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**SKOWHEGAN SCHOOL
OF PAINTING & SCULPTURE
Skowhegan, Maine**

**Lecture by Jane Hammond
July 8, 1992**

Transcriber: Janet Levoff

Introduction: I just wanted to make a few announcements. We were going to have the class photograph tomorrow, but because Jacques is going to be away tomorrow, we're going to wait. Is anyone not going to be here on Friday? John? Where you going [laughter]? How early? Could we try the photograph at 9:00? [friendly boos from audience, then laughter]. How about Monday? Is 11:00 OK, is everyone awake? It's a little better? So everybody remember that.

Then this Saturday is the open critique run by the students. So, about half a dozen of you have signed up, and that could be a really interesting forum, so do think about it and do try to come by and see how it's going. The more people who show up obviously, the better. The more interesting it will be for you.

I also wanted to say that unusually, between six and eight, I haven't counted you, of the young artists have come to me this summer and mentioned that they are drinking too much. They are drinking too much, so you might. I've noticed it myself, that there's a little more drinking than there usually is. But when it's hurting, when people feel that they're drinking too much to get their work done, then I just want to remind you, as easily as possible, that as John Walker said here a couple of years ago, it's going to be a long time before you've got nine weeks without anything to do but your art. And if those parties, you know the sociability is interfering, just think about it and get your priorities for yourself straight.

Then I wanted to do something that is a real pleasure. That wasn't a pleasure. I wanted to tell you Jane Hammond is, we all know Jane now. Jane, by virtue of being, by a hair, the youngest faculty member, we saved her till last. Jane was born in the East, in Connecticut, and she schooled in Wisconsin and Massachusetts. She is, as most of you who have spoken with her know, she's very well informed, very interested and has a remarkable mind, and a very curious mind, and a very direct and clear way of formulating what she is thinking. And it's so immediate that I'm terribly envious of this ability. Jane has shown at, she's had many one person shows. In

New York they've been at Exit Art, and Fiction/Non Fiction which represents. She's been at Gallery Wetterling in Sweden, at the Zola Lieberman in Chicago, the Honolulu Academy of Art and others. And she's here this summer preparing for one, it's kind of wonderful to have the models of the faculty that you have because they're all in their studios working pretty hard, and Jane in particular, has a deadline, so she's working with, you know, the gun pointed to her head, sort of.

And I just wanted to read you something that was written of Jane's work because it seems to me that it's very appropriate. It's written by a woman, Ellen Handy, and she said, "Jane Hammond is a painter whose works are linked, each to each, by an intricate, if largely invisible web of associations. Her paintings connect past and present, both within her own work, earlier works in intimate dialogue with recent ones and in their reference to the wider world of history, the society, and culture. Like any artist, she stands in the threshold of the future each time she enters her studio. But Hammond is involved in the realization of an unusual grand plan whose rules she's determined, without being able to see or control its outcome in advance."

That's such a mysterious and tantalizing statement that Jane is going to sort of expose a little more of it now. With great pleasure, Jane Hammond [applause]

Jane Hammond [hereafter JH]: So if you guys will darken the room and start the slides, I'm going to just begin talking. Can you promise me that you'll let me know if you can't hear me? The idea of standing up here talking a blue streak and nobody hearing me is highly upsetting to me.

Questioner [hereafter Q:]: What? [laughter]

JH: My theory on this slide talk business is that...let's see if I can get this focused, I want you to see every little detail here, can you maybe focus it on the machine and then this thing will stay.

My theory on this slide talk business is that mercifully, these carousels come in a circle, so I'll just kind of start, and we can always go around again. And I want to tell you a little bit, in particular, about a couple of paintings, and then, shortly after that, try to shed light on things which are true of all my paintings. So you'll see that these things all belong in a context which is bigger than any one of them. But I can't make everything make sense right away, so we have to get started somewhere.

All the paintings I'm going to show you tonight are made in the last three years. And it doesn't matter when they were made. So I'm not going to tell you, "this is 1989, this is 1990, this is 1991." There's no chronological distinction to be made here stylistically, so forget about it.

This painting is a painting that is 76 inches tall and it's 70 inches wide, it's roughly like a six foot square. When I made the painting, I had a notion in my mind of what it was going to look like. Usually when I make a painting, I'm walking down the street or I'm often times in bed, and this thing pops into my head, sort of like a slide in a projector, and it's a full blown painting.

And I, more or less, make that painting. It's almost like I'm a copyist in a certain way. And then of course I encounter all kinds of problems, so it never turns out to be exactly that way. But in any case, I did have a germ of an idea in my mind. And the germ of the idea was, that I wanted to make a painting that was a female sexual fantasy. And I like the idea of a woman

painter--that much is easy for me to accomplish--painting a sexual fantasy. Because if you think about that in terms of the history of art, there are very few paintings which comply with that description. So, I made this painting, in fact I had this group from Westchester in my studio, it was 22 women from some group in Westchester County. You know, they were all really nicely dressed, in fact two cashmere sweaters bit the dust that day because they both backed into oil paintings of mine. And I sent this one woman home in her bra, underneath her winter coat, with her sweater in a little bag. But anyhow, I said to these women, you know, just think, this is kind of an incredible idea. This is this woman and she's having sex with this octopus, it's really kind of wonderful, don't you think? [laughter] And they had that kind of reaction.

So anyhow, the point is this. I have this very specific goal in mind. And then, I was talking about the painting to someone, and I came home, and I went into my studio at night. This happens to me all the time. I go into the studio at night, after I've been away somewhere. Or I come in like at two o'clock in the morning because I wake up from sleeping, and I turn the lights on and it's kind of like the elves and shoemaker, "who made these paintings?" Like you see them like they're not yours. And I suddenly realized that whenever anyone, particularly people on the outside ask me about my work, I can never explain it quickly because they'll say to me like "well, is it abstract, or is it representational." And I'll say, "it's both, it's everything, I make all kinds of paintings, words, flowers, deep space, flat space, numbers, subject matter that's identifiable, etc." Then the person is so frustrated, so then they say, "how big are they?" You know like. And I always say, "they're like this." You know I always make this gesture, it sort of reminds me of the Da Vinci drawing. You know it's like this kind of body thing gesture. So I walked into the studio and I realized, she's making this gesture. And then I kind of realized, that in fact, it's not really quite about what I thought it was about. And what it seems to me to be about now, and this may unfold further six months from now, is that, in a way, this thing, this blond woman at the top is holding, is in the grand scheme of things, greatly like a painting. And she is holding it more or less in lieu of a body. And so, in a way, I see this as a painting about painting. Or that is, not in the literal, Greenbergian sort of sense. But a painting about my being an artist. A painting about my being a painter. And a painting in which this woman is holding this thing, sort of, I think it's like painting equal's body is how I see it. And it's sort of like about I think the eroticism of painting, and the fact that I do spend hours painting in this kind of, I was going to demonstrate, but I can't move, but this kind of up close full bodied sort of relationship to the work.

This is a painting in which the central image of the painting is taken from a science periodical and it is a path of a fly walking on the wall. I bet half of you in this room have read this chaos book or certainly know something about it. And there's a lot of interest now a days in mapping certain kind of fairly open phenomena, like the shapes of flames in fireplaces and smoke rings coming from a cigarette etc. So I think on some level I was interested in this shape because it's beautiful and sort of modern looking. And I always love the idea of something being concrete or having an analogue back in the real world. And yet you don't know it. You don't know what this is. It's a something but you can't name it or identify it. And I think that it was only after I finished the painting that I realized that this notion of a fly leaving a path on the wall--you know what they used to say particularly about action painting is that the body makes these gestures, and that the mark on the planar surface, i.e., the canvass, is a record of the gestures of the body. So, in a way, I saw that too at a certain moment in time as being a painting that said something

about painting. And I played with this image a lot too. I kind of degenerated it via xeroxing, and then married that with a notion of sort of pointillism in the ground. I don't know if you can see that, but I was sort of interested in, I call this drift. When you xerox something, and then you xerox and then you xerox it and then you xerox it and you xerox it and starts kind of evaporating in a beautiful, sort of neat kind of way.

This was the first painting that I made that had a deep space room, diorama like space I would call it. And, when I finished this painting, I suddenly had the idea that it too had a kind of psychological--I'm making an analogy to the first painting. It too had a kind of psychological relationship to me in the sense that there was this period in my life when I was a child, when my mother had this relationship with two men and was sort of immobilized between the two of them. And I was separated from her and everything was all kind of strange and dysfunctional. And, in some ways when I finished the painting, it occurred to me that it might be about that.

Now I should tell you something general, I think, and something big. About four years ago, I stopped making some paintings that I had been making at the time. I'm not going to explain every painting to you, or we'll be here all night. And I went through a period in my studio, where I made paintings literally every day for nine months, and I threw them out. And it was like a totally horrible period, and if I never have to go through that again, I would be a very happy person. I'm sure I will. But in any case, I came via that period, that horrendously frustrating period to the work that I'm doing now. And I didn't come to it theoretically. And I didn't come to it knowing what I know now. I don't think I know so much now, but I knew even less then. And I didn't come do it having like this whole agenda about what I wanted my art to be. But as I've come to understand it, I will try to shed light on it in those terms too. But please understand I didn't have this like agenda and then figure out what art would fit this agenda. One thing that I was extremely interested in and have always been interested in all my life is collecting information, particularly, factual information. Tuesday is my favorite day of the New York Times. That's Science Day. And I'm a big book collector, I probably own 30 books on beekeeping, and books on frog raising and tapes on toad calls, and handwriting analysis, and all kinds of arcane, and not so arcane subjects. I'm extremely interested in amassing factual information about. When I was a kid, I used to go into the woods behind our house and grid the woods into these 50 foot sections with string. And then my big charge was I would identify everything inside of there. [laughter] That is just something that is natural to me. I have files of newspaper headlines that I've saved. I went to Yaddo in 1985, I saved all the National Inquirer Headlines from that month at Yaddo. So this is something, it's probably sick neurotic behavior, but it comes naturally to me. I like information and I love collecting it and sort of organizing it into these little systems.

So that was one thing. The second thing was, I was disgusted with the state of art in New York. And I was extremely ambitious. And I somehow wanted to be an artist, and I wanted to show my work, and I wanted to be perceived as having something mature, together, and coherent to say. And it seemed to me, that every time I went to shows, I show basically 10 versions of the same painting. I could identify whose work it was through a dirty window on a foggy day across the street, that you know, one year to the next was a tiny modification on something. And I felt like I was this person who was interested in issues which were intellectual, who was interested in being funny, who was angry, who was smart, who was dumb, who was hot, who was cold, who

was confused, who was clear, and I knew that I was never going to wake up one morning, and like a beam of light would fall on my being, and suddenly, I would be of a piece. And then I would have this style, and it would be me, and I would be it and everything would be clear from then on. And I knew that I was always going to feel like this kind of complex combination of all different instincts and urges. And, I also knew, that to my way of thinking, art was supposed to be something open, exploratory, investigative. The people, that I admired most, for instance, people like John Cage, Marcel Duchamp, didn't close down their work. You can't deduce what the next Duchamp is going to look like by looking at the previous one. And, I don't know whether to use the word commodity or not, but it seemed to me that there was this pressure in the art world to make this kind of style which was so consistent, that I didn't know how these people stayed in their studios and made these paintings when they knew what the next painting was going to look like. So, I wanted to figure out some way for myself, that I could use a lot of this information that I had been saving for years, that I could take advantage of the different kinds of inclinations and feelings and instincts that I had, that I could make some body of work that would stay open, exploratory, investigative, I could be authentically and genuinely interested in it, and that I literally wouldn't know what kind of painting I was going to make next. And I wouldn't feel like a chaotic idiot.

So, I've always been interested in systems. A beautiful thing to me is like Mendeleyev who was the man who discovered the periodic table of the elements, sort of organizing the idea of how matter falls into categories. And I've always been interested in language. So basically, I rather tentatively tried out an idea. The idea was that I took all this information that I had at home anyhow, and I made it into a kind of lexicon, or a kind of vocabulary. I assembled lots of different things like toad skins, clowns, magic tricks, birds' nests. The thing in the upper left hand corner, that blue thing is a pollen molecule, OK, blown up. And I put all these things together, and I decided that everything was sort of going to be equal to everything else, and for that reason, I'd give everything a number. And it would also eliminate naming and the implications and associations that naming has with it. And then I decided that I was going to limit the palette. I guess intuitively, I knew that I wanted to make all different kinds of paintings, and it would be good if the paintings had something in common. So I limited myself to red, orange, yellow, blue, black and white. That was all I knew. I knew I was going to use a lot of information, and I knew that I was going to have a kind of restricted palette. And then my idea was that I was going to make any kind of painting I wanted out of that information.

So for instance, this red shape that you see in the center of this painting, is a cousin of that fly on the wall shape. It's another fly path. Are you guys with me? OK. And all the little things inside of it, which I sort of thought of as like making a necklace of Chinese fortunes out of a fortune cookie. In fact it came after I was fooling around--I had bought a case of fortune cookies. I was breaking up all the cookies and looking at the fortunes and I made this little necklace on dental floss. I don't know why, but I did it. [laughter]. And it gave me the idea for this painting. And so what I did, I took all these found texts--I'll go into this thing about how I get this information--and I put them in this fly pattern here. The funny thing about it was that in order to read the text, you sort of had to have this body relationship to the painting, which made you feel like the fly. Do you know what I'm saying? The reading got you into this kind of fly like behavior.

So what I wanted to show you was sometimes how the relationship between paintings works.

OK, so there's all these sort of nonsense phrases inside here. A prudent man shuns hyenas, no fossil can be crossed in love, that sort of thing. So anyhow, one of them is no quadrupeds can whistle. So in other words, this painting here, comes directly out of that painting there. That's the sort of thing, I think one of the things that was really on my mind was how can I develop some kind of system which can act as a surrogate for style, so that the kind of paintings that I do can remain open, and I don't get so damn knowledgeable about them. And so in this case, I had done some paintings before this, where I had made an image, and then sort of put a text with the image. So I was interested in the idea of having the text be the seed or the germ of the painting.

So I started out with this phrase, and then I teased anagrams, you know I made other phrases out of this phrase, such as dunce licker, sperm switch, etc. And then I kind of jammed, if you will, my information into a relationship with these phrases. So it was a kind of language game in which language led imagery. And then having done that, I made another one. Now you can obviously see since that original necklace had about 20 phrases, I could have made 20 paintings like this. I've actually only made two. Maybe I will make another one some time. But I sort of had fun with the idea of taking something like, that's Popeye's hat, and putting it in conjunction with the phrase shape huts, and making a little house out of it.

I've done some paintings that are only words, and this was the first one that I did. It was list of things that I chose out of, well I have lots of phrases that come from magic, and magic props and accouterments, and I chose ones that had a particular sort of viscosity about them, I thought. And this is a painting that puts some of the phrases from the previous painting together with a particular image, as if they stand for parts of the brain.

Painting ideas for me come from all different kinds of various, this painting coming from having read years ago a book called *The Art of Memory* which is about how people, before the prevalence of writing, could remember long strings of events, like something like you'd read about in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. And essentially what they would do is picture in their mind visually, a complex architectural space, and then seat the events narratively in those different rooms, and then mentally visit the rooms to unlock the sequence of the story. So somehow I wanted to do this big kind of phrenology head, and that book reminded me of this whole thing.

I think what happened when I first developed this way of working, which I think of as a kind of system. It has 276 pieces of information in it. And the information comes from all different sources. It comes from the East, it comes from the West, it's old, it's new, it comes from science, it comes from art, it comes from children, adults, pornography. Any kind of source. It's a varied range of sources. And I think that when I first assembled all this stuff, I had a notion that it would operate somehow like a language. And one of the analogies to language that seemed clearest to me was that a language is something that you inherit. You don't invent the language that you speak. And then you have to figure out, by context, association, juxtaposition, tone of voice, gesture, whatever you have at your disposal, how you inflect your being into this language. How you make the you of you visit and live inside this language. So, in the beginning when I first started making paintings this way, I think I was extremely self conscious. I think I was very aware. Like maybe when you're speaking 3rd year French or something. Of talking, very aware of myself, and very sort of on the outside of things and sort of putting A with B. And after a while, I think that I began to be living in it, and comfortable in it, and maybe the analogy

would be when you speak a language well enough, that you can think in terms of it. And so, as that happened, I think the paintings begin to have more of me in them, and more of my conscious in them, and be sort of more psychological.

I'm not sure about all of them. I have a rough sense of what this painting means for me. I think they usually have some kind of almost allegorical, or metaphorical significance to something that's going on in my life. Usually it's something I don't really want to talk about in front of a group of 60 people. [laughter] But this was definitely something that had to do with a particular moment in my life, and in my relationship with my significant other. And what was strangest about this painting, to me, was that about a year after I made it, this woman called me up, and asked if she could use it on the cover of her book. And I said, yes, sure, fine. Well, there's 100,000 copies of this book out in the world now, and it's called "My Lover, My Enemy: Man-hating and Ambivalence in Women's Lives." [laughter] Need I say more? Sometimes the associations are really kind of silly too. There are certain themes, these are the things other people have pointed out to me. There's lots of costuming, there's lots of transvesting, there's lots of gender confusion or gender trans...you know, going across gender lines. There's lots of, I don't know, you'll see as I go on.

I work on them in all different ways. Sometimes I have a clear picture in my mind. In this case, I had a clear picture in my mind about wanting to do a painting of a raft with a snowman on it and lots of the people and figures in my system with their heads coming out of the water as if they were drowning. Kind of truncated heads. And I had something else going on in the sky, and kept changing the painting and changing the painting, and finally this painting came into being. And I do sort of think of this as a mourning painting. It's the classic thing of like, I mean the thing that I really love about this, and this is a very good example, is that the paintings lead me into the discovering something that I didn't know before I made the painting. And it's usually fairly kind of shocking to me. Sometimes it's sort of too hot to touch. But it's interesting to me because they seem to come from this sort of conceptual outside information.

And yet somehow, it has this way of worming right into my heart, and ending up being very sort of true. So it's this funny combination of conceptual and psychological. Someone said to me it's like the meaning is installed in the painting. I think the meaning comes in a different sort of way than traditional psychological painting. But some people think I work randomly, or I like page through these kind of tarot cards and shake the dice or something like that, but it's actually not like that.

I think I have a detail of this painting because I made the painting; it has this image of a carved stick in the center. It has this image of a man--the painting is almost intentionally impossible to see--holding a carved stick. He's divining on the left. And then the painting is carved with a stick. I never thought that out. You now, that would have sounded like too clever if I had thought about it, but that's actually how it came to be. I've made a couple of paintings directly out of dreams that I've had. They've usually gotten me into a lot of trouble. Once I started using this language or this system, and I got really conversant in it, again an analogy to speaking the language fairly well, I then started dreaming in it. It seemed to me the first time I had such a dream that it would be great to just kind of get up and make the painting. So, I did that. I had a dream in which I was married to a man who was Asian, and I frequently had dreams in which I was Asian and he was white. That happened to me all the time. My theory on that is because you spend much more time looking at the other person than you do looking at yourself. You

kind of confuse your inner being with their visual appearance.

Anyhow, in this dream, I was painting in my studio and I was extremely tired, so I was lying on the floor. Do you all know what a hummingbird feeder looks like? and it has that red sugar water? And my husband came into the studio and he was revivifying me with hummingbird fluid. This was my dream. And so I decided to make this painting of this in the terms of the images that I had. And the interesting thing about it was that I thought of it as this sort of nurturing, sweet, sexy, pleasant, positive sort of image. And then people started saying to me things like, I saw your abortion painting, I saw that terrible painting with the big tube, I saw that man killing that woman, you know, all these things. I do find sometimes, that they operate like Rorschachs, and that people come to them, and they sort of see them in the terms that they want to see them. And that's sort of interesting. I also love this kind of, I thought the igloo was a nice sort of analogy back to her body and the idea of genitals, and I also loved the idea of those little dogs kind of watching. It sort of triangulated the thing. And it made these dogs these little voyeurs. I lived in Alaska when I was a kid, and there's a fair amount of, I don't know if it's an accident or it's related, but I do have a fair amount of snowballs, snowmen.

Can you begin to see now certain images coming over and over again. I mean I'm very interested. It's sort of like recombinative DNAs, my idea of a beautiful thing. And I'm very interested in this notion of how that's the clown that was in the moonscape that I showed you in the beginning. Of how this information can occur, and reoccur.

I made this painting at a time, it's sort of the first painting that I've made with these really really big heads, and there are a number of paintings that sort of explore this idea of the head being separated from the body, or this feeling of the head being separated from the body. And I made it at a time when I felt that my life was getting thinner and thinner, and I was getting closed out of my own life. And I think that I didn't really know exactly how to name that feeling and then I made this painting, and I thought, wow, this is what this is about. This is like a model for world, and it's a really thin world.

These paintings are very painterly, I guess, this is what everyone calls this. They are very thickly painted, they have sand in the ground, they usually have layers and layers of different kinds of paint. And I don't think it's because I'm in love with thick paint. In fact I think a lot of thick paintings just look like mud or goop, or cream cheese, or something. What it is is that I have, one of the most interesting and amazing things that's ever happened to me in my life is that in eight grade science, we grew crystals. Has anyone ever done this? You heat these minerals up, you drop a string in it, and the string is kind of to the crystal as the sand is in a cultured pearl, and then the crystal grows around the string. I sort of think of the idea via the images that I have in my head in the beginning as the seed. And then it needs all this time to kind of become individuated, to seek a life in this painting, for my being to leak into it, for it to be more than just an idea. And so I think the purpose or the function that this thick paint ends up serving for me, is it allows me to be in all this kind of dumb contact time with the painting. Like contact time from the neck down. There's like hours and hours of painting the ground orange, and then painting it red, and then painting it orange again etc. And I think that helps the painting become what it is. I've made a couple of these pinup paintings, I've made two of them. I don't exactly have a total theory about it. I don't know if they're politically correct. I know that one thing you

can say about them is they have to do with re-appropriating pornography from the woman's point of view. That is to say, it's different for a woman artist to do this than it is for a man artist.

But I don't think they're totally as politically correct as that. I'm saying that somewhat tongue in cheek, but not entirely. I think they're also titillating to me. I think they also have to do with doing something that's a little bit, I don't know if I should be doing this or not. And I also think that there's something about painting this body, and it's like tattooing or make up or something.

There's some link between painting on the painting, and decorating the body that's interesting to me. I don't know.

Sometimes I use the word jamming, like I'm kind of like jamming these images, and these texts that come from these other places into this comic like narrative. And the jam, the lack of fit, is as interesting to me as some kind of seamless new confluence.

This is the only painting I've ever made that has to do with an art review. I had my first one person show in New York at Exit Art, and I got a lot of reviews and 4 out of 5 of them were very good. And I got one review that was negative. I was absolutely incensed, I was crying, I was furious, I was throwing glasses around the kitchen. I couldn't believe how undone I was by this.

And one of the things, two of the words that the person used were defensive and jitters. And I also thought that only Betty Boop got the jitters, and I thought it was sort of a sexist thing to say.

And then somehow, I was standing in line at [inaudible] and I got this notion of putting this image of this lady painter together. I don't know, it was like I saved the day, or turning a bad thing into a good thing, or sort of making, beating your sword into plowshares or something.

I've done some paintings recently of myself. And, I like to make the point that all the information or all the imagery in my paintings is found. And I like the idea that it is sort of in a way, about...it's not about the media, but it's raw material's the media. I think it ends being about something else. In a funny way, I think it's about the private self, but in any case, all the information, all these 276 things are found things that are out there in the world. And, I also had this instinct in the beginning that I wanted to have myself in there. So I had to figure out a way of making myself a found thing, so I had myself drawn by all these artists in Central Park, and I xeroxed it and collaged it and changed it around and went through all these shenanigans so I could convince myself that I hadn't made this me, they had made this me. And this was I think the first painting I did using myself. I had this intense Geronimo fetish as a child. Don't ask me what it means for a little white girl to have this fetish, but I read every book on him, and I used to jog around with a pebble in my mouth because I had read that that was what he did. So this is sort of my system made into a kind of costume.

Your whole life comes out in this stuff. I mean I was telling someone today, I forget who I was even telling that I operated this tattoo parlor in New York as a way of making...I rented my house out to this tattoo artist, so there are a number of paintings that have this kind of body painting, and it probably comes from the fact that I've seen lots, you know I've seen 150 people tattooed. So this was one of the other paintings that I made. This painting has come to be nicknamed, Jane of Arc. I gave every piece of information in my system a number, and I don't title any of the paintings, so the title of every single painting is untitled, and then within parenthesis, the numbers of the images. Like there's a number for one image, this one probably has 4-5 numbers within the parenthesis. Anyhow, it's so unwieldy, that like it or not, people use

some nicknames. That came to be nicknamed Jane of Arc.

This is a very early painting. It was in the first show that I had. You'll see this guide with this cute little apron come up again. Do you begin to see like that's the lady in the defensive jitters painting? You begin to see this kind of um. I let myself use every image anyway. I can use a tiny piece of the image, I can change the color, I can use it upside down, and I can use it as a shadow. Anyway that I want to use it.

This is an image that, somehow I was thinking about the missing people in Argentina or some kind of, I was thinking about silence in some kind of political context when I made this painting, but you'll see a painting later on where a similar figure is used and it has to do with perfume, and the idea of blocking smell.

I thought I was being extremely witty and cute when I made this painting. I mean when I stuck this phrase in this painting. And sort of making a sort of smart ass pun between the fact that the depicted people here are collecting. This person at the bottom is aspirating insects, it's a way of collecting little tiny insects out of flowers. And between the fact that, and also that the people who purchase paintings, we call collectors. And then I realized that the joke was sort of on me, that I'm the young collector. You know, that I'm the one that's collecting all this information and that it's my collection that this whole thing comes out of. I made this painting right before I had my first show in Sweden. I had never been to Scandinavia before, I had never shown in Europe before. I think on some level I was extremely nervous about it. And although I thought I was making a painting about some outside thing, and using this phrenology head, and this kind of magic sphere, and this moonscape etc., I think I was sort of, in some very obvious way, making a painting about taking my world with me into this seemingly foreign, far away place. And this was a painting that I showed over there, and I thought of it, there's a fly pattern in this window, I thought of it as having to do with abstraction and representation, and I was sort of playing with the idea that I was making this overtly figurative painting, and someone had come into it and made an abstract painting on the wall, and it was sort of like, you guys are probably too young to know about Zorro, and how he made that mark, and then rode away. But it was sort of like, who made that?

I'm very interested in other sort of systems. Other kinds of cosmologies. There's a fair amount of reference in my work to alchemy, phrenology, palmistry, etc. This is an image that's taken from the French palm reader who did Napoleon and Josephine, and it's Josephine's palm, and I'm sure that one of the reasons that I chose it was that it sort of is a very feminine palm, and it has this little kind of J bracelet, so it probably on level has an autobiographical Jane link to it too.

I make some paintings which I call to myself, highly intelligent nomenclature, messy paintings. What I mean by that, in contrast to all the other paintings, I have no idea where I'm going when I start. In a sense, it's sort of like the traditional idea of abstract expressionism. There's a dialogue with the painting, you make a mark, you keep on going, you add and add, you make this big mess

[END SIDE A, START SIDE B]

loose gestural, sort of unconscious marks, remind me of signs, and vice versa. This painting started out, I think it had the pyramids at Gaza in the background. I mean it really came a long way.

I have made two paintings by chance, and only two. Because I have a palette essentially of six colors, I use dice. It's a six sided thing, it lines up pretty nicely, and I made each one of them by plotting out this 400 square grid on graph paper, and devising 8 dice oriented operations, and rolling the dice. Plotting it all out in pencil on graph paper, and then forcing myself to execute the painting, so that I didn't know till I was finished in any way, what the painting was going to look like. It looks, actually quite ordered, as chance operations almost always do. But in any case, I was of course, I don't think I have a slide. Oh I do. I was of course, I don't think I have a slide but, oh I do, I was of course interested to see, it's almost only an interesting idea till you do of them and see what the variety can be. I actually have this kind of cruciform shape in my system, but these aren't they. These just came. I didn't put those crosses in there. They came, if you know what I'm saying.

This is the second pin up painting I did. It's kind of a sequel to the red one. When after I finished the red one, everyone said, her hands are tied behind her and I thought how do they know that for sure. I mean, what about scientific methodology and all that? So, I decided that I would do a painting about all the possible things that her hands could be doing behind her.

This is a classic example I think of how the text married with an image can sort of slide the feeling, the meaning, or the association of the image. And I have a number of these texts from old ornithological sources. My theory on them is that they're from the days before the telephoto lens when the bird watcher developed...they're very anthropomorphic and I think it's because the bird watcher actually had to spend all this time up close with the birds. No bird book today calls the birds dishonest, cruel and inquisitive.

I like this painting a lot. It's one of my favorite paintings, and I don't know what to say about it. Once, I was camping in Canada--this is going to make me sound like a moron--and I was standing up on this mountain and I was looking down into this glacial pond, and it was filled with billions of tadpoles. And it looked to me like sperm, like when you see those magnified blowups. Like the scale thing flipped all of a sudden. So I think I've always associated frogs and sperm. Luckily, not all women think this way. So anyhow, that sort of is the genesis of that painting.

Then I went to Hawaii and I was looking at the diaries of Captain Cook. And they were laid out sort of a la Sears Roebuck catalogue. Like constant plane, and then series of equal things. I call this a list, this format a list. So I did a bunch of paintings that had this kind of list format. This is one from Body Part. This is what I mean by an alchemy painting. And I've done several of these. I'm extremely interested in alchemy, and I guess fundamentally, I kind of feel like this notion of transubstantiation, of changing a material into another material, or changing a material into something which is non material or supra material. It's what alchemy is interested in and it's essentially what art is about too. You make it out of this dumb stuff, but you hopefully make something out of it that effaces the material, stubborn, obdurate, physical quality of the stuff.

I don't know what this painting is about. But sky writing was an idea that I had in mind. Looking out was an idea that I had in my mind. And I've always seen this dancing headless chicken as something that's very kind of zany. Like, out of control. I don't know, maybe I shouldn't say anything.

This is a painting that I've kept. It's a painting that uses my own image, and it's the first painting that I did that uses this, it's a classic magic trick, hat in the box kind of trick. I'm intrigued with this idea of sort of the mind and the body in two different places. And how they can come together, and how they sometimes can't come together. And I was intrigued with this idea of painting it as if it was a projection or an illusion, or a trick.

If you want to ask me anything, you can poke out now.

Questioner [hereafter Q]: [inaudible] the number 276.

JH: Yeah, it's an interesting question how I decided on that number. It's nothing particularly razzle dazzle. It's not like I'm in to numerology. At a certain point, I felt like I had enough, and I stopped. Now, looking back on that, I don't think 276 is dramatically better than 280, or 305, or whatever. I think if I were working this way and I had 35 pieces of information, it would be too cute, too repetitive, too gamey, and you'd be able to see the patterns too easily. I can't see the patterns. I haven't gotten to the point where there are any patterns yet. I think if I had 5000 pieces of information, you would simply apprehend it as chaos. I think I have something that is in the right order of magnitude. Like the bigness of it is such that it feels very elastic and open, but there is some kind of recombinative structure. So it seems like intuitively, I chose a good number. But it's not some magic number.

Q: [inaudible]

JH: I haven't, but I do feel like all this system is is a form that I've invented that allows me to get around style in a certain way to a certain degree. It's sort of like the sonnet is a form. It doesn't really determine the content. And it's only in a way, sort of a tool. I figure I can jettison it or change it any time I feel like it. I just sort of like the idea of keeping it for long periods of time, and doing it in something of a formal way. The restrictiveness of it has helped me be more open, and more playful, in a funny kind of way. I was reading this thing the other day about artificial intelligence, and it said that the amount of printed material in the world is now doubling every 8 years. So in a way, I like the idea that I'm making art out of this plethora of information in the world that we live in, but if I wanted to be really true to it, it would seem like it would have to get bigger.

Q: Do you keep any catalogue [inaudible] of all that you've used [inaudible].

JH: I keep files of the images that I make my work out of. And then I also keep this kind of big book that has Polaroids of all the paintings that I've made. This is one of the simplest paintings that I've ever made.

Q: Was it important to you like there was one with a woman, do they relate, do you show them

together?

JH: I've never shown them together, but I'd really like to. I mean that's one thing that's kind of fun about this. Some curator kind of people have made, sort of illusion to this to me. Since I make all these different kinds of paintings, and assuming that I'm going to go on and on doing this, you could make, I mean when you come to my studio, it looks like a group show, do you know what I mean? But you could also go through this years later, and you could do a show of the clown paintings, or the word paintings, or the pin up paintings. So it might be fun to start these little subsets some day, and see paintings together that I've never seen together. Like that blue pin up lives in Europe, in Switzerland or something. And that red pin up lives in New York. They've never met each other. [laughter]

I made this painting, this is in the Museum in Detroit, I made this painting completely unconsciously. I was as excited about putting together the markings on the map, which came from a gardening catalogue, not the map, but the markings idea, with the pointillist background, as I was about anything else. Now I put these white men up there, and I stuck all this money on them, and I did make the painting right after I started selling my first few paintings. And I think on some level, it has to do with that.

This is another of the sort of simpler paintings.

Q: Do you think that normal language, linguistic language is about a sort of commonality between people coming to an understanding about things, but is that the same as the language you've developed? Or are you going in the opposite direction?

JH: Yeah, it's a complicated thing Tom, because I do kind of believe I think basically in the idea, that the trouble with talking about this is, I end up telling these sort of anecdotal stories, right, because they're the only stories I know. Now I discovered that when the paintings are out in the world, the people that look at the paintings and live with the paintings, they develop their own stories. Even when they tell me their story, and I tell them my story, my story doesn't supplant theirs. Do you know what I mean, not in my mind, not in their mind. I do think I believe this idea about the more specific and particular you get to your own experience, in a way, the more universal you are. And, that if you can do something that has this kind of resonance of a kind of private, psychological, being wrestling with the things in the world, other people will be able to bring their own experience to it. I don't quite want it to sound as corny as that, but I think I believe in that. So the only conduit you can use is your own, but the trouble with talking about it is I don't want to say this is the meaning of it in a way that excludes you. Do you know what I'm trying to say?

Q: Is like an absurd language in a way?

JH: Absurd? Uhn, I thought it was at first. I thought it was absurd or sort of like Heisenberg's principal of uncertainty, or something. But now I don't. Now I actually think it's got a lot more sort of traditional psychological content than I ever wanted to fess up to or than I overtly thought I wanted. It has it in a funny way. I think a very nice analogy to this...This is based on a Frida Kahlo, I've done some paintings that are based on other paintings. If you know Frida Kahlo's

work, she has that painting of 2 Frida's, her European self and her Mexican Indian self. And so I used these two pin up figures and then I chose all the stuff in the border that seemed to me sort of Kahlo-esque.

Here's the best analogy that I can think of Tom, I don't know if this is an answer to your question. Italo Calvino has a book called the Castle of Crossed Destinies. Has anyone read this book? Great. The plot of the book is basically this: a bunch of people who've never met each other before, end up spending the night in an inn together. To amuse themselves, they play a game with the Tarot deck, i.e., this inherited system of information. They all have the same cards. They all get a hand of the deck, and looking at the same images, they all tell the story of their life. And of course, they all tell completely different stories. But even though their story isn't your story, the more particular their story is, the more sort of useful it is to you. Does that...do you...

I'm going to go quickly here. I think. Oh I made this painting after I went to Hawaii. And there's all this stuff in Hawaii about how it's the most isolated land mass in the world. And how it's geologically new, and how after the mountains, volcanoes poked up from the ocean, the only way plants and animals could get there was via long distance traveling birds. There's no point to the story except that I'm sure I wouldn't have done this painting if I hadn't just been to Hawaii.

There's also a lot of this kind of precariousness, I think. I don't know what to tell you about this painting. Sometimes I think it's about two people and a third disconnected person, and sometimes I think all three people are involved in a single act, and I don't know. It's come to be known as the lesbian painting.

Q: This has to do with [inaudible]

JH: Yeah, I think it all relates to that initial phenomenon that I was describing about looking at someone else. This painting is at the Met. I was sort of amazed that this was the painting they picked out, I was kind of proud of them. [laughter]

This is a painting, I don't know, I do know where, I just can't tell all these kind of anecdotes about my life. I feel like I do this work instead, especially in front of a big group, but I will tell you a kind of a cute aside, which is the woman who is my art dealer in Chicago called me and she asked me if I had a painting and I said yeah I do have a painting. And she said, um, she would like it, and I said OK, and she said, what does it look like. She was real eager because I don't know why, and I said, well, it has this naked hermaphrodite, and there was like dead silence at the other end of the phone [laughter] and then I went on and described the rest of the painting. And this man whipping himself. I wanted this painting to be like a nursery rhyme, like the kind of crazy logic that they have. Like logic, lack of logic, and how they're sometimes kind of violent and creepy, but it's like little Suzy. People are being stabbed, and their tails are being cut off, but all this kind of, I wanted it to be like that. It's sort of reflective of the system too; it's like I got a cartographic kind of key of the colors at the top, and then all these texts found from other places. I don't know why that's in there twice. These are some things in the system, I don't want you to have to read this whole thing.

Q: [inaudible] are they part of the 276.

JH: Yeah, I was going to say this and then I thought shit, I'm just talking on and on and on. Some of the 276 things I use are words. Like juju sticks is in there. And, oh God, this is complicated. I don't know if it will interest everyone enough. This is three things. It's two found texts, and it's made up names that are in association to visual things. And I've made up the names as anagrams out of the found text. I can explain that more later, I just don't know.

You know it's really Byzantine.

This is inserting myself into a history of women painters and using that image of the lady painter there. I don't know if you can read all the names from there, but it's like Georgia O'Keeffe and Dorothea Tanning, and Sophie Tauber Arp and Merrit Oppenheim etc., they're all dead.

Q: Is it a round painting?

JH: It's a round painting, yeah. They're really fun. When you move them around the studio you feel like, I don't know what, like you're building a Viking ship.

Q: [inaudible]

JH: Yeah, that's a good question. I have 3 or 4 rooms. And I delete and change the architectural details so maybe it looks so far like 5 or 6 rooms, but there's only a few rooms.

Q: Is there a particular reason, like for this room?

JH: Well, I started making these room paintings, and I really sort of like this kind of diorama like space with these things in it. It was sort of like an analogy for the system itself. Like this kind of format that holds this stuff. And I thought it was very kind of theatrical. And actually, what's come out of these rooms is this series, or a couple of sort of stage paintings. I don't know. I like these rooms, they operate differently. And that phrenology head was a little room, this was like a conflation of the phrenology head and the room discovery, like jamming the rooms into the head. I don't have a whole theory about it except that it does make a painting that feels different, than the flat, more sign like painting. I don't know if I want to say it feels more real. I don't know about that, but it has a different life.

Q: [inaudible]

JH: Divination? yeah I do. See, you don't want to overstate this stuff, but like that black and white painting with the divining rod, I don't think it's accident that there's a divining rod in that painting. I do think, that the way painting is operating for me, it's like letting me find something. I don't know before I make the painting, and I don't know another way of finding it. And the it, that I'm finding, thank God because of this way I'm working, can keep changing. See the problem with style for me is like after you have made six red black stripe paintings with one little rectangle in the corner and one dot up there, I don't know how you're finding anything any more. I didn't mean to cut you off. Does that seem like an answer?

Q: Yes. [inaudible]

JH: You mean how long they take?

Q: [inaudible]

JH: I don't think you could have some big lesson come out of it. I couldn't have some big thing come out of painting that only took me a day and a half to make. You know what I mean. It has to take enough time that you get lost in it. And somehow, it has to have this little bell curve, where at some point in time, you're genuinely worried about it. That is my feeling. Usually, the one's that are the biggest problems end up being the biggest, I don't want to say lesson, like it's some little fortune cookie platitude, but something better comes out of it usually.

Q: Didn't you say in the beginning that you were in a sense a copyist, that you saw the image, and that you copied it.

JH: I know, that's such a good question. And when I said that copyist thing, I thought, this is gonna, you're going to regret this [laughs]. I sort of have this theory that some of these messy paintings, I sort of have this theory that you can't get started based on nothing. So I have to have this picture. Somehow, after I get started, the picture like goes on the blink, and the thing doesn't work out. The color doesn't look right, the image is too... You get all these technical problems, or you get a better idea or whatever. I always think it's going to be just a copying. It isn't just a copying. But each time, I dupe myself into thinking it will be as simple as that, and that's the way I get started. Does that make any sense? It's like, why does Elizabeth Taylor get married again and again? [laughter] Each time she must think, it's going to be easy.

Q: [inaudible] You stay fairly faithful to the [inaudible]

JH: I do in some ways. I put someone's head on someone else's body. I put someone else's hands on there. I leave out the demarcations in one place. I could put their feet on backwards, I could make it upside down. I could put the rocks in different places. Whatever, but there is some thing. It's like if you were making a collage out of a magazine picture, and I was making a collage out of the same picture. We'd come up with two different things, but there's still some principle that's guiding the two of us. Do you know what I'm saying, so I don't know if that's a yes or a no.

Q: Do you work on more than one painting at a time.

JH: Normally, I often work on 5 or 6 paintings at once. Because they're oil paint, and I don't use a dryer, so there's a lot of down time, and it would be too boring just to work on one or two paintings. But, when I have a big problem, or a lot of work to do, or I seem to be losing it, then I'm just working on one at once usually. I think I'm a great proponent of working on several things at once. I think it makes you looser, more unconscious, less afraid. I used to sit in the chair for 6 hours and decide whether the dot should be red or blue. My new theory is do two paintings, one's red, one's blue, get going. [laughter] Do you know what I'm saying? I wanted to make a flower painting in the worst way. I was basically raised by my grandmother, as a child, and my grandmother was quite nutty. Like I once saw her having a fight with my grandfather, and she threatened to jump out a second story window, and she did, and she landed

in a privet hedge, she had on a nightgown, a bed jacket, those furry ostrich kind of slippers with the high heels. I mean she was wild, but she was completely into flowers. She knew the Latin names of 200 hundred flowers, and she'd like dance around. You know, she was kooky. So anyhow, I really wanted to make a flower painting, and I know a lot of it has to do with her, and there are all kinds of reasons NOT to make flower paintings. And you feel especially controlled by these reasons, or I did as a woman. Like, oh my God, I don't want anyone to think I'm a lightweight, and so I kind of backed into my first flower painting, by making a painting that I thought of as a perfume painting.

This is another one of those messy paintings. It's sort of an extremely...I'm sort of fascinated with this world within a world within a world.

Q: Is that painting centered?

JH: You mean is it straight up and down?

Q: No, you know how you open the woman's magazines and [inaudible]

JH: My paintings always smell...Oh, the perfume painting? No it's not. But actually everyone is always saying how smelly they are, so it's funny that you say that. I can never smell it, but apparently they reek of oil paint for years.

This is a painting I made about sound.

Q: You made all these paintings in the last 3 years?

JH: Yeah, 4 something like that. I work all the time.

Q: Do you have many, like 100 paintings?

JH: Well that thing is like 80. Yeah, so maybe it's 88 or something like that. Oh, this image down on the left hand corner here, this little ventriloquist, that will pop up again, so it might be nice to look for.

Q: [inaudible]

JH: All different kinds. See, part of this happens that I've always collected this stuff. And then another thing is, for 10 years, I had this teaching job in Baltimore Maryland, and I'd spend the night there 2 nights a week, so I'd spend those nights in the library. So I'd collect stuff and xerox there. It was sort of the most interesting thing to do there. And now I go to the NYU library. They just come from all possible sources. I mean, you know, if I come back from Sweden, I come back with armloads of postcards, comic books, porno, you know just all kinds of stuff.

Q: Have you never altered any of those 276...have you taken one out.

JH: No, but I'm sure I'm about to do it. The thing is like, first of all, I think all systems have some natural quality of entropy about them. And second of all. Let's pretend I go to Japan next year. As my experience grows, there will be things that I want to put in that weren't about me 3 years ago. And I can feel right now, the thing is like straining. And now I'm armed with this new information that the printed information in the world is doubling every 8 years. I'm like getting ready for some kind of addition.

Anyhow, I've used this ventriloquist picture a number of times, this ventriloquist image a number of times, with different heads and bodies and scales etc. I'm very drawn to it and I think what it's about is that this ventriloquist, the notion of it is, this person doesn't speak through their own body, they speak through this other body. They speak through this. And I think there's an analogy between me as a painter, like me speaking through these other bodies, and this idea of a ventriloquist. I think that's the pull of it for me.

So, if you would just stick this other carousel on, there's five more slides I'd like to show you. And then you're free men and women. Free at last.

Q: Would you consider your visual language [inaudible]

JH: I think the language of it is [inaudible]. That's why I wanted to use the analogy of the Calvino story. Everybody gets the cards, and everybody makes up a story from the cards. Are you with me. And I think of the work as a like a fiction that's woven from facts. The work of it is about the story. It's not about the cards. It's about what's told with the language. It's not about the language itself. So say that question again.

Q: [inaudible]

JH: The tools are inherited, but the art is invented. You know, something like that. This is another one of these messy, molecular, world model building kind of paintings.

Q: Do you ever get tired of painting in the same colors?

JH: Yeah. I just started to. Now one thing that's happening is, I don't know if you can see it in this painting, in some paintings this yellow and blue, I'm like letting them mix a little bit. Like, big deal, but it feels like it to me. But I had this dream about 3 months ago of this big, green painting of women drowning. And I'm like trying to forget about this dream, but it keeps coming back. It's not like a little green. It's Astroturf green, it's like really green. So I think that's going to get me into green. And actually, I don't have a slide of it, but I made this painting the other day that has gold in it. [laughter] The thing is, there's some strain in this now.

Q: Would it be that you add more colors.

JH: I don't know Phyllis. One idea is to add a couple and another idea is to jettison the whole thing and pick up this other palette. I love like Suscetta and that early Italian palette, with that kind of bubble gum pink and Granny Smith green. So I don't know. This is an interesting painting for me because I was really working on it in a fairly abstract way, as a system of kind of

balances and counter balances. Almost like the way Hans Hoffman would talk. And I put this image in there, of the women, didn't you say something about [inaudible]. I put this image in there of the women and I was really thinking about this push pull thing. Like the way that this gesture is coming out, it makes the viewer, it makes the painting kind of push out. And I was really thinking of this in sort of spatial and kind of kinesthetic kind of body terms. And then I walked into the studio, and I thought shit, this is an image of domestic violence. You know, these women aren't going to hit anybody but a man, and this is a painting which makes the viewer into the hittee. Do you know what I'm saying? And I think that was really largely done unconsciously. So I really like it when all those extra things kind of pile up. I feel like it's very interesting to me because of that, and because of the way that was arrived at.

This is another kind of list. This painting too, in a way, goes back to Captain Cook's diaries although nobody but me would know that.

And another one of these stage paintings where I'm making myself a magician. I was sort of interested in the idea of a female magician and a male prop because it's always flipped the other way. And I was sort of interested in the idea of a magic show--I think it's kind of like the way I work. You have all these things that make this system, all these images. They're like props and then you do these things with them. So in a way, I think it's a painting about my painting.

I had this show in Sweden. It was the first time I made a group of paintings to go together. So I made 9 paintings, and then I made this painting. I made 9 paintings, every painting had at least one element in common with another painting, and then I made this painting which had a piece of every painting in it. It was just sort of like a little mental game, just to make life hard for myself.

Oh, this is backwards. Don't worry about. This is another Terry and the Pirates image. This is sort of like a flow chart of someone reading a painting in a room, if that makes sense to you.

Q: What about the role of the found.

JH: There is some. There is something about these images. Other people have pointed this out to me. You know, in a certain way, there's stuff in your work that you can't keep out. And there's the part that you're dumb about, and you don't like ever kind of see. I think in a way, that's the seed of the work, and it's the most important part. I don't know. I was raised by my grandmother. We didn't have TV until I was well into my teens, and we read all the time. And a lot of things we read were old books. They were the books she read when she was a kid. Maybe that's part of it. I don't know.

Q: The imagery though has an old feeling. [inaudible] They have that feeling of an old dictionary [inaudible]

JH: They definitely don't have a 1990s feeling, I would agree with that. It's not something that I ever set out consciously to do, it's ...

Q: There's a beautiful quality about the shadow components that seems to be, I know it's subjective, but particularly in the hand movements that [inaudible] or something. It takes on a

very, I wonder if you could speak about that some more. The shadows that are created by the hands.

JH: I think there is a lot of fear in there. Probably the answer is, because part of me is afraid. If you pick up on that. I pick up on that too. I think that's there. I don't know what to say about it. I'm not being flip. I really don't know what to say about it.

Q: On the one I'm trying to be kind of [inaudible].

JH: Funny, yeah.

Q: And it's almost like there's this element of control, like it was such and you make this shape with your hand. You make this motion. And then it creates another effect. And that effect takes on its own kind of thing.

JH: People have said to me they're funny and scary. When they say that, I don't think, no they're not, I think yeah, that probably is right. Do you know what I mean? I think, it sounds like sort of a dumbo thing to say, but the more I make them and the more I look at them, sometimes it helps to look at them in this kind of distanced thing. I could almost be talking about someone else's work. They seem like me to me.

Q: What about the water, unconsciously?

JH: There's a lot of water, right?

Q: Even [inaudible] that snowball. It was red but it was water.

JH: I know there's a lot of water.

Q: Is it like isolation somehow?

JH: I don't know. In that very first painting, where that woman's, the octopus is eating out the woman, I don't know if I'm supposed to say that in a lecture [laughter]. The fact that it's in the water seems right to me. I don't want to be too doctrinaire Freudian about it, but it's something about being unconscious or out of control, or suspended or in a different place, or something like that. I also grew up around a lot of water. Like I'm from the sort of the East, I'm not from Kansas. I don't know exactly.

Q: It's interesting, because it's not exterior. You have the water in that one room.

JH: There was that flooded room. Now after I made that painting, I was in a hurricane exactly like that as a kid. We were rescued by the Red Cross, the water was this deep on the living room floor, and it was like a very kind of traumatic time, when someone in my family was in jail, and there was a big crime, and there was all kinds of scandal, and I know that it was very traumatic. And of course as a child, I also thought it was fabulous to have a boat row up to your house. You know what I mean. It's like every kid's dream. But I actually was sort of in that flooded

room type thing. But I wasn't thinking about that when I was making the painting. I just kind of...so I don't know. They work in an ass backwards way, which I think is deeper and truer. I was thinking of this painting on some level, as being like "ta da," I'm the painter. Like little girl painter. Like this is my painting, and here I am. Do you know what I mean? \

Q: Who's the woman on the right?

JH: I don't know who she is? She is the other one, you know I don't know. [laughter]
I don't know.

Q: Do you like Joseph Cornell.

JH: I do like Joseph Cornell. And I do think that there's an... The idea of the disparate things in the box is sort of like the system, in a conceptual sort of... I'd like to think I'm not as overtly nostalgic as Cornell, but it also may be that his work in his time seemed less that way. So anyhow, once I did this perfume painting, I conquered my fear of flowers. And I'm now about to make several flower paintings, and this was the first of them. And it's also 9 feet tall so it's a big painting. For me, this is a big painting. I guess for anybody it's fairly big. And I sort of wanted to really make these flowers.

Q: Do you seriously feel that you don't have a style? After 85 slides, I would know a Jane Hammond when I see one.

JH: Well, I can completely what you mean by that. It's sort of one of those head of a pin things. I can tell you, that if people see paintings of mine that are not...we get into this thing of typical. But if people see a painting somewhere, not near other paintings, or not where they know it's supposed to be, they sometimes can't make the connection as simply as they could make it for some other artists that we can name.

Q: Well I think I can think of a number of artists, I think we can all think of some artists when we see them, but we also recognize a personal stamp. And that to me is a style, simply because it transcends all [inaudible]

JH: I actually think that if you wanted to make an art that was completely styles, you'd somehow have to keep yourself out of it altogether, and I'm not interested in that. But as a means of explaining, how I began to paint, the way I began, one of the things that governed me initially, was that I didn't want to make a body of paintings that overtly looked like each other, within fairly narrow limits.

I wanted to try myself in this ventriloquist, sort of mother and child artist/painter kind of role. And I think this is the end. I made this painting while I was watching the Miss Universe contest. [laughter]

Q: Would you feel if someone just gave you some images, that you would be able to make it work just as well, as the images that you've collected and culled from.

JH: I wouldn't rule it out because someone could give me something that I really liked. But if you talked to sculptors who use found objects, they'll almost always say to you that other people are always giving them things that they think they're going to like, and they usually don't like them. Do you know what I mean. It's actually like, the picking of the things is pretty hard, it's hard to guess what someone else will like. I don't have anything that someone else has found for me. I'm not against it, it just hasn't worked out that way. Well, actually, this woman brought me these diagrams from her Lamaze class of wrong positions that the baby can get in, and I do have that. It was in one painting tonight. That's practically the only example I can think of. I think part of it is I love finding the stuff. It's like this other activity I like, the way someone might like gardening or collecting minerals or something like that. And I don't want to be shortchanged of that.

Q: Could you talk a little about the difference of your using the female nude, and like being a woman and all, and all the different clippings you put on that.

JH: Yeah, I knew I was going to get into that. It's complicated for me and I'm not sure I have some textbook feminist answer about it. I'm interested in the idea, there's a big schism in feminism right now, anti porn versus not. Are you aware of this? And I think, if I had to give you a really simplistic answer, my feeling on this is, we should have girl porn about them. Do you know what I'm saying. It's not like, let's make the world asexual, OK. So that's one thing. I think I was interested in reclaiming this. I don't know if it's as politically correct as I'm re-appropriating male pornography of women. I think it was also like, a titillating thing of like, what would it feel like if I wore falsies? What would it feel like if I wore this red wig? What would it feel like if I got tattooed. Like trying on something that you're kind of scared of. It's kind of a forbidden realm. I also find it erotic myself. Don't think the world breaks down into gay versus straight. I think that's an asinine model. I think sexuality is this really complicated nuanced sort of thing. Does it feel like I have at least half an answer.

Q: Have you gotten a lot of flack from feminists about that?

JH: No. Actually, I've gotten the opposite.

[END OF AUDIO]