



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Peter Busa, 1965
September 5

Contact Information

Reference Department
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560
www.aaa.si.edu/askus

Transcript

Interview

DS: DOROTHY SECKLER

PB: PETER BUSA

DS: This is Dorothy Seckler interviewing Peter Busa in Provincetown on September 5th, 1965. Peter, I'd like to begin with some discussion of your early background, when and where you were born and the kind of family background it was and anything in your childhood that may have predisposed you to become an artist.

PB: Well, my early background was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I come from a long family of artisans and artists. I think there's been an artist in my family as far back as we can trace. The family is of Sicilian origin. My father was an Italian craftsman who was specialist with religious murals, and he did commercial murals for churches. So my early stimulus was by accompanying my father on Saturdays, helping to wash his brushes and filling areas for him to that art and the craft aspects of art came to me rather naturally through my father's own interest.

DS: He continued to do this work in Pittsburgh?

PB: Yes, he was one of the outstanding commercial church decorators and muralist. As a matter of fact, he became rather well known at it. He had a large firm that employed about twenty-four people. Most of them were Italian immigrants that used to do very involved gold leaf work on bank buildings as well as churches. He had a repertoire of that material that was handed down to him, a kind of lost art. Nowadays that doesn't exist as much as before.

DS: So at an early age you had all the tools of the craft under your belt, as it were. You knew you were going to be an artist. Did you decide that pretty early?

PB: Well, it wasn't a question of decision. I sort of fell into it. My father didn't particular encourage me because he was interested in having me become an architect. As a matter of fact, I enrolled at Carnegie Institute of Technology first year course in their basic course, and was in the architectural department. But as I grew with a little more independence I decided I wanted to major in art and I repeated more or less some of the training that my father gave me and also through the tutelage of Raymond Simboli who was extremely important in my development. He was an artist who was teaching at Carnegie Tech at that time and a close friend of my father's.

DS: How would you spell that name?

PB: Ramond, Raymond S i m b o l i. He was a well known Pittsburgh painter. He did portraits of Leone Walker's father. Leone, Harvey gall and a number of personalities. And through his stimulation I used to go to the Saturday morning children's classes at Carnegie Institute. And this was when I was only about ten or twelve years old. And I drew every one of the casts in that area. So that my training was extremely classical. I'm grateful for it now because I can in retrospect look upon my own ability to react against it with a certain amusement because I seemed to have felt after my training that when I arrived in New York that it had very little to do with art as I saw it in the early thirties and late thirties in New York City.

DS: Then you arrived in New York this must have been about the beginning of the depression and a period that, you know, ushered in a great many things. Social consciousness, as the thirties went on, of course not immediately. But what did you actually find when you came here? What year would that have been, Peter?

PB: Well, I think that the Bernays Scholarship which I received in my third year at Carnegie Tech, I actually didn't graduate. I was stimulated to turn by Alexander Koslow who was a great teacher and the person who introduced me to the basic fundamentals of cubism. And through Koslow I came directly to New York and while I enrolled at the League studying with, of all people, Thomas Benton. In that group I met Jackson Pollock and his brother, Sandy, as well as Charlie who was monitor of the class. You may remember Bruce Mitchell as well. And it seemed to me that in that particular environment I learned as much from the students as I did from Tom Benton, because it was a very stimulating group of students. But much more effective for my own development in New York was my friendship with Arshile Gorky. And it was gorky who helped me a great deal by introducing me to Stuart Davis who wa perhaps my most fundamental influence of the turn of my work from a Modigliani type of influence to perhaps a more flat and oriented attitude toward two-dimensional structure that has preoccupied me since. It was Gorky who would walk around the streets of New York and point to an itinerant sign that was probably painted by a man who owned a shoe store or a shoe repair store or a man that owned a fish store and he'd say, "This is the most authentic work of art in New York City." Which seemed very unrelated to my previous training and to what would constitute a valid work of art. So it was through pointing our these aspects of shapes and design that he was so fond of and, as you know, in that period he was influenced by

Picasso, that I became aware that all of my sensibilities and their relationship to drawing as I was taught in a classical way, and chiaroscuro, the effect of light and shade, had very little to do with the preoccupations of abstract thinking that I was to involve myself with more seriously as time went on. And Davis, of course even went further in many ways. He would point out just purely the letters of a sign and say that the color of the whites were as significant as the letters themselves. So through these stimulations I became increasingly aware of attitudes that had to do with not classical interpretations that were based upon the Greek ideal or the Italian Renaissance but rather a concept of tradition in art that was completely removed from the orbit of western culture and more emphasized folk art, children's art, art of the primitive, you might say, as well as gradually an awareness of our own indigenous cultures of the American Indian which preoccupied me for a full period of at least fifteen to twenty years.

DS: That brings us to a very interesting chapter. But before we leave Gorky and Davis, did you actually study with Stuart Davis? Or was this a sort of personal contact, informal?

PB: Well, I studied at the Art Students League. And right after that period of a year with Benton and I did some lithographs, I went immediately on the Art Project. And through the Art Project I didn't actually study with Davis, although I wasn't his assistance I was assigned to teaching in those days. I used to see Davis quite regularly, as well as Gorky and they would look at my work and give me comments and criticisms, which was to me much more valuable than if I had been in a class because I did them on my own. It was almost based upon the contribution of a mature artist who would give to another fellow artist and through such insight that I thought it was a very radical process by which I became acquainted with these men's mature development and which in turn gave me a great deal of the benefit of their own development.

DS: I'm very much interested in the WPA projects and its effect upon the artists. Did you say that even in a limited way you had been working on the Project with Davis at all? I know that the other thing was more important, but was he involved?

PB: Well, Davis had done murals. Davis did some of the most significant murals even today as you see them. As you know, the whole look of the WPA project brought out one of the most critical aspects of ideas in relationship to the development of art. And one was the concept of we were all concerned with social consciousness and so on. And even Davis at that time was president of the American Artists Congress as you well know. And he himself was involved in it. But nevertheless there was a sharp schism by all the abstract artists in relationship to the ones that were working with subject matter. And my work, if you know my painting, *The Organization* that was exhibited at the New York World's Fair in 1939 was one of the five abstractionists in the whole show. So I took my clue early from an abstract orientation and became quite involved with the idea that form and content rather than being a separate thing, as the Marxists pointed out, was to me one, one idea. And that if you had form you also had content. So I stuck pretty closely with these concepts although at times because of the artist's feeling for his time, most of the artists I knew were extremely socially conscious. They were very active. Unlike the younger generation today they took very clear positions on social problems and it seemed to me an anachronism that I was constantly attacked, as was Gorky, for being a kind of a bourgeois artist in those days. I can remember Artists Union meetings where Gorky would try to speak out a point of view that he was interested in and he was practically shouted down. And one time he sort of became exasperated with the concept of what was social art as so called, the official term in those days was proletarian art. And he got up at one meeting and said, "Do you want to know what proletarian art is? It's poor pictures for poor people." So that was the kind of atmosphere in which the schism between the abstract artists and the more socially conscious artists, more representational artists were involved with. In that particular period I remember artists like Max Spivak and Ilya Bolotowsky less divorced from these social problems than other artists. Nevertheless they were attacked because of their work for being so called Trotskyites. But Gorky and Davis were in no way connected with Marxists ideology in their socialist interpretations but were rather oriented in their work, but from the point of view of structure and of formal means, if you want to call it that.

DS: Just for the record, how long did you work on the Projects? And were you always on the easel Projects?

PB: No, I started originally, as I said, on the teaching project. And I worked in the Brooklyn Museum teaching project as well as the Brooklyn Art Center with men like Davis and Ralph Rosenborg. We all taught for a while. Then gradually Burgoyne Diller took an interest in my work, who was head of the Mural Project. And he was able to give me a commission to do a mural. And this one mural that I did was for a religious chapel in the city penitentiary, the Riker's Island Penitentiary, which was for the professional staff there and their families. It was called the Catholic Chapel. And there I did my first semi-abstract mural. If I can remember the time, Balcomb Greene did one. Gorky was commissioned to do a window, I don't know whether it was executed. And I remember Jean Xceron's work and it was in no way equal to the project which was done at WNYC where Byron Browne and Davis did two outstanding murals. But nevertheless it was a significant step for that Riker's Island development because previous to that they had had some murals done by Ben Shahn and Lou Block which as you probably remember that was the first big controversy about whether the state had the right to obliterate it. And they did, of course, remove Ben Shahn's mural.

DS: Is yours still there?

PB: One of my panels, as I understand it, is still there. And that's the one directly behind the church, behind the altar. There was another one by Lechinsky and Maurice Block, I believe his name was, who is now in Paris and paints in an Impressionistic manner. Theirs was a mosaic mural which was still there. That was executed.

DS: Peter, that's a fascinating history. When did you leave the WPA? Under what circumstances?

PB: Well, the WPA gradually, as you know, deteriorated to where they removed the artists from these projects and when the war broke out I was one of the very last to stay on it. This is the most amusing part about the WPA. That's the part that I think led to my more recent development. And this goes through the period of from, let's see, the first year that I was on the Project, that I was on was 1936. And from 1936 to 1940 is a kind of grand basis for me to go to what I would call a post graduate school of training which would be similar to what a lot of students do today when they get their undergraduate degree and then go and do advanced training. And it was a sort of school for learning for me. Not that I feel I didn't achieve anything of any significance but I think that that particular period led me into the period where they were making armbands on WPA for the armed services because, as you know, Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941, war was declared, so the few remaining artists seemed to have a nucleus of abstract artists that were on his project. Some did posters. Some did murals, photomontage murals. And I remember a particular project that I was on. Lee Krasner, who is Mrs. Jackson Pollock now, was the head of that particular project. And we were supposed to do murals. And on this was Jerry Kamrowski, myself, Willem Baziotos, and Jackson Pollock. The most unregimented group of artists that you can imagine as far as carrying out a project. And in this particular environment Mr. Willem Baziotos was instrumental in getting all of us to practice therapeutically automatic drawings. And from there on my interest in art took on an aspect where the doodle was glorified. And I had a re-understanding, you might say, of Paul Klee as well as through Bill's insistence on the surrealist use of the automatic change.

DS: Did you then begin a series of paintings or drawings working completely in an automatic

PB: Yes, I did drawings that would resemble doodles today. I don't know of course, they were still reflective of the interest of working flatly. There are a couple that I can show you relating to this period. One is owned by Mr. Will Sachs. It's based upon the symbol of just some straight lines against curved lines where nevertheless they engendered certain images. But this was directly due to Bill Baziotos's influence of the automatic gesture in painting, as well as Gerome Kamrowski who was a very influential artist in my development in those days.

DS: I asked you the medium in which you were executing automatic drawings and to what extent the automatic drawings then affected the work that you were subsequently to do. Did it affect you by bringing more organic images?

PB: Yes, that's a very good question because it wasn't until the late forties that my work became much more involved with the total flat Indian space than the early period. But it was a kind of sidetracking development where the surrealist images were bound to predominate because one can only do these automatic doodles so much then they become mechanical and they repeat themselves. So that the same kind of symbols seems to have come out and as a result of that practice I began to realize that there was a schism between the purely plastic and formal approach and that which was engendered by the unconscious where the private and personal symbols would predominate and have overtones of surrealist imagery which you say, very pronounced in Gorky's development later on as well as the amoeba-like shapes of Miro as well as Gorky.

DS: Were the rest of the group equally involved at this time? Did they all go through this period at the same time you did?

PB: Very profoundly so. As a matter of fact during this late stage of the project I met Matta and through Willem Bazister we used to meet at his house, as well as Robert Motherwell and Gerome Ramrowski and we actually used to discuss our work and bring our work. And Matta would look at it and make some comments in relationship to our work as to what dimension we were reflecting and he had organic attitudes about it whether you were reflecting a rhythm that would be associated with water or with fire or rock forms and so on. I remember particularly Jackson Pollock's work which was really outstanding because he had a very natural exuberance about this point of view. And I think he took it to a point that was most original and most exciting because he had, as I say, a natural access to his unconscious that was in no way unfettered by formalistic preoccupations of a more intellectual approach that I have always been involved with.

DS: In what medium would he work out his automatic drawings?

PB: They were mostly was and ink. And I think most of us preferred that. And that was the beginning of the type of drawings that you'll see them in the current magazines of that period. *View* magazine, as well as oh, I would say some defunct magazines if I can remember.

DS: *The Magazine of Art*?

PB: Well, I'm thinking of these independent magazines like *Iconograph*. If you look at some of the drawings that were in some of those magazines were just typical of the resurgence of the black and white as a means of drawing. And it was purely done with a brush, most of those drawings. There's where the drawings took on a great impact that were equal to the paintings. And for a long time, in my own case, I practiced just particularly with black and white. And I couldn't seem to interpret them in color until much later. And those were very striking drawings. They were in no way as lyrical as some of the other artists who were more close to the surrealist movement as was Willem Baziotes. And they did have an aspect of directness and bluntness which was to appear in the work of Willem de Kooning, as well as in Robert Motherwell's work for a long period of time that reflected that directness of approach where the line was really very thin. When is the drawing a drawing, or is the drawing becoming a painting? And that was one of the first beginnings of the establishment of the direct force of the American preoccupation with drawing with a new attitude of freedom in drawing that related to more the art of children or the art of the insane or the plain doodles of perhaps emanating from Masson, Miro, as well as Klee.

DS: It's important to remember again this was about 1941.

PB: This was about 1941.

DS: It's amazing how early it is in reference to what happened later.

PB: Yes, there was a good period of three or four years of solid work in this direction before Peggy picked us up and showed some of the work at the Art of This Century. And, of course, she knew Robert Motherwell as well as Willem Baziotes. They had their first show there. She gave me my first one-man show and she seemed to emphasize the orientation of the free attitude in drawing that emanated from the surrealist background of their stimulus. As far as my own development was concerned I never was really quite happy about the marriage and this free approach that I never really felt that I achieved any great success with my own stimulus by these artists that I mentioned. And there are two or three paintings that would perhaps pinpoint the development or even period. One is owned by Peggy Guggenheim. It's called *Star Dance*. The one is owned by Walter Chrysler, which was given to him is called *The Desert*. Now *The Desert* was exhibited originally, show at Peggy Guggenheim's in 1944, and it was called which he has in his collection now. And in unholy marriage that I speak of between my formalistic and the purely automatic approach and this would be a very good example between the two.

DS: When did you do that one?

PB: This one was done in 1944 and it was exhibited I believe in 1945 at her Autumn Salon. My first show at Peggy's was in 1946.

DS: Did you show more than once there?

PB: Well, I showed in group shows, but I had only one one-man shows at Peggy Guggenheim's.

DS: Did the interest in Indian art represent a kind of reaction against this in some way? How did you become involved in Indian, oh, but first of all I suppose we should get you off the project. How did you get off them?

PB: Well, I got off the project like everyone else. It just died. And rather than just waiting till the last dregs, it was such a demoralized atmosphere because you couldn't function as an artists except to do you own little sketches and whatever you had to from the government was strictly a basis for enrolling members either in the or one of the services. So most of us were doing large photographic for induction centers. And it seems to me the best thing to do would be to give right to work in many artists were So that's how we were able to get off the projects. We worked for the Allied Engineering Corporation of about six months. Then after that I think we worked during this period as a marine craftsman. number of other co-workers who I knew on the project. George Cavellon also worked for the same firm for the duration of the war.

DS: So that takes you through the period of the war, to about 1945.

PB: Yes.

DS: And then what happened?

PB: Well, as you know, in 1945 I showed some work at Peggy's in group shows, not only in the Autumn Salon, but in several shows. Willem Baziotes had his first show there in 1945. As did Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell.

DS: And you kept in touch with this group to some extent during your war jobs?

PB: To some extent but it was rather sporadic because some of us worked at jobs to earn a living and some didn't have to earn a living so they kept right on painting. But my own production was extremely limited because of my work at these war jobs. And I was married in . I shipped that. But that didn't seem to affect my production. I worked all during this period of 1942 to 1946. Then after a one-man show at Peggy's quite a few of my works this was right after the war, so have closed it in 1947. So in that period everybody was scurrying around to different galleries. myself with a gallery on Third Avenue, Carlebach Gallery where I had a show in 1943 of my period that would be directly related to my own development which was American Indian influenced paintings.

DS: How do you get involved with American Indian forms? Did you take a trip through the west? Or was it simply by looking at what you saw in museums?

PB: Yes, it's an entirely different attitude to what a layman would feel, that you'd have to go somewhere endogenously or meet Indians. The most stimulating source of the influence of the examples of work that influenced me, as well as people who were interested in it long before me, which was Steve Wheeler and Robert Motherwell, was the Museum of Natural History. And rather than frequent the Metropolitan, as we had all done when we were younger, we used to spend a great deal of time at the Museum of Natural History. And in those days they didn't have the streamlined exhibits. Very often they were covered in dust and you had to ask to see it out of the bins and out of the glass cages, so that today many of the objects that were considered just curious are now, it's thought of on the same level as examples of Western culture. But it was through the stimulus of the grand collection not only at the Museum of Natural History but also the Brooklyn Museum, and later on through Eddie Schenk there that I saw a great many things which influenced me to work in a concept that was completely removed from my earlier training of Cubism where you had objects in their relationship to the space around it, but where you had a total idea where you couldn't tell the difference between the object and the so-called space around it. It all seemed to have equal emphasis as far as the spatial consideration. And that was the most stimulating force which had kept me interested in this type of structure to this day.

DS: So that it was in Indian painting rather than in totem poles or other objects that ...

PB: Well, their artifacts more precisely, you see them in the bowls of both the North American Indian as well as the South American Indian, the Tehautepec period, particularly the Peruvian period. And this, of course was nothing new because as you know, Picasso reflected some of the pre-occupations with some of his more flat periods that are referred to today as synthetic cubism, say the period from the twenties, 1921 to 1927. And particularly the *Three Musicians* was a picture that seemed to be hanging in every artist's studio that was looking at this type of work. That was the particular influence that the American Indian art had for me. Not that I wanted to become an Indian or live in an Indian Reservation, but rather it was their peculiar type of structure that was so intriguing to me from the point of view of their space concept.

DS: So that it was a more formal thing rather than

PB: Something concerning the possibilities of the image which was very personal with him. And he used it in a way that he called idea graphic images and that was his particular bent. And mine was related to a development that was very close to Peruvian art where I tried to more or less re-do the inventions of Picasso in terms of my interest in primitive art.

[PAUSE]

DS: Peter, to repeat a question on this fascinating territory that we're now getting into on the role of the primitive influence on American art at this point, American Indian as well as other primitive influences, what I originally asked you was if you could help me to disentangle which particular primitive arts were relevant for particular artists and for yourself and the group that you were in touch with at that time and I know how you are prepared to dig out a very interesting answer.

PB: Well, let me put it this way, there was an attraction to every particular culture in its beginnings rather than its high point of development. Instead of the late Renaissance it was the early Renaissance, and it was put to me even more clearly by David Smith who told me once that he was attracted to the early Italian rather than the late Italian. And I think this was typical of most artists with any genuine love of the reasoning that went behind these primitive cultures. And that was for the economy of their forms, for the simplicity of their direct statements, and for their unfettered quality that was based upon the virtuoso-type of statement. There was a basic attraction to all these cultures and whether it was the early Italian or the early Greek it nevertheless had its influence. I can think particularly of Jackson Pollock in this regard who had a great attraction to the sand paintings of the Navajo Indians. As a matter of fact I think he was intrigued by the fact that you could paint on the floor. This seemed to have stimulated him from the point of view of the way these Indians worked. Jack, of course, was a person who was very romantic about it and he wouldn't admit for a minute that he would copy an American Indian design. He was a highly personal artist who was able to be influenced by almost everybody of thought and interest in the 20th century as it was from Alfaro Siqueiros right down to the automatism of Masson

and Matta. But nevertheless he had the tremendous capacity to come through on his own answer. I think that's the intriguing part about all these influences. How each artist differed so radically in their interpretation of these influences. It's the differences in their temperament. The difference of Adolph Gottlieb's temperament as different from, say, Jackson Pollock. And it was, however, not until the late forties that the big breakthrough came in American art which was the final break from French influences through cubism through the expression of deKooning's expressionism or through Jackson Pollock. It's always ironic to me that until Jackson died that he seemed to feel that Bill was more French than he was. That was always his reaction that Bill was essentially a European painter.

DS: Well, before we get to that I have just one other question that I wanted to ask you about your earlier reaction to primitive art. Isn't it possible that the experimentation with automatism which you mentioned as taking place as early as 1941, the realization of the unconscious as a very powerful force in art would have also opened the way for seeing new qualities in primitive art since the primitive artist was working not from a rational motivation but in order to mediate between unknown powers and his life and was working often in highly intensified emotional states and so forth.

PB: Well, of course there was a great lesson in the work of Henri Matisse in his influence from children. But look how different Matisse's interpretation of children's influence was, say, compared with Paul Klee. And this existed right down to the artists who were working in the forties. And it was that vast variety. But why this influence on children's art? And primitive art, and for that matter, the art of the insane as might have been expressed by Henri Masson in the complete liberation of the hands as a motivating factor in terms of the image. Well, the motivating factor was that one didn't have an image to begin with, but rather had a hand and they had motor ability. So that if one trusted the ability to just move one's hand, one could say many of the sources of images and come up with not only a discernible surrealist image, but at the same time a certain amount of freedom. But what did all this have to do with the type of drawing that was taught at school at least in terms of the type of training that I had. Absolutely nothing. It was an entirely new world. It was an entirely new world to just begin to feel that one had within one's power the ability to sit down without thinking and be able to move one's hand and come up with an image of a figure, a special figure perhaps, or configuration of a figure in which would be much more involved with one's psyche. Rather than knowing that it had two legs, two arms, it would be a configuration of such a form that would at the same time reveal an aspect, dimension that didn't exist before even as compared with the work of Henri Matisse or Paul Klee. It seemed to me that the American's interpretation of the motivating factor of these cultures was much more direct, much more brusque, much more stimulating in terms of what the final product became.

DS: That's very well put. In your own case, the thing that you came up with just using this free, you know, trusting the motor response, was something, however that you felt was not quite to be trusted because of your sense also the need to deal with the image formally. Now in the American Indian forms did that seem resolved to you?

PB: Yes, because the type of work that was reflected by related to their religious meaning of their unconscious relationship to the However this wasn't a motivating artists that practiced that type of spatial reservations so that they worked from they were artists that were more or less colored by their own particular experience. And that was the uniqueness of it. It gave it its particular and distinctive feature as compared with a person who would sit down methodically to study it like a scholar but rather would infuse themselves with the look of the total idea of the all over what later Jackson Pollock derives into an all over arrangement to the all overness of say, a more formal Indian approach. Now these elements were irreconcilable to me. He was perfectly at home with this. Whereas it took many, many aspects. For instance, I can remember some of Will Barnet's work which seemed to me to be a very consciously related to the aspect of Indian structure. And yet it was only when I saw some of Will's drawings done on the back of envelopes that I said, "how these are much more personal that I've ever seen you do, these are the ones that you should develop." And some of his most basic things and feel his best contributions were the result of these drawings that he did rather incidentally when he was in

DS: envelopes

PB: personal temperament said but I think that most were uniquely conscious of the contribution of not only our contained culture but the culture that was inherent in so-called primitive civilizations not at an inferior thing but on an equal plane with the Italian Renaissance.

DS: That's a very good point. One of the things that it reminded me of when you were speaking of will. I've often found those envelopes in his studio and said, "Oh, this is marvelous, you know." But when he translates them into Will Barnet like a number of other artists of this period would as I recall, combine the flat things with a sense of a plane organization. That is, an organization that came out originally of cubism. And I think there's some evidence of this perhaps in some of the paintings of yours. That there was flat patterning and there was also a sense of a slight shallow space, but a slight space. But you wouldn't get a sand painting, for instance, would you?

PB: No, you wouldn't get in some of the Tehuantepec cultures as well as Peruvian or the pre-Columbian periods, or for that matter, the North American Indian blankets. But you see it took a long time to be able to understand that completely because these attitudes were so foreign to the development of what makes for logical painting to the average person. So that artists being only human took quite a while to be able to discern that the possibilities inherent in an Indian contribution was perhaps a more profound and moving thing than was apparent at first acquaintance.

DS: I wonder if there's one other element here, maybe this is just perhaps a crazy venture, but in order to be able to give up the idea of the plane structure and accept the completely flat expression of many Indian forms perhaps it was necessary to understand also some of the revolution in the handling of color that we had through Matisse so that we could understand that the very size and expansion of a color shape was in itself a kind of plastic idea, you know. That one needn't rely on a total plane structure or a plane structure with illusion of you know, one thing behind another.

PB: Well, I'm glad to hear you say that. That's an interesting point that you brought out in relationship to Matisse because Matisse is one of the great revolutionaries of color. His color statements I think are equal to, in not better than, Picasso's in terms of being a colorist. And it's ironic today that one sees the mild subjects of Matisse and yet there's the great intrigue that artists have for his color statement. And that, if it's exploited with a total flat idea that has less to do with the subject matter, becomes more pronounced as color, is real experience instead of having effects of light and shade you eliminate atmosphere entirely and just depend on the vibrancy of the color not only as a note but as able to give off a light, you might say. The color has its own light.

DS: Yes, and once that was realized then you could look at primitive painting, I don't mean on canvas painting, but paintings on ceramics or tapestries and so on and see them with a new eye and identify with them perhaps more completely. At least I would think so.

PB: Well, this identification on the surface may seem like a long period because after all in a way didn't Van Gogh try to break some ground in this sense and what was his influence aside from the people that he claimed he liked? I'm sure he looked at Japanese prints, and of course, Gauguin.

DS: And Gauguin was looking at

PB: Very pronouncedly and you can see that he perhaps, most people are more prone today to think of Gauguin as a great breakthrough and a forerunner of modern color than they are of Cezanne. So that there's a long history of preoccupation with the identification of form as a reality in itself and color as a reality without any gimmicks. But I think artists in a human way take a long great period to be able to crystalize these convictions so they become operating principles with that are unfettered, you might say.

DS: There's nothing I can add to that. That's very beautiful. To come back to the chronological story we were dealing with before, unless there's something else you'd like to add here. We had jumped ahead I think about to the period of the late forties and to the changes that this new kind of influence had brought into your work and into the work of other artists that you were associated with. This would be in the period immediately after the Peggy Guggenheim show and so on. Can you remember other things that were important in that period to you, or that things that were happening to this whole group of artists that must have been relevant to your own development?

PB: Yes, things that had to do with their nostalgia, in its original of development basis for development of that's why of doubt about the acceptance of the that had to do with the orientation that was completely opposite the classical training. And of course that sense of doubt is what gives significance to the artist because I think, if anything else, it was that which killed Cezanne. It was that which killed Pollock. And it's that which you might say killed all the artists. But nevertheless it's also what keeps them alive as well. It's the sense of being able to exist in one's time with the ability to be able to break through with the character of a form that in turn changes the person so that the quality of a form is capable of changing a person. So we can change ourselves according to the development of our work.

DS: Well, actually by the end of the 1940's what would your work have looked like, Peter? I think I have an idea, but I'd like to hear it.

PB: By the end of the forties?

DS: Yes.

PB: It too a you remember my series of shows. It was during that period through the fifties where it took pattern, very single development that I use of some of my . Nevertheless in the which I did in that particular period them into either basic vertical or horizontal begin with the idea of a figure and of the canvas and be more or less led

by the of the canvas into the idealization of how this figure as eventually going to resolve. So if I had a long narrow canvas the figure would turn out to be kind of long and narrow. If I had a wider canvas than it was narrow the figure would in turn become much more horizontal. So that there was an intrinsic regard for the basics of structure relating to the canvas itself. So I was gradually losing the objective configuration that one might have had in mind about a figure. They were becoming bands, you might say. Bands of color. They were either related vertically, basically, or horizontally with a little emphasis on the diagonal but not predominately diagonal.

DS: I see. Were you at this point using any clues as to their being figures at all? Like dots for eyes? Or anything of that sort?

PB: Yes, that still was a residue that retained itself. The graphic image was always a means whereby I was led to believe that it wa an authentic expression. I didn't quite release myself of the pure factors of just movements as colors in the way that many American artists developed even as early as Clyfford Still and Mark Rothko. Mark finally developed his idea of graphic forms which were completely anachronous to his other developments which were forms against a kind of a cloudy background into just bands of color. And it took me until the late fifties to finally realize the quotients that were expressed in those forms could do without the actual graphic implication that these figures or that these were forms and where I approached it purely as structure and as movement and color. Now that seemed to be enough for me. But it didn't seem that I had enough faith in that development to be able to convince myself that this was beyond abstract art. Because like many artists who had a horror of surrealism, and most artists were not naive in that period because Gorky had a long period of painting behind him in the most extreme formalistic developments of the Parisian School. So he knew the limitations of surrealism and yet there was an intrigue for its romantic quality to be able to involve himself not so much in making surrealistic images in the way that might have, but to use the implications of the freedom factor in surrealist development of how to achieve forms through the unconscious but to relate it in painterly terms and in plastic terms. And I think he was always involved with that. He was much more of an artist than he was say a surrealist. So that it's very difficult to put your finger on it and say that one isn't this or one isn't that. The lines are very thin. It was like insanity, when is a person a paranoic and when is he a schizophrenic? They overlapped and there was always, based on the person's preoccupation a great deal of quality in the work so that it had elements of both the graphic and the romantic as well as the strictly formal.

DS: Do you thing that one of the factors that may have held you back from completely eliminating the graphic references to figures and so on, may have never been a sense that I've notices artists sometimes in that period there something or lacking in human involvement or cold about painting which were so completely geometric retaining realistic in when was it it some configuration preoccupation in those days the American abstract artists was much more doctrinaire. Jackson Pollock was rejected from it. As was I and a number of other people because we had resemblance of graphic images.

DS: Isn't that fascinating. When was this? Pollock wasn't, when did this happen?

PB: Well, this happened in the late thirties when Jackson Pollock was working with his totem ideas and with his series of paintings which more or less were influenced by Picasso and Siqueiros, if you know that particular period.

DS: Yes, yes.

PB: That preceded this.

DS: I remember it very well. And you and he were rejected from the American Abstract Artists?

PB: Well, because we had overtones of subject matter.

DS: Yes.

PB: And with some of the most article of that particular period it didn't really matter to that whether it had subject or not. They were in that they were pictures in it didn't really matter to them. So there that most extreme artists had, and referring to Pollock, whose sensibilities were always directed abstractly. As well as Gorky. And in the end Gorky finally wound up with a very sensible kind of image that was directly traced to the influence of . But it new remained his most original period in my estimation as compared with his earlier Picasso influenced period.

DS: Well, this is such a rich area in the late forties with all this going on that I hate to move on. But I suppose we should be getting now to the period of the early fifties. Have we covered your exhibitions? After Peggy Guggenheim was there any other gallery before Bertha Schaefer?

PB: No, there was just that one show with which has held in a place that I was attracted to because he had a great reserve of American primitive art as well as, oh, primitive examples of sculpture from all over the world,

oceanic as well as Polynesian and Alaskan totem poles. That was Mr. Carlebach who had a brief period with showing artists and evidently it was not as profitable to him to show contemporary artists. He had a number of shows. I can think of Seliger who had a show there who also was from the Peggy Guggenheim Gallery. I don't remember his first name. And there was Then from Carlebach I went to Bertha Schaefer Gallery. I think the backlog of work that I showed there was more directly related to my development that came out since then and that was the flat patterned approach that I've now developed into using large areas of color as forces in themselves without depending on a playful image that might result from of more of a doodling approach.

DS: This reminds me, bring in the recent geometric quality. Did you at any point fall under the influence of Mondrian? Or how did you resolve Mondrian in your own history anyway?

PB: Well, Mondrian. That's a good question because Mondrian was always behind one's thinking in terms of the ideas of formalism, of relating things of just pure notes of stress and tension and the relationship to the proportions of a canvas, trying to get an idealized relationship into strictly vertical and horizontal movements. However this seemed in terms of the American's development much more strict than our own temperaments would allow. I don't know of anyone except perhaps Harry Holtzman who vary slavishly adopted it. Even Burgoyne Diller's work as he developed turned out to be quite an original note of just working with bends of color. In retrospect it seemed to me that Diller's work took on an extremely original and steadfast position in his development and although he would say that Mondrian was a great influence in his work, his answers came out to be quite like Diller's. There was, however, this great idealization of what Mondrian's potential was, that is, with purely plastic names to achieve a painting that had a great deal of sense and sensibility in regard to just purely the formal means. There was always intrigue and love for this source. However, the American artists in general were so influenced by the graphic inventiveness of Picasso that it was more or less clouded, I think, for many, many years.

DS: Yes.

PB: And today there's such a relaxed feeling about it that one mentions Mondrian in one breath and Matisse in the other for his color and Mondrian for his at ease in appreciating both of them

DS: Well, they have in common certainly their awareness color or having capacity for expansion, contraction, in itself aside from the movement that may be given in co to the linear elements. But at this time it was not so easy to see it.

PB: No, put in retrospect it's a good point. That one can see it a little easier now. As a matter of fact, if one wanted to be critical of some of Steve Wheeler's remarks about Mondrian it was that he had put a grid over his basic colors and he didn't allow them to function freely, so that he objected to Mondrian's sense of superimposition of a grid. Well, artists have all sort of differences with this depending upon their own interest and their own development. But it's rather interesting to see the philosophic attitude of artists as they relate to these structural approaches that these artists have had, the difference, say between Mondrian and Matisse. But I think we're entering into a period now where the person who looks at a Matisse doesn't really look at the subject matter any more. They're looking at the painting as pure experience. And look at the relaxed feeling there is about looking at an Avery and other period of exuberance of say, the breakthrough of the forties with Pollock and, oh, deKooning. Now Avery looks mighty good. However modest the note might appear, to some people quite substantial and grows on a person because of his access to his means in such a direct way and such a personal way that I think American art today is at a stage where we're less polemical about this business of form and content than we might have been and we've broken through another barrier. And I think it's possible for us to into a of the bare beginnings of just the exuberance of resurgence of abstract ideas relating to art purely abstract notions.

DS: Peter, that was a beautiful expression I'm just going to let that complete this particular reel.

[PAUSE]

DS: ... in Provincetown on September 5th, 1965. In the first part of this interview we had discussed your painting as it had developed through the late forties and into the fifties in which there were strong influences coming from American Indian art and a kind of painting which was largely geometricized but which retained a certain graphic resemblance, or reference rather, to images, perhaps figurative and so on. Today, in coming up to make this tape I had a chance to see a number of very monumental canvases that you finished this summer in a very different vein and yet one which continues the spirit and the feeling in many ways of the earlier work. This is painting which is entirely without any reference or clues to any kind of images, entirely geometric. And I think it might be best to let you take over the description yourself. And what I'd like to now develop here is how this new form, more simple, more direct, more intense in color, by far, developed out of your earlier work, and by what stages and how you know, what your life was like during the years when it was developing.

PB: Well, that might have a lot to do with it, as to what your life is like and how you're able to get in more a

specialized development of my direction. I think a lot of it has to do with circumstances. I think probably one of the things that I've been able to do to solve my economic problems has been to teach. I have been aware of aspects of teaching from my early days when I taught at Cooper Union. And there was a period of six years when I did not teach at all, when Walter Chrysler supported my efforts and bought a great many of my pictures from the period 1955 through 1959 and 1960. But since 1962 when I went to teach at the University of Minnesota I went there as a visiting artist and since Cameron Booth's retirement when he proposed me as a regular member of the faculty I more or less have reconciled myself with the market in relationship to my work so that the best market for my own development now seems to have been that there's no market and I'm doing these purely because I'm interested in my development and they have actually no relationship to a market place since I don't have a gallery. However there are certain benefits from that point of view. I've been able to pursue my work almost individually and rather isolated. Which I don't know how long I can continue with it, but it has given me the chance to pursue much more intensely the attitude of working with form and color as precise and fundamental means of by themselves without any relationship to what may have been some other reasons for not pursuing it as much as my earlier work would be the images. I go into this now because I'm interested in pointing out some aspects of this type of work that didn't seem to have as much interest for me in the past. One element that I've been concerned with in these works has been the element of being able to divide the canvas so that one reaches a certain degree of equilibrium almost as though one would create movement and countermovement in music with certain points of reference. For the first time in my life I've used some mathematics in my work so that I divide the canvas up with a chalk line and stripe it just to get a few placements as to position and try to relate my basic movements to these points and alternate it according to the way my feeling would go as well as the actual points of reference which are mathematically obtained by the use of the golden section or the golden mean. Many of these forms stemmed originally from some collages that I did of discarded pieces of numerals and letters from the General Outdoor Advertising Company where I have my studio in Minnesota. And it was rather incidental that I was able to get some papers because I had run out of color and I pursued using some of these modified "l's" "m's" and incorporated them as part of my work. So that now my work has a residue of shapes that might be related to letter forms but nevertheless are not completely discernible as complete letters. But this has been a basis for me in which to come very directly and very drastically, one might say, with just the attitude of being able to use a form and a movement as a force in itself without necessarily relating it to the notion of the proportions of a figure which preoccupied me so long. Because like most American artists I was always interested in the inventiveness possible with the figure and the ability to be able to discern the figure in a way that makes an invented figure a plastic interpretation of a work of art. And it may seem slow and it is, probably in my own case, the many years that it has taken me to approach abstract art with just the qualities of abstract thinking. And if I can point to any direct influences in relationship to this I would say that Malevich has been an influence in relationship to my work. As well as the work of some American contemporaries. There is some relationship of my work to the work of Kenneth Noland who I admire very much for his ability to make a sign or a modified arrow and to create a sensibility of relationships with these arrows to the total space. Also to his use of clean bright colors and his free flowing forms which have an affinity to my own particular direction. As well, as the work of Jeremy Moon, a British artists that I met.

DS: Jeremy, how do you spell that?

PB: Jeremy Moon. And of course in this development of my own work I always like to feel that an artist is not necessarily some phenomenon but is not only related to circumstances but to stimulus and influences. There is one other New York artist that has been of great interest to me who is unrecognized but I will mention his name. His name is Domenico Paulom, an abstract artist, who was formerly an architect associated with Walter Gropius.

DS: Would you spell his name?

PB: Paulom. And his first name is Domenico. He's been an abstract artist for so many years. He's been of great encouragement to me to pursue my own direction and has been in turn stimulated by some of my own solutions for my ideas that I've projected with Domenico in conversations. So that in this development that I'm particularly involved in now it seems that I'm preoccupied with plastic means to an extent that I never was before, that the development of the relationships of sizes and proportion take on an interest that I've never been able to achieve as a real experience. Color has become much direct and much more alive. I try to use color in a way that is completely arbitrary. Unnatural in a sense related to nature, 19th century terms of nature, and more natural as it is related to the ideas of man inventing the color. In that sense it brings up one of the contradictions that I tried to speak of just vaguely before as to what constitutes the human element in it. The human element it seems now in my own estimation of it is not self conscious one of being self consciously human, but being gaining a certain strength in the sense that man is also nature himself walking around in space. And knowing that one feels that no matter how subjective one becomes one still reflects man, that is, if one is part of being part of mankind. There no longer is this self conscious idea of how human is it or how one can become humanistic. And it brings out this question very often in my discussions with colleagues as to what constitutes the human in 20th century art. And what constitutes the human in not necessarily related to our past interpretations of the human element. The human element can be retained as much in the feeling of rhythm and the walk of a man in the sense of one's arm's space relationship to the canvas, the proportion. All of that is just

as human as if one self-consciously create a message with a human interpretation. And as Malevich said in one of his remarks the problems of the stomach and art being very far from each other are quite divorced from each other. I think you have it here if you want me to, where is that, if you want me to quote that more directly I will. He speaks of his point of view in supramatism and this is a direct quote from Malevich and it was written by A Cawlensky in *Arts Magazine* of it's from his original article called "Avant Garde and Revolution." Supramatism is both in painting and in architecture devoid of any social or materialistic intention. Every social idea however great and significant is the daughter of hunger and need. Every work of art is mediocre and insignificant derives from the plastic sense. It is high time to recognize at least that the problem of art and stomach are very far from each other. So this is something that we've all known but something that we've clouded in relationship to our own work over a period of years because we have not really made the distinction as clear as Malevich has.

DS: Where did you first encounter Malevich? I'm sure you saw his work during most of your life, but I mean in what way did it become particularly significant for you at this point?

PB: Well, Walter Chrysler has a Malevich that I've been very interested in. Of course the Museum of Modern Art has. And in recent years there's a French publication which had quite a number of his works, which I have. I was particularly intrigued by his ability to reduce the forms to their basic thrust without any relationship to having any materialistic or literal representation. I think he above all was one of the most extreme of these artists to approach that even more than Kandinsky was. Because Kandinsky with all his ability to be able to reduce painting just forced forms was a very large feeling in his work which as I say, are just these thrusts and these proportions.

DS: That's beautifully expressed, Peter. I was interested also in what you had mentioned along with Malevich the work of Noland. And of course one of the things is always, I thought, of Noland I must say, when I first say the paintings, you have but here on your porch. However of course there is one notable difference; Noland seems to use color stained onto the canvas. And you still apparently, I'm not using still in any . But you paint using the usual binders and so on, so that it's more of a painted feeling rather than a stained feel. Would you like to talk about that difference in any way?

PB: Yes, that's a good point. I've been intrigued by Noland's painterliness and the way he achieved his work and the roughness of the actual execution of his edges and so on. And I think that's a personal idiosyncrasy that I think doesn't negate from his work. But it's interesting that Noland and Moris Louis, have retained some aspects of staining in their work as you mentioned. But the stained aspect of a work is still a which has implications of modulations, implications of very attractive in its painterliness, doesn't give you the full impact on just the painted flat color that represents a sheet of paper the college spaces. In my own work I've tried to become as clearly as possible related to just painted surface without any effects of atmosphere or any modulations what ever. Now this is a very conscious attitude on my part to bring out the full impact of the shape and the color without any accidents and getting completely away from some of this accidental notions because my own attitude about work that can exist on the plane of the purely plastic idea can be completely divorced from any incidental basis, but can be achieved by working on it without incident. By that I mean without accident.

DS: That reminds me of something else that I think we've overlooked here. I remember seeing an exhibition of your paintings a few years back in which you were working in a much more fluid way although I suppose to use categories it would have been more abstract expressionist. Large areas that were often not bounded and the play of painted fields much more important and of course less geometric in the third edge sense than you're employing today. How did you, first of all the transition to your, what I would imagine could be called abstract expressionist period interests me and then of course the transition from that into what you're doing today. I'd almost forgotten seeing today being reminded of my old friends in your work, the geometric period and then, of course, what you're doing today but I had also been immensely interested in the brilliance of the color and interesting textural treatment too that I've seen is that other period.

PB: Well, I've always been interested in color, but I'm glad you asked me that because to see a development of painting as we've discussed from these different points of view I can look at this, for instance today, and it looks very mild, this particular painting done in the forties or early fifties where aspects of the brush were in it and with a certain degree of subject matter but at the same time an interest in the color and so on. It would seem to me that the development of this and the just purely color movements and color planes as I approached it in several of the paintings in that book that was put out by the Tweed Gallery and also in some of the canvases the majority of which Walter Chrysler owns. He practically bought up all of those canvases in that period. And he finds it very difficult to see anything in the new ones that I have.

DS: Oh really?

PB: And that's the idiosyncrasy of being able to develop in your own way. There's the compulsion I have of being able to develop in a way that interests me at the time. And abstract expressionism gave me an exuberance that I never had. I was almost as though I needed to work in that way in order to be able to spill color, in order to be

able to move the brush and so on. And gradually, as you can see in my development from the paintings that Walter owns and to some of the ones which were done much later, my work took on a natural aspect that some of Walter's paintings don't have. For instance, just blocks of color.

DS: I love that.

PB: Just blocks of color and just movement of color. Perhaps the barest notions. Two or three movements at the most. And having gone into that and done quite a body of work on it, I have then since dispensed with an aspect that is so divorced from what I'm doing now. And if you were to ask what time it is, that would be the one of using the colors sliding into one another and creating the feeling of a glow through lights and color which is atmospheric. Now the ones that I'm doing now are just I might say a cross between the older things and the new ones where there is no atmosphere, when it's just flat colors. And there's perhaps not the freedom of those big blocky shapes that I did before nor these long stringy forms that were based upon just the simple vertical movements of the majority of those that I've done.

DS: Peter, is this particular rather painterly abstract expressionism would this typify the ones that Chrysler has preferred or has collected?

PB: No, the ones just before this where they were more or less longer forms and bent diagonals and vertical. You may remember his reception he gave me in 1957 when he bought that large painting called *Entourage*. Well that one was strictly vertical forms moving, bending almost as though it was modified procession based upon a series of movements and in no way was it a central form like this. It was more or less an all over effect. But these were crystallized as just one movement, just a shape. And I did a series of these, as you can see by that program.

DB: Yes, they're very handsome. Very appealing paintings. Beautiful surface. I mean I know that for a while back in the early years these I remember that Will Barnett considered surface a very negligible quality in painting. And I presume you must have too at that time.

PB: Oh yes and I still do in a way. Because while you get a surface by working on it, it's much different to get a surface like that by making mistakes. It's much more exciting to get a natural surface than to surface. For instance, for a while I used to use sand and build it up and in no way did I ever feel I was as successful as through a picture and achieved, you might say, it's own surface. So there is something to Will's approach. For instance today many students are taught to make so-called texture paintings in school. And they start with texture. Well, they wind up with texture too very often. And that's never a criterion that it's going to go beyond texture. So that it's not within a dimension of experience. It's like referring to Pollock's work and thinking of it as a drip technique as though that's the only valid interpretation for it. That isn't necessarily the criterion for appreciating a Pollock. It's perhaps what he did with it. In his own words, I asked him, "Do you try to control the accident?" And the way he put it to me rather discerning and to me revealing his great scope of understanding he said, "No don't try to control the accident. Use it. Be taken for ride by it. Then you'll understand it." Which in a way revealed his great freedom and exuberance in that way he went about it. It's very revealing to me when actually talking to an artists as to his attitude about it how he with conviction and with

[INTERRUPTION IN TAPING]

PB: This is called colors from that period of Montezuma in some of the Mexican pottery. These are some of the colors that you see in there with a minor accent of blue. And the way I arrive at this was to merely push myself against the wall with the others and wound up with just the barest kind of movement.

DS: I think we're losing you but

PB: For instance I did a series based on just dividing a canvas. Some of these. Just the movement.

DS: Yes, wonderful.

PB: I just seemed to have gotten into this rather naturally. Of course some of the drawings that I did in 1964, they reproduced these drawings and this has an interpretation that goes a little further than this in the sense of trying to grab both spaces. How this one that, the drawing that I have here I'd like to show you. This doesn't do justice to the drawing because the drawing is cut. Look at the difference between this drawing and let's see if I have an extra one. Oh, here here you can see the difference other which well, on the surface seems to have me in the first place it's as involved the whole canvas. You don't have background here. You do have could come from behind. And the canvas itself. This way these proportions are very discerned in terms of size so that they become units. The white is just as magical as the black.

DS: Yes, beautiful.

PB: Whereas you don't feel that here.

DS: No, because the margin loses everything.

DS: Some of my efforts were kind of like starting from scratch. Yes.

PB: Almost modestly just trying to understand this and working with these rhythms.

DS: I like that one there. I think that's a very exciting painting.

PB: That's a conti chalk thing. Then these are some of those collage things that I was telling you about, letter forms.

DS: Yes, I'm glad we got that in. So that the impetus came from your desire to eliminate a certain area of what you felt was almost illusionism or atmospheric?

PB: Yes, the use of the brush, it seems to me, like all aspects of expressionism, while it has a great interest for me and most painters in the sense of its freedoms and there was a great stimulus for the artist to be able to use paints. Never before could artists really wallow in the paint and be able to get the feeling of being at home. That is, of being able to go on this thin line between a mess and a great work of art. And very often the line was thin. Sometimes it was a mess, as some people have said. But very often there was this involvement with paint up to your arms, you might say, so that you did get a sense of involvement. but at the same time in the end it appeared to me as a basically abstract painter, that some of the elements that were extremely intriguing were fugitive elements. They were elements that were on the fringe of bravura, on the fringe of being able to use the brush in such a way that it wasn't too far removed from Sargent. And this is a criticism of some of the very best abstract artists, as you can see from George McNeil's article in which he speaks about Sargent and the influence of abstract expressionism as it relates to the abstract expressionism to the gesture of Bodini. That there is some innate criticism that most artists have even the very best abstractionists will feel that there is an element of danger in the sense of the bravura. In the sense of the playing with paint as a means of being able to achieve an effect, but not necessarily a sound dimension or necessarily in depth. So it was some of these fugitive elements, not only of dealing with light in a retrograde way, but also using atmosphere which is to me a throwback to the early part of the century. It seems to me that in retrospect abstract expressionism is the last grasp of academic art in the 20th century. That seems like a strange thing to say, but I think it's quite true. When history is written we'll look upon abstract expressionism as being the most naturalistic efforts of the 20th century artists, not only in the terms of their image, but also in terms of their invention with the form and also in terms of their concepts about drawings as well as using light and color.

DS: In a sense that there's always an element of something illusionist, or something behind something else, something atmospherically saturated.

DS: Yes. Without illusions. of art.

PB: your inventing for themselves. I hope they will certainly be seen too.

PB: Well, I hope to have a show there some day again

DS: You will, of course. You're hiding out in Minneapolis teaching at

PB: At the University of Minnesota.

DS: At the University of Minnesota. And we have a chance to see you here. But I'm sure they will be seen.

PB: One nice thing about Provincetown, every artists needs some contact and having spent 22 years in New York and having grown up in my own development in the backyard or my contemporaries in the arena of ideas I do miss New York very much. And to me, Provincetown is a compromise because I meet my old friends here. I have a house here. I can show here with a feeling on my front porch and it's like a big gallery because one painting is 18 feet long and about six feet high and I couldn't show this in any gallery, any commercial gallery in town.

DS: It certainly wouldn't have the wonderful feeling it has here.

PB: Intimacy about it and it's my

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[Return to Top](#)