of what is constellated in his work is more or less trying out varied motifs and then perhaps the interpenetration. And as I said, a number of variations were tried here, and then the final selection of this may have to do with the immediate synapse of varied motifs. Obviously the literary aspect is very concrete...Even the village idiot would see an opposition between the Christ figures and the turtle: that you would see some sort of polarity in the image, whether you thought of it as related to any kind of sexual imagery, or spiritual, chthonic, earthly, or what have you. The very nature of his structure, the idea of taking a unit, printing it— regardless of what he does thereafter in the variations in technique. But taking the image, printing it, saying no, the plenitude of this relationship is inappropriate, then trying another. And then there is a point at which we have basically this kind of symbolic gestalt that emerges from the association too that he seems to have a capacity to simply say, there it is. Not always.

Student: Did you see the other 13 variations on this one by any chance?

No I didn't, but I saw some of the trial sheets, indeed I did.

Student: I would be curious to see what kind of thing moves across them in terms of the process that he is involved with.

Is Nathan still here? Nathan, did you see any of the variations, the small study sheets that he did for, I did, I say a number of them, but I don't know whether he actually retains those or saves them...

Nathan Lyons: There might be a half a dozen variations on a given theme.

Right...in his files he has a number of preliminary images that lead toward a final one which he insists that he will never exhibit. He doesn't particularly mark them, I asked him, do you do something to them, put a mark on them to indicate that in the event of these leaving your domain, will they ever be interpreted as being final selected prints, and he said, no. But he definitely makes a choice, and he does not exhibit those preliminaries. That would be interesting, I'll write him, or perhaps you might find out if he could send you a whole series, because it is a fascinating study. You know the one of the figure diving into the water? With the striping effect of the building behind it, that thing went through an incredible amount of variations: just where the figure was placed, up close to the balcony, down low, or what have you. It would be interesting to find out whether we could see this in sequence or not. Isn't that interesting it never occurred to me to ask.

Student: The one of the woman in negative and positive, he has about six variations that you can see.

You mean the *Small Woods Where I Met Myself*? But that one he did intentionally though. Those variations were part of a sequence, they were not trials to get to a final print... Are there three or four in that catalog? I don't know but they are along the border edge, and that photo was considered to be not like a series of studies to arrive at a final example, but they were definitely part of a group. And he originally intended them to be seen as a group, though they have been exhibited as two, as three, and six all total. But he does consider each one part of the total. I don't think he would object to each one.

Nathan: {inaudible}

Pardon me?

Nathan: The total process, what he was essentially trying to do was to document the process.

True, that is quite true, but at least it occurred to me to ask him the question, Nathan, about does he consider one of these, and he was asked the question in fact for the Philadelphia show, which of these would you want included? And he said well I do have one I prefer, that was more or less the way he worded it, but he said I intended them to be seen, well I guess that is it, as a process definition, and maybe that is what links them, but he said that the effect of the idea of where you see the image, where you don't, whether the image is not present and so on, is part of a sequence. I suppose, would that be Jerry's— I'll ask it as a question— would that be Jerry's attempt to extend the image into a series, let's say like Duane Michaels has done— on an entirely different level granted— to show a sequence.

Nathan: No, I'll have to look back, there is a letter that he describes why he sent about ten or twelve to be retained as a group and it explains it. It sounds like he is sort of shifting something about his original intention.

Well he may be, but now— all I have is— I have a letter, frankly on the same, not countering your letter, (laughs) and not playing one-upmanship or anything, but the letter I wrote Jerry, it was really interested, it came up in the editing of this catalog, what to print and what not to print, and he was very explicit about that he originally intended for the entire series to be a group. That to be seen at once rather than seen...

Nathan: There is a complete group deposited at the House, at that period, but there is also a letter at the time, that he wrote, describing his concern.

That is fascinating. Is it at the House or not?

Nathan: It may be here, it may be at the House.

How many prints are in the series at the House?

End reel 2

