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Oral history interview with Paul Allen Reed,
1994 Apr. 29

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Paul Reed on April 29, 1994. The interview took place in Arlington, Virginia, and was conducted by Judith Zilczer for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The sound quality for this interview is poor throughout, leading to an abnormally high number of inaudible sections. The Archives of American Art has reviewed the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

JUDITH ZILCZER: This is track number one. Yeah, it's—it's going now. It's working.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] not your equipment, mine. [They laugh.] That's [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Thank you for checking. Today is Friday, April 29. I'm Judith Zilczer, and I'm here at—in Arlington, Virginia, at the home of Paul Reed. And we will be talking about his life and his career this morning.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Alright, let's begin. Um, I thought we'd talk a little bit about your background and—native [ph] Washingtonian.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. Well, um, as early as I can remember, I was making things, you know, mainly drawings and things.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —encouragement in school.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you have any special teachers that encouraged you?

PAUL REED: In—at McKinley High School here, there was an Alexis Mattie [ph], who was the—in those days, quite unusual, I think, as a—a high school art teacher.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, you better get a little closer, because I noticed the—the machine was stopping when—

PAUL REED: Okay.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Go ahead.

PAUL REED: And, um, I can remember in junior high school, we—one of the teachers gave me my first bottle of India ink. [They laugh.] And I don't know why I remember that, but it was important. The—the *Post* was, um—I guess it was the old *Times-Herald* then—would run the kids' drawings, like it was a, sort of, a contest.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, that's wonderful.

PAUL REED: And, uh, I used my father's name, and—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Which was?

PAUL REED: [00:02:02] And they sent you a dollar or two if they published. And they were just a little [inaudible]. And, um, the—when I went [ph] to California with my father for the—I guess it was a senior semester of high school, in San Diego. And, uh, came back and graduated from McKinley, and then went back out that following summer, and entered San Diego State University. And that was very brief, two or three weeks at the most, because this was, uh, '37, it would be—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —the voice activation, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. We have to make—

PAUL REED: That's a very good thing.

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's a good device, but—but—but it's almost too sensitive, because if you speak softly, it's—

PAUL REED: Oh, it—it won't grab it, huh?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. I'm going to turn up the sound just a little bit, so that—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —or the volume, so that maybe it will make it more sensitive. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Um, and there was a—they were—well, we were just coming out of the Depression then, but, uh, they were still very hard times, and a job opened up on the newspaper, on the—on the *Times-Herald*. Got a letter from a friend. And so I left school. It was hard enough to try to stay in school anyways, just for economic reasons. And the—the job was, um, uh, masking half-tones so they could drop out the whites in advertising. And, uh, I was there a while, and they—I—I went to the Corcoran [School of Arts and Design]. It was a night job, so I went to the Corcoran in the daytime. The—you know, the work would come in, and we were [ph] preparing for the paper the next day is when we'd have to [ph] come in. [00:04:05]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. But you put in long days, then, I would imagine.

PAUL REED: Well, it—you know, when you're young, you can go 24 hours, and it doesn't matter much. And, um, I, um—so that was just before Christmas, only the work dropped off. And—and it looked like they were going to lay people off. And—and, uh, a job opened in Atlanta. So here, again, I had to leave the art school, and I went down to Atlanta. And, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: While you were at the Corcoran, can you tell me, who was your teach—who were your teachers?

PAUL REED: Well, uh, [Richard] Lahey was there then—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Really?

PAUL REED: —and a man named [Kenneth] Stubbs. I think Stubbs was the—the—we were doing antique drawings with Stubbs, I think.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's an appropriately named instructor. [They laugh.] I think of the—the animal—animalier teacher, [laughs] George Stubbs.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And, uh, I went to Atlanta and worked. And curiously enough, the Atlanta job paid almost twice what the *Times-Herald* was paying me. It was—it was, like—Social Security had just come in, and the—as I remember, I got \$18.72 a week, and the missing pennies were for Social Security. It was, like, \$17.82 a week, and I was paid \$18 a week. This was 1937. Anyway, with—Atlanta was \$30 a week, and that was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And where—where were you work—

PAUL REED: —all the money in the world at that time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] Now, where were you living—uh, where were you working in Atlanta?

PAUL REED: It was an engraving firm.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Engraving.

PAUL REED: It was called photo processing engraving. And—saved enough money, and a friend in California had invited me out for the—for the summer. So I quit the job and went to—spent the summer in San Diego, going to the beach. [00:06:03] Making a few drawings here and there, but not—the art wasn't important. We were just having a good time. And then I returned in the fall and went back on the paper. I mean, all this is fairly extended, and I don't think it seems [ph] very important, but it all is condensed within a few years.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, um, the, um—then this, now, was getting—we—I got married in '39.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I was 19. And—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Where did you meet your wife?

PAUL REED: In Washington.

JUDITH ZILCZER: In Washington.

PAUL REED: Yeah, mm-hmm [affirmative].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was she also interested in art.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. She was my first wife and my last wife. [They laugh.] Um, the—then the war was imminent, at this point.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] was getting into the 1940s. And, uh, I went with the air force as a civilian—

JUDITH ZILCZER: You enlisted, or—

PAUL REED: No, no, as a civilian.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —no, no, as a civilian.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Mm-hmm [affirmative]. The air force magazine. It was called the air corps then, [inaudible] they changed the name. And they moved the whole office to New York. So it was on 101 Park Avenue. And, um

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's where you lived, or—or that—or that's where they had their office? That's—

PAUL REED: Yeah, 101 Park Avenue. Yeah, we—we were out on [ph] Long Island, and—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, where—where—where did you—

PAUL REED: Elmhurst [Queens, New York City.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, yes.

PAUL REED: And, uh—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, it stopped again. [00:08:00]

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's because we didn't want to make any noise.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay, or [ph]—okay. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: And then I—I did illustrations and page design for the magazine. And I was there two years, and, uh, let's see. We were [inaudible], so this would be—hmm, '42, I guess. And the—what had happened was, the— [inaudible] out of the [ph] war, they were—there were a lot of artists going into the Army, and they were preferring uniformed people, rather than [ph] civilians, for military jobs. And so I took a job at an advertising agency, um, in—in—up in Montclair, New Jersey—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: —uh, [inaudible] Adams. And I was there four years. And then I went over to, um, to Monroe [F.] Dreyer [Inc.] Advertising in New York City. And that was, uh—I left there in 1950.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —came here and established a freelance design business.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] Bill [inaudible].

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: How did you meet him? How did you know him?

PAUL REED: Oh, Bill I met on the newspaper. Uh, and like I said, I first met him in Atlanta. He had worked on the *Times-Herald*. He was—he—actually, he was a graduate of the Corcoran.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see. So he was a bit older than you?

PAUL REED: Yes. Bill was about five years older.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, I don't know. Somehow we just struck up a friendship. And, uh, I met him, uh, for the really—actually met him for the first time in Atlanta. [00:10:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And I then was leaving for California, and he—I don't know whether he—no, I don't think he took my job in Atlanta, but some other people had come down, and that was a—um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So you kept in touch?

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's right. Bill went into the merchant service, became a radio man in the merchant service during the war, and, uh, would visit us in New York, you know, [inaudible] ship in and out of New York.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, um, oh, he was talking up this idea of doing a—doing a freelance thing here. Now it's beginning to look [ph]—the Korea [*sic*] War is coming, so Washington is gearing up again. And, uh, so we were partners for 10 years. And we were doing trade associations, *National Geographic*, unions, just a miscellaneous magazine design and illustration, photography. Uh, and we dissolved the partnership in August 1960—'60, '61. And I was on my own for a year, and then I was invited to come on staff at the Peace Corps as a, uh, graphic designer. And—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] there for—until '70 or '71. And—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —the printed material. I was what they called a graphics director.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you remember who invited you to—

PAUL REED: Um, uh, actually my boss there was Bill Moyers, originally. And Bill went over to the White House when Kennedy was shot. And there was a man named Lloyd Wright, was the immediate thing. And this is, um, through the '60s, the early Peace Corps years. [00:12:00]

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you have any, uh, particular, I don't know—I associate the—the early '60s with a kind of idealism.

PAUL REED: That's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You know, with the founding of the Peace Corps.

PAUL REED: Well, the '60s are a very curious time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: You know, a lot of things happened in the '60s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Too many things, almost. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Well, for some folks, yeah. See, it was a Kennedy—when did Kennedy come in, '62?

JUDITH ZILCZER: '60—

PAUL REED: '60 or—

JUDITH ZILCZER: He was elected in '60.

PAUL REED: '62? Okay.

JUDITH ZILCZER: '60.

PAUL REED: Well, I went in very shortly after that. I was a Kennedy appointee, actually.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, right.

PAUL REED: And, um, the—probably from a—a fine arts point of view, the most important thing was that I met Gene Davis. Gene and I had grown up in the same neighborhood of Northeast, and had gone to school. He went to McKinley, too. He was a year younger. He—than I am.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So did you know him in high school?

PAUL REED: Yeah, I knew him. We—we were—well, we were neighbors, you know. We were boys in the neighborhood. And, uh, I ran into Gene in the street when I was freelancing, uh, in the—in the '50s, and I actually did a lot of work for him. He was working for the "three As" then.

JUDITH ZILCZER: The American Automobile Association?

PAUL REED: That's right, that's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] Yeah.

PAUL REED: He was a publicist for the AAA, and we did a little magazine and things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: So in his interest, you know, and, um, contacts, and—we'd go, like—we'd have lunch frequently. Eventually, when I went on my own, I—I had an office right across the street from the AAA, so we would—I don't know, three or four times a week, we'd have lunch, and we'd go to the museums. And we'd eat up around the Phillips, for instance, and then we'd go visit the Phillips, and talk to Jim McLaughlin, and the other guys there. And, uh, the national—whatever was going on, the show. [00:14:03] We went to the Oreiga Gallery.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I was just going to ask you, what was the gallery scene like back then?

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, Oreiga was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Could you spell that for me?

PAUL REED: O-R-E-I-G-A. And that, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Where was that in DC?

PAUL REED: It was up around R Street, up around Dupont Circle there. It was very short-lived. And it was a—I think it was—I don't know whether it was a co-op gallery, but it was, uh, very thinly funded. And I think the fire marshal [inaudible] closed it down. I don't know. But anyway, we saw Howard's show, Howard Mehring. The first—I guess it was his first show, and it was the, uh, very loose expressionistic things. We saw Morris's show at, uh—was it Columbia? The Columbia School for—[inaudible] the name of that school. Not—it was not the New York Columbia, but Columbia—there was a Columbia—I think it was a teachers college [District of Columbia Teachers College].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Something like that, yeah.

PAUL REED: I don't know if it still exists.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I don't think so.

PAUL REED: And, uh, so that was my introduction. I had been—I had been to the museums in New York and had—well, of course, I was in New York during the '50s, so I was aware of a lot that was going on, but not [inaudible]—I had to [ph] actually talk with Sweeney up at the old Guggenheim that was in a—in the brownstone. And, uh, I'd seen the Kandinskys, and the—and, uh, so that was my introduction, and it was really done [ph] fairly intense,

and I began to—well, in the early '50s, started to paint.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: There are a—there are a couple of other of them [ph], of course, the Masonite paintings that you may have seen in the paper [ph] [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Probably.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And, um, then in the middle—or at the, uh—acrylic colors, um—I think it was around '54, was the introduction of acrylic colors, and they were the [inaudible], the oil based. [00:16:09] That's what we started out with. And then the water based came out. That was '58, I think. This—this can be verified.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Certainly, but—

PAUL REED: It's my memories. And, uh, we saw Ken's—the first show of targets at the old Jefferson Place. And, uh, I met Downing there at the Jefferson Place at his first show. And, uh, that must have been '58. But the—back in the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: We'd spend time [ph]. We, uh, we struck up a lively conversation, and, uh, um—so we—you know, like, it wasn't just to shake hands, but we had—you know, we had started to become friends at that point.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So there was regular contact among all of these—

PAUL REED: Yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —artists in Washington—

PAUL REED: That's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —in the late '50s.

PAUL REED: Well, except for [inaudible]. Ken, uh—I don't know when Ken left, but he left before '60, I think. He moved to New York. And, of course, Morris was dead in '62. By the time I had a contact to meet Morris, he was too ill to talk to anybody. And I never met—I did meet Ken in his studio in the—in the Chelsea Hotel in '63. And, uh, at the same time, David Smith was visiting him, and so we spent about an hour there. It was very exciting to me, because I—at that point, David Smith, you know, nobody [inaudible] more important to walk through that door. [They laugh.] He was very friendly, and very jolly, and very charming. Um, so—and then it was frequent trips back to New York, once I became aware, for—to the museums, and then to the private galleries, then. [00:18:05] And—yeah, I will so ramble on.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Please do. This is wonderful.

PAUL REED: [Laughs.] Well, the thing is, I may miss important things that you might want to point out, so don't—interrupt me and—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Alright. Well, I don't want to interrupt your train of thought, so—

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, I'll—the, uh—my first show—now, this is a show from that bio list. I'm pretty sure [ph]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. I have—I have some—some of that with me, because you've very generously donated all the papers and—well, I have this—is this the catalog you're referring to? This is the Adams-Morgan Gallery.

PAUL REED: That's right. That's a little folder, actually. And this is the first show, at Adams-Morgan Gallery—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], that was your—your—your first show.

PAUL REED: —in '63. It's, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Tell me a little about the gallery.

PAUL REED: Uh, February of '63. Howard wrote this, um, little introduction.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: It was a gallery that Howard had formed up in the Adams-Morgan area—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Howard Mehring.

PAUL REED: Howard Mehring. And, uh, he had shown there. And, uh, I forget the director's name, unless he has a—if his name shows up here.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, there's no—there's no—there's no mention.

PAUL REED: He went out—he went—Howard—the history of the gallery was, he had this little—it was like a storefront. And, um, he did some shows, Sam Gilliam's show. He did a—had an oil painting figurative show that followed mine. [They laugh.] Sam was—uh, that was my—when I first met Sam. And, uh, he had met Howard. He was—got all exciting about color painting and staining at that point, and I think that's when he made the switch, although I didn't—I wasn't close to Sam, so I don't—don't know, really, what happened. But he did show at the gallery. [00:20:00] And the gallery then—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was there a backer for the gallery? Was there a financial backer for the gallery that you're aware of?

PAUL REED: Oh, there were two guys that were partners. And, uh, the—the one man that I had the most contact with, I think went in—became a furniture salesman or something. I think he—it might have been very fine furniture. I don't know. But, like, uh, it—what he did, he—he—they had this gallery, and for some reason, he moved to another gallery further up, up Columbia Road. It was a larger space. And they [ph] had inherited a—another show there. Actually, he showed his upside Ts there. It would be [ph] '64. And then that gallery closed. Now, I introduced Howard to, uh, Melzac.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, Vincent Melzac?

PAUL REED: And [inaudible], uh—and I introduced Tom to Melzac, and Davis introduced me to Melzac.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [Laughs.] So that was the—the chain. And, uh—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: And so Melzac began collecting your work—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —and all—all—all the group.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Actually, he collected Gene first, and then me, and then—actually, he came to my studio, and he picked out some things, and asked me who else was doing interesting work. And I said, "Well, there's Downing and Mehring." And he, uh, called them up from [ph] my studio, and one of them was available right like that [ph]. Now, he bought—check me on this one to confirm, but he bought everything Howard had to move. He was in the [inaudible], which is a—[laughs] [inaudible] Columbia Road. I think it's still there. And the [inaudible], the main—he—it was a nice spacious apartment. It had a lot of good light. He had a storage room, and a studio, and a bedroom, and a living room, kitchen. [00:22:00] It was [ph] really one of those old-timey, high ceiling, very nice space for an artist. But he had—he had to move. And so he sold Melzac everything in this room full of old paintings.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my gosh.

PAUL REED: And later there was a—some lawyer activity, and he got back half [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay.

PAUL REED: Melzer just wrote him a check for everything.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, that's the way—he was really [ph] like Hirshan [ph] in that sense. He was what I call a plunger. I mean, if he—if he liked it, he would just take it. You know, he—like fish in a barrel.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And that's unusual.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Particularly in Washington.

PAUL REED: And at some points [ph]—yeah. Yeah. I understand it happened to [inaudible]. They locked him in a room sometime. Now, I only heard this from Andrew Hudson, so I—and I'm sure Andrew was told, but I don't know the source.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Like he was—they paid him for a number of paintings which he didn't have, so they locked him up until he made them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Well, he was a—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, he was a quick worker.

PAUL REED: Yeah, so [ph] he was up to it. He had plenty of—and, um, um—I'm—see, I'm off track a little bit there, but—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, that's alright. Take your time.

PAUL REED: —it fills in, sort of, the history.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, um, um—well, I—I actually acquired a—a couple of Howard's paintings. I have since sold them, but—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. Was that common? Did—did a lot of members of the group buy each other's work at that time, or exchange—or—

PAUL REED: Not—not really.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —give—give [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: The, uh—I was thinking, they—you know, they had had this—I don't know. Maybe you want [inaudible] what happened to American—what happened to Washington Color Painting at American University?

JUDITH ZILCZER: I missed that.

PAUL REED: You didn't go. I don't know what—I know who the panelists were, but I don't know what their premise was. It—it's like what happens to any so-called school.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Because as schools go, if you think of Cubism or Impressionism, uh, then you think of how the influences filtered out through history. [00:24:09] And when you were going to do that, you need to [ph] look back almost a hundred years now for Cubism—uh, Impressionism. So you know who the giants were. The work exists. You see it over and over again. And all of the critique and analysis has come down. And, um, um, the—uh, the influence—like, I've [inaudible] out in Phoenix, Arizona, and have shown there. And this would have been in the '70s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh—and in my case, for [ph] the history, when I left the Peace Corps, I worked [ph] to teach at the Corcoran for the next 10 years, which was the '70s. Um, so, uh, it's not so much what happened to individuals—we know that, too—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —but what happened to the influence as it disseminated. How significant was the influence? And it was. There were—there were people out there that don't understand [ph] colors, really, and it had to come from, I guess, Morris and Ken, at least, you know, because they—those works have been seen around. Let's see. Now we—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —You'll lead me. I'll—I'll—I'll go on in [they laugh] whatever direction you want.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I'd be—I'd be happy to. Well, I want to—I want to jump back for a—for a minute to the—to the time when you were working for advertising—advertising agencies, and, uh, had your own firm.

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And I just wondered if you could comment on—on how you feel that commercial experience did or did not affect your career as a—as a painter?

PAUL REED: Well, it was—[inaudible] effect that there were, from a compositional point of view, other [ph] things. [00:26:00] Uh, they would tend toward a graphic sense, a geometric or placement sense, a compositional sense. The color—I did do—uh, in—in New York, we—they were fashion [inaudible] mainly.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And so, uh, it was color photography, and we would—we would buy those [inaudible] Avon Cosmetic. It was the top, and we were buying the *Time*, and *Newsweek*, and *Fortune*, and the top magazine schedule [ph] every month. And, um, so these were—it was all about color and color production, color separation, and so it was about how things were made up, and also photography. I didn't actually—we had the—the best photographers in the world do the photography, and I was a—like, an assistant to the art director, and I would, you know, check out the composition, and drape some of the stuff, and then other things [ph], whatever needed to be done. There were just two of us. And the agency had some—quite good accounts, so we'd have a lot to do. And that was a very demanding job, because I lived in New Jersey, and you ride three trains to get to Rockefeller Center, where the—where the agency is. And then there were nights [ph], and—that was—that's mainly why I left. The pressure was so great. I mean, you were at the top of the heap, but, uh, physically, it just was so demanding. And, uh, uh—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[inaudible], and that kind of intense work, it just—I saw people breaking up over it, and that wasn't going to happen to me.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah. You know, riding the subways was—[inaudible] very difficult, physically [ph]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And there's not that many, either.

PAUL REED: Well, yeah. I—I'd had enough. [inaudible], my boss there, was a great friend. [00:28:00] He died at 50. The man who owned the agency died at 55 or something. It was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So it was a very stressful kind of—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —career.

PAUL REED: Yeah. I'm sure it's not that way for everybody in New York, but the agency business, so much is at stake.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. It's very competitive, I would imagine.

PAUL REED: Yep, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And it didn't leave you any time to—to pursue your art?

PAUL REED: I actually set up a studio at home.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You did?

PAUL REED: Yeah. But it was, um, uh, more commercial.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It was just mainly, sort of, information and looking at things, and, uh, that wasn't—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] certain—you wear different hats, and—as I do now, when I look at work, or when I work, or when I go to a museum. I did go to the Hirshhorn show on Sunday.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you?

PAUL REED: And I did 20 minutes of tape. And I got three new—[inaudible] stores, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: I—I got that by looking at that seated figure there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Great.

PAUL REED: And—and by looking at the tape. And I got the stores—I had the—I had the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So you actually—

PAUL REED: —I think that's a piece of coal [ph]. [They laugh.] But, like, I had the object, and I hadn't decided what to do with it. When I saw that [inaudible], I knew that—that—that's it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's it.

PAUL REED: But that's a practical job [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah?

PAUL REED: Like [*This is a Portrait of*] *Iris Clert*, like Rauschenberg. This is a portrait of rock [ph]. And, uh, I got the title from the [ph] Italian mural, [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: De la [inaudible], yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And, uh, I got the—the, uh, *Sextant* [ph]. What is it—is that c [ph], *The Sextant* [ph]?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, that I don't—I—I—it doesn't ring a bell with me.

PAUL REED: It's the little—it's a—it's a—it's a nail head that's against a marble L shape. It's called *The Sextant* [ph], and I think it's Rossi [ph]. So it was very fruitful.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Good.

PAUL REED: And I looked—I looked at the tape three times, and it just struck—I mainly was doing romance, because I did [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's very interesting that you use video—videotape—

PAUL REED: I'll show you a clip of that if you want. [00:30:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: —as the source.

PAUL REED: Oh, yeah. Well, the museum [inaudible]. See, it's the next best thing to visiting, and it's your view of the work, your selection of which work to, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: —to look at, and how you look at it. Now, it might interest—other people might be interested, or not. It doesn't matter, because I've already gotten my goal [ph] from it. And, uh, yep, it's great. And it's—it's an idea I've had, but I never—I've sent other people to do it, but, like, they—they look at different things, you see.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Of course.

PAUL REED: And, uh—like, for instance, [inaudible] take the camera, and, uh, just walk through the museum and take pictures of what you like, and take the tape home. And, uh, it—and it works.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Which—which room—it brings to mind whether you used such—you used such techniques in your teaching, when you were teaching at the Corcoran? Let's go [ph] back—back for a minute.

PAUL REED: Well, the, uh, the Corcoran experience was really something special. I'm sure some of students

liked me, and some of the students hated me, but I liked it on the whole. I ended up being friends with everybody at the end—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: —because, you know, you go through—it was a first year [inaudible] a degree program, and I set up the curriculum for the first year, and I had—

JUDITH ZILCZER: For painting, or for the whole program?

PAUL REED: Uh, just the studio program.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: They took the art history and the—any specialized thing, like printmaking or photography, or—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —we did drawing. We did clay figure. I—it's in the—archives has the—I don't know if they have a curriculum, but they have some of the lessons.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The last lesson, it was so exciting. I did a Pop art—now, I'm not a Pop artist in that sense, or wasn't at that point, but—[00:32:00] After the whole—it was right at the end of the year, and there was only one thing on the—two things on the board. You just have to have something from popular culture, and something from classical art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Okay? That's all the requirement. Don't extend yourself in a technical or a material way. Deal with materials that you know, that you've learned and you know, so that won't get in your way, and just express yourself within this sort of frame [inaudible]. It was just amazing. I've got the slides of them. You know, uh, history—the, uh—what you had was Dada, right? It—it's a kind of Pop art, or anti-art, or an anti-classical art. You had Surrealism, and—you had Dada, and then you had Surrealism, came out of Dada.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: Okay? They were doing surrealist objects, but in a Pop art concept [ph]. I had no way of predicting what they were—didn't want to predict what they were going to do.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's wonderful.

PAUL REED: Here come the surrealist—it's just amazing. And, uh, just—it was so exciting. People would come, and—I had the big hemisphere [ph]. I had two rooms. I had the next big room to it, which now they've made into gallery space, which I—I don't think it's a good idea, but we had those walls. Every student had a panel 4 feet wide and 10 feet high, and we'd start working, and we'd pin the work up. They had their picture, and their name, and their work. So if you were grading, or if you wanted to talk to them about the work, there it was.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you do, uh, critiques regularly?

PAUL REED: Yeah. Yeah, we did critique, and the students would see each other. [inaudible] really had a—a wonderful grip on it. And, uh, the work they did was just exciting. I mean, it just [inaudible]. And, uh, you couldn't compliment them too much so their head would get big, but it was great. I mean, it was really—and people would come and stick their nose in the [ph] door. They'd just say, my gosh. You know, other—other teachers. [00:34:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. Who else was there on the faculty at that time?

PAUL REED: Oh, let's see. [inaudible] was still there [inaudible]. Tom Green, Stackhouse, Bob Newman [ph], [Bill] Dutterer. Uh, they're gone, but, uh, hmm.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: I think Tom Green is still there, but the other names—

PAUL REED: Yeah. I know Bob left, Bob Stackhouse, and Bob Newman [ph] went [inaudible]. Oh, Ed McGowin was there. He didn't—I didn't—Ed was—Ed wasn't there much—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Who was—who was the—who was the dean when you first joined?

PAUL REED: Uh, Roy—Roy Slade.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Roy Slade.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Roy had just come in. He had come over on a visiting professorship or something—

JUDITH ZILCZER: The Fulbright, I believe.

PAUL REED: Fulbright, was it?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah. Actually, I studied painting with him. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Oh, did you?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Yeah, well, the, uh—Roy was good, and he was—then he was the dean. And then he became the director, and that changed his focus, but, yeah, Roy had a lot of drive. And he did a couple of lessons in the—in the early years that I was there, he would come in and do a day's lesson, and move the people through [inaudible] strenuous group activity.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So it was, sort of, like, team teaching, or—

PAUL REED: Yeah, it was team teaching.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah. And the way it worked out, it didn't—Bill—Bill Christenberry was chairman of—not—what they had a coordinator. Chairman—[inaudible] Slade was the chairman, and I was coordinator, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: That was Roy's wife?

PAUL REED: Roy's wife, yeah. She might still be alive. I don't know. But, um, there was [ph] the team teaching. When I went, Bill Christenberry was there, and I was, sort of—I started out with the fourth-year students, not first-year. They—and then I wanted the first year, and Bill wanted to get out of first year, so we [laughs] [inaudible]. [00:36:03] And Bill was there that year, and then he was gone.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, uh, I guess that was the ball—they gave me the ball at that point, which—and I had never taught. I wasn't trained as a teacher, and I had never taught before. And, uh—oh, I had taught—I had—when I left the Peace Corps, the—the Corcoran—I had to—there was a delay when I—I had to go into the new semester. So I taught down at the Art League in Alexandria [Virginia].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, yes. That had only recently been founded, isn't that correct? It was a fairly new organization at that point, or not?

PAUL REED: They were pretty well organized.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Were they? Yeah?

PAUL REED: This was, like, '71, I think. I was there maybe two or three years. Roy didn't like me teaching anywhere else when I was [inaudible] the Corcoran, but I didn't feel I could—the only reason I left there, the—At one point at the Art League, I had 30, 40 students. I was doing two or three classes, night classes. And they were all ages, but mostly middle-aged people. Some people with art degrees. And I was teaching just form painting. And then the—they, sort of, tapered off. And when the classes weren't large enough, I just cut that off and went [inaudible] everything at the Corcoran. But Bill—then—then I started to develop a curriculum, because there was no organization. It was very curious. You would just go in and do something. And so I set out a plan. And that—down at Corcoran [ph], I think there might be a copy of it in the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: In the papers that you—

PAUL REED: —[inaudible]. Anyway, I can get you want if you want, if you're interested.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I think that would be of interest for the archives.

PAUL REED: Okay. I'll see—I'll dig it out. Um, and that—[inaudible] organize it, I—because some students kept saying to me, "Who is in charge of running this place? What are we supposed to do next?" That was embarrassing, you know? [00:38:00] And, uh, I wasn't very good at just walking and looking around, and saying, here's what we're going to do. I wanted to have a—some kind of a developmental thing. So what I did, I vaguely—we worked in black and white first, and next we [ph] went into color the second semester. And I—

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Hello.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's running again.

PAUL REED: So, uh, [inaudible] the most logical thing I could develop, ending up, like, with that top spot thing [ph], starting out with charcoal and newspaper pads, and drawing objects.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And progressing [inaudible] starting with the paint, and—and grays. Doing, like, a chrome object. And at the end of first semester, getting to the canvas and the paint. And then over into the [inaudible] second semester.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And it worked pretty good. I think they learned quite a bit.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you teach all of those courses, or did you assign—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah? [They laugh.] That's—that's amazing. So you were teaching what—what might be called the core curriculum? [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Well, I had—let's see. Actually Tom Green was there for a long—[inaudible] 20 years [ph]. I had Bill Dutterer for a year. I had Bob Newman for a year or two. Stackhouse was there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, you know, you—they all [inaudible] degree or art teachers. They had been teaching.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah. So I learned from them, you know. You know, they—then—but they went—then went on. Bob took over second year, and—Bob Stackhouse. And they did various things. But, uh, that—I found that by having a plan, and more or less—oh, let's see. Rosemary [Wright] was there. Um, I had—I did really well [ph]. It was really—really, it was very good. [00:40:001] And, uh, the last year, I had, um, Bill did the—the, uh, ceramicist—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —I'll—we'll have to get that all together.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Alright.

PAUL REED: But at any rate, we had—at that last year was—now, what—what eventually, it did, you asked if I taught everything. Then Bill did a clay figure thing, and then a—no. Bill did a fantasy figure clay figure thing, and he showed them how to model to—for the—for the oven. Now, he just used Plasticine, which means you couldn't fire it, but he did—the kids did these great creatures [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: He was doing that sort of thing himself at the time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: And, uh, he had a—he was a—he was a Russian. He has a Russian name. That's why I can't—it was a name like Zilzcer, [they laugh] or something like that. I don't remember.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: And, uh, there were—and there's the—[inaudible] the woman who was—I don't know. Maybe she's still there. I'll have to get that [inaudible]. Um, and she did a mask thing, which was—turned out very well. And so what we—what we had, we were [inaudible] on the basic things, and then we would plug in specialized—their specialty. And—and [inaudible] looked at finished results, and the use of the—you know, the materials.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh, [inaudible] was in there. And [inaudible], then, when we would do figure work, would be very good at the figure work. And, uh, uh, we'd bring the model in, oh, several times over the year. And they did very well.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you have any particularly outstanding students that you remember? [00:42:00]

PAUL REED: Jody Mussoff.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, yes. Jody's a good friend.

PAUL REED: Jody, yeah. Jody was, uh, [inaudible]. Jody actually came here after I had left, and after she was out of school.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And I'd had a thing with these [ph] students that wanted to come. We did a roundtable thing, which started drawing—well, I guess, it wasn't like the [inaudible], but it was, we would just pass the drawings and everybody would [ph] work on the drawings—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: —until we were exhausted. And I still have Jody's, and I—I want to give them back to her, but I haven't seen her in a long time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, you know, she's—she works part time in the Hirshhorn Library.

PAUL REED: Oh, does she? Now?

JUDITH ZILCZER: You should—yes.

PAUL REED: She does?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Well, Jody, you know, she was one of the—I guess, now, I haven't kept track, but, um, I mean, I know she's shown in New York, I don't know how many times, and that she's had a—a drawing in the Hirshhorn. I saw one of her paintings. And she shows here—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —probably once a year, at least. So she, um—some of them were from out of town.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And so they would go back home. I wouldn't be—

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible]

PAUL REED: Some of them went to New York. Jim Mullen, and, uh, there were a group of them in the early days that went before them. I guess they're married. It was a—two—two men and two women.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, they met in school, and they, uh, they married, and they—they married along the line somewhere, and moved to Hoboken or somewhere. And Jim did have a show in New York. I haven't heard from him for a while, but—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, they—and there would be ones, I'm sure, that have accomplished things, and I would have lost their name over time. And I wouldn't have had—I was just one of their teachers.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: I had them the first year. And even then, they had four or five other people to—and the other skills they were developing, in the other areas, so you can't take much credit, except that it's really exciting to see them do good work. [00:44:05] And that's—that's, sort of—it's like you plug in a complex [inaudible] lessons get more difficult and more complex. It draws on more of their resources. And then to see them succeed and do good work—you know, to have strangers come in and be impressed by work that's from a first-year student, that's the—that's the reward.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Hmm.

PAUL REED: [Inaudible] It's really, really [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Good. Well, let's—let's turn back a minute to—to your own, uh, work and your own contact [ph].

PAUL REED: Well, the, uh—as I say, in the early '50s, I started on Masonite and then moved, probably by '57 or '58, to the acrylic on canvas. And, um, the first show here was in '63. I did New York in '63.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. Was there a difference between your work of the late '50s from New York and what you were doing in—in the early '60s? I mean, your first—your first show was already, um, what might—

PAUL REED: This one I have upstairs.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —might be called your—your early mature style. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Well, uh, the, uh—let me think.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: When did you begin staining?

PAUL REED: Uh, probably around '58, '57, '58. When the—when the materials became available. My friend Gene [ph] gave me a little packet of Magna [acrylic paint], a little sample of Magna, and then I bought some Magna. I think Magna was first developed about '54—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —if I'm not mistaken, and Bocour made the Magna [inaudible] Louis and Mullen [ph]. He made it for everybody, but he did it especially for them with no beeswax. And he did it in cans instead of tubes. [00:46:02] And the acrylic, if you didn't turn the can frequently, would turn to a rock.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my gosh.

PAUL REED: And you would—you would have just the—it would separate out from the pigment. So—but that's how they got that intense color that, uh—was that the beeswax had, kind of, the gray hue a bit.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: But it does keep it in suspension. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Tricks of the trade.

PAUL REED: That's my understanding. I could even be wrong, but I—but I read that somewhere, that—

JUDITH ZILCZER: It sounds plausible.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And, uh, the—what you have is—the water-based is a lot less toxic, in a sense. It's, um—there is some—there are some chlorides in it, but we can work with it in close quarters a lot better than—because you have the turpentine and the evaporatives in the other, and especially if you're pouring—see, if you've got water evaporating, it's going to put a little bit of chlorine in the air, but it isn't going to be like turpentine evaporating. And, um, also, most of the people—I don't think Morris worked with the water-based, but Ken shifted over to water-based, I think, sometime in the early '60s. And, uh, others [ph] used—used both. Like Barnett Newman used Magna. The Magna [inaudible] black. That's why the Magna black there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: But Magna black, that isn't—

[END OF TRACK AAA_reed94_6294.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: This is track number two. You were explaining about Magna.

PAUL REED: Yes. The, um, I don't know. The—I—I worked—I have a few paintings in Magna, and then I went over to the water-based, and then most of the work is in water-based. Uh, because the large paintings, you might use up as much as a half a gallon of paint.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And these—I have a 14-inch roller, [inaudible] roller, which will hold probably a quart of paint [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Were you the only one of the group to use rollers? I mean, some of them were pour—some of the artists were pouring directly, as I understand it.

PAUL REED: Uh, in the early Mehrings, they sprinkled. Most of the Mehrings were sprinkled, up to the point where he did the geometrics.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, um, Downing used a brush, because he was doing discs, and you have to control the edge. Davis used a brush, because he was doing the narrow stripes. Ken probably flung the paint around [ph]. And the early—what they called the jam session paintings, that a few of them exist, that Louis and Noland supposedly did together, okay? That was very much Pollock or—or Frankenthaler-like—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] splashing [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Um, the—Gene did [ph] use the roller on the Philadelphia thing. You'd [ph] almost have to, to do the *Franklin's Footpath* or something like that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, right.

PAUL REED: And later, I would imagine, depending. Tom did some chevrons. He should have used the roller. I don't see why not, you know? I don't think Newman used rollers [inaudible]. The—to—my object was to lay down a very even, smooth surface, forming [ph] the flat areas, the so-called fields. [00:02:00] And to do that, you have to saturate very evenly. You have to—you can't have any edges dry on you. You've got to keep it all wet at once and have it dry all at once.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And that's—you lose a lot, because in doing a disc, you have to be careful that you're going to stay on the edge of that disc, and you've got to go around and meet that other edge in a big painting. Well, some colors, like green, dry more quickly than others, for some reason. The edges set up. So it's hard to get a green painting. [They laugh.] And I finally did, you know. And then when you do that, it's like this painting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: This painting I—I started in the corner. This is a '62 painting. And it's—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Just for—

PAUL REED: —I had it upstairs.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —just for the benefit of people listening to the tape, you're pointing to the background of the photograph of yourself on the cover of the Adams-Morgan Gallery brochure.

PAUL REED: That is a yellow, orange—it's done with three colors. It's an orange, a yellow-orange, and a yellow.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And I started in one corner. This is, sort of, a Matisse or an arc-like [ph] shape, something that I could—4 by 4 inches area. And I just started the one corner [inaudible] 3 by 4 foot painting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And I just came right across and—to the other corner. And when I looked at it, it was pretty good. And I stopped. [They laugh.] That was—I never did any more [ph] of those, because, like, how are you going to go beyond that?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And I guess, uh—I don't know what the point I'm making—but—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Had you outlined the shapes beforehand?

PAUL REED: No. I did it all—yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No. You did it all freehand.

PAUL REED: Yeah. In some paintings I did outline them. In many, I didn't. When you do so many, it's just easier to do the shape, you know, [inaudible].

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —I still use that—I—in the gouache paintings, I use that same principle.

JUDITH ZILCZER: The gouache paintings that you're doing now. [00:04:00]

PAUL REED: Yep. Or that I did up until early this year.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh—

PAUL REED: I'm doing sculpture now.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —yeah. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: But, um, it's the idea of, if you take a color, and you take a canvas, and you just place certain colors around the canvas, and then you place other colors in relation to that, and so on until the painting is finished—and, uh, you know, it may be a Matissian method. I don't know. It's not—not an original [inaudible] method. It just works for certain ways. And [inaudible] it—it's a coloristic balancing [inaudible] compositional balancing, which it does at the same time—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —coincidentally. But just a method of—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you pre—go ahead.

PAUL REED: Well, the structure of the surface, really.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you predetermine the colors you were going to use beforehand? Or did you improvise as you were painting?

PAUL REED: Uh, in—in—in the painting—now, in, uh, geometric painting, you have to have the plan. You can't change the plan. Now, you can modify, but you'd better—the geometry you'd better not try to change, because it's not going to work. So you—as you know, I work from studies, so [inaudible]. And then a general direction of the color. Now, uh, between the study and the—and the thing, the studies may be done with collage or paper, and so, uh, there will be a variation between that and the paint on the canvas.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Of course.

PAUL REED: But you might want to [inaudible] it that way, make it more red or less, or so on.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And yes, that's a—can be a judgmental thing along the line. Or you might say, I'm going to do—I

feel like doing a blue painting. Yeah? And you mix up a number of blues, and stay within at least that. Now, you might vary the blues, make them more red, or—but—[00:06:02] Now in the case of the gouaches, I start out with, sort of, a—a basic color, a structure of color, you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] decide, like, it's going to be violet, or red, or—you have a choice.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: That would work up and down the scale. I do a warm painting, I do a cool painting. And then, each area, which is—it's done like a [inaudible]. It's done on a big piece of Plexi. And the areas are scraped away of that basic color. That leaves white areas when it's printed onto the paper.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, I see.

PAUL REED: Then the choice is—then it becomes—and that evolved, as you could probably tell from the tape, the—I was doing mirror images, which—which is, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: You do that in the photography?

PAUL REED: The photographs. And it was a—[inaudible] a symmetrical geometric image. And then I was doing a—a mirror or reflected image. Same thing. Then I was doing—now, the mirror would just be a mirror, in the beginning. Then I was doing complementary color with the mirror. You know, another type of reflection, a negative-positive reflection. And, um, that's where it, sort of, ended.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And I had the larger ones of those. When I accomplished those, they—it—it meant, then, that if I did another painting, I wouldn't take it, and I wouldn't make great leaps and bounds. It would just be, kind of, enhancing that idea. And when I looked at the large ones, realized if I decided to make that painting, that would be a week of, uh, staying within the perimeters of that idea.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And it would be a nice painting when it was finished, but there wouldn't be much imagination along the way.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. [00:08:00]

PAUL REED: Now, the reason—another reason that I slowed down on that was, um, it was fairly complex, but I started to do these videotapes, because I figured it was time to sum up, and look back, and have some kind of a document. And, uh, so that just took—I got the equipment, learned how to use it, and then did the tapes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: I did nine tapes so far. And none of them are technically very good, but at least there's a record. And, uh, different—and in some cases, the reproduction on the—on the tape is very good, better than the original, because you can magnify. It's like photographing a sculpture on tape. You can walk around it, and you get more—much of the sense of the three dimensions, instead of a flat, just, photograph of one—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I understand, yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh, so it's much more useful, [inaudible] what it is. Now, this doesn't guarantee any significance or quality. It's just, there—it's true [ph], there it is.

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's the document.

PAUL REED: It's a—yeah. It's an acc—more accurate presentation.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, I noticed from—from looking at the videotapes and looking over, um, the material that you gave the archives, that you're—you appear to me to be a very methodical worker, and that you worked in—considerably in series.

PAUL REED: Yes, yeah. I mostly worked in series, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And do you want to talk a little bit about—about working in series, what it's meant, why series?

PAUL REED: Well, I mean, in most cases, there's a lot of precedent.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

PAUL REED: You know, there isn't anything too original about the concept of series. Um—it's a way of developing the idea, of refining the idea, of, um, bringing it down to some sort of a—[00:10:03] There's a—oh, there's a painting hanging in the hall over there that I'll show to you, and this'll be a good explanation of that. It's the last of a series, and the largest—well, it's, like, a 9 foot painting. And I called them Interchange, the Interchange series. And they're just bands, uh, kind of, uh, like a spreading [ph], just moving back and forth up the canvas. The last one is a smaller one, but it—the background moves up the canvas, as does the banding. And it's very simple. It's just an orange and blue painting, really.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So you work—my work tends to go toward complexity. I start out, and it may be simple. This reversed that, and it became very simple. The idea is very simple. But the effect—so it's—it's very clear, then. Then again, it doesn't guarantee anything, but there it is. Now, the, um—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —and that the—in the case of the series, usually doing the painting, the geometric paintings, I would, uh, find a form. I would draw until I found a form that I think would hold [inaudible] truly [inaudible] exercise for the color. Then I would do the paintings. And as the color got [ph] sophisticated, or—or changed, or evolved to where I was going to take it, I would then start new drawings of another geometry, another form.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So—

PAUL REED: And I'd bring the old color over into the new form, so I wasn't risking everything.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And then as that tapered off, that's how that moved along. And it shows very clearly if you look at—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [00:12:01]

PAUL REED: —the continuation of the paintings. It just—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So the ideas almost generated themselves—

PAUL REED: Yeah, they built on the previous.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Um, a little different than expressionistic painting, where it's all out there, like the early paintings. To paint like Pollock, oh, well, it just is a tremendously nervous thing [ph], because at any minute, you can lose everything. And, um, so [inaudible] very tense, concentrated situation. And it's thrilling.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And—and you—you were doing that in the beginning.

PAUL REED: Yeah, I was doing that. Yeah. And I—it's like, why are these—why do I make these stone sculptures? It's a new way of working. It deals with old ideas [ph]. I can give you dozens of reasons why I make them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: When did you start making those?

PAUL REED: Well, it's very curious. Recently, in, like, November.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], yeah, because I don't remember seeing them the last time I was here. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: No. These are all—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And—and do you carve the stone, or is it found object?

PAUL REED: No, it's found.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: What is the French word? Trouver?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Objet trouvé.

PAUL REED: Trouvé, yeah. Objet trouvé. They come out of the photographs. The idea there was, some of the paintings—if you work on a grid, you can make a painting any size. Once I realized that, I didn't have to make any of those paintings anymore, because once you have your units and can multiply them, and that, and have a system, scale is no problem. Like [ph], you can conceive any—any—look at a space and just fill it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It just—and that goes back to your earlier question about the design, the magazine design, with the [ph] idea of what you can do with space. And, um, like the [inaudible] I edited hundreds of thousands of photographs, so I—you know, it's a matter of choice. You have to—And, um, the—once I realized, with those—with the photographs, that I could combine mountains and mosquitoes—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [Laughs.] [00:14:07]

PAUL REED: —in one unit—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —uh, subject matter is unlimited. The same is true of the stone. I've got, uh—I can go back. I've got a couple of El Greco. I mean, where are you going to find a portrait of El Greco? And it's, like, the whole of art history is open, just in the photographs, all—all scale and all subject matter, totally open. In the paintings, scale is no problem. But, now, here again, it doesn't mean it's significant, but it's true that you can do that. And that's an almost freeing sort of thing. You know, if I find a rock that can—can represent anything—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It's, like, you know [inaudible] or something.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: You know? But they're wonderful. Objects can be [ph] very curious things. And then to feed that back into the museum, to go to the Hirshhorn and find that St. John's head—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: And I've already got the rock. You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: That's pretty exciting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, it is.

PAUL REED: And, uh, and it's amusing, in a way.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: It's not heavy. Now, these aren't pretty things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: But they're not, uh, depressing things. There's a [inaudible] to it, but they aren't beautiful in the sense of, uh, [inaudible] beauty.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Most people wouldn't have them, because they are ugly and dirty looking. But that, uh—the other part, it's like virtuosity or, uh, shining up something so they're just—it becomes a precious object. These certainly aren't precious in any sense.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: But that is a—a continuity through all the work, is that idea of moving into new materials and new ideas, or ideas you couldn't use in one form, but you can—[00:16:06] Now, for instance, titling. Titling becomes

very important to these. And the title—the rock is fixed. It's been fixed a long time. The title, I can change it. I'll [ph] find a better title, I'm going to put that on there. [They laugh.] Sometimes I don't have a title either [ph] way. It's like—like St. John. I was worried about that. I thought it might have been, um, Caravaggio or something. It may be. But I—I might come across something that looks more—that looks more like that, so I'll put that title on.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. Well, there's—Rodin did—did—many artists did a head of St. John the Baptist, but you're right, I think there is a Caravaggio painting on that—

PAUL REED: Well, it doesn't even have to be St. John. He did some—I guess it was [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: They were [inaudible] terrible. [inaudible]

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible] [Théodore] Géricault.

PAUL REED: Géricault. Right. That's what I—that's the name. I've got to look at my Géricaults.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Now, when I went to the Hirshhorn, the, um, [inaudible] were down, but I've got a conspirators, a [inaudible] conspirators [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see it over there, yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh, I just wanted to confirm it with the object, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I have a print that he did, which is called the—a bunch of lawyers or judges [inaudible] sitting in rows, and one of them looked like that. So that—that's what I like about it, is that it—and also, it's forced me—it—just when I made the tape, I went back through. I still have the magazines from the '50s [inaudible]. [Laughs.] So I went through everything to see what had, sort of, influenced me along the way, what I had read, a [inaudible] article on the Ashcan school.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my goodness. So that would have been in *Artforum*, I guess.

PAUL REED: *Artforum*, right. Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah, that's it. [00:18:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: There was an interesting idea about [inaudible] or something, you know? And, uh, you know, like, a definition of realism. And it's—it's a very sound idea. I mean, what is—what is real, you know? And—and then the other—I guess the other influence was the—just reading the—mainly the French philosophers.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Which ones?

PAUL REED: Well, Sartre, Camus, Robbe-Grillet.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you were reading—when—

PAUL REED: Still reading them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You're still reading them, but you started reading them in—

PAUL REED: The '50s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: The '50s. Yeah. Did you talk about them with any other artists?

PAUL REED: Uh, [inaudible] there was Gene [inaudible] [Eugène] Ionesco, and he was, uh—so Gene was, uh, reading a lot of advanced stuff, and—[inaudible]. And yeah, I don't think he got into that existential side, but he was reading Kant [ph] and novels and things. And he knew—he knew a lot. He could understand a lot, you know? As a writer, he had, you know, he [inaudible]. He didn't have to, but he certainly could.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And he wrote. He—he—he wrote a number of things. It was fairly—let's see. There was one I came across. I forget the subject, but it was very interesting. He had a comment [ph]. And then I lost it, and I went back because I had—because I had reread it—uh, misread it. And on second reading, I had a little different understanding. It wasn't quite as profound. [They laugh.] But, uh, so the, uh—Robbe-Grillet is—he did the little thing [ph], *For a New Novel*, which is, uh, I think, very significant. It's '60s [ph]. Now I'm reading—trying to read Derrida.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Good for you.

PAUL REED: And now, that's—that's '70s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I haven't.

PAUL REED: Well, I give it in one sentence. [00:20:00] We cannot know. That—that's his whole thing. We cannot—man is not—

JUDITH ZILCZER: You saved me a lot of reading. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Yeah. I mean, that's [inaudible]. It comes down to—well, the *New York Times* did a profile on—on Derrida.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I missed that.

PAUL REED: Well, I could lend it to you if you'd like to see it. [Laughs.] But he—uh, the—the person who was commenting on Derrida says the—it's that, instead of saying, you know, if we keep trying in science and all these areas, we're going to find it, he says you're not going to find it, you're not capable of finding it, humans don't have the equipment to find it. And his, um—it's, sort of, a—he comes out of Freud and Nietzsche. And, uh, it's, uh, it's a nihilism, I suppose, but it isn't quite the right—right word, because he's very optimistic. He just says, you don't—you can't know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you just accept that.

PAUL REED: Forget about it. Do the—do the best you can, but you're not going to make it to the end. It's not going to happen. And it's very curious. There's a thing in the current *New Yorker* on the man who did immunology, and he won the Nobel for immunology. I don't know his name. He's still—he's—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Not Salk. Not Jonas Salk.

PAUL REED: No, not Salk, no. [inaudible] immunology.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay.

PAUL REED: This has to do with the immune system—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —fighting off, um, mainly cancer, I guess. Uh, Salk was the vaccine for, um, polio. Salk, and then Sabin. There's no more Salk. There's Sabin.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: There's Sabin, who got it into a pill. Didn't have to—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And Salk had the [inaudible]. The Salk Institute is very significant in California. I had a friend—an acquaintance who build the house that blocks Salk's [ph] view of the Pacific. [They laugh.] But the Institute is—and Scripps [Research]. Salk and Scripps are near each other there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: And, uh, it's—it's, um, this rugged California coast just north of San Diego, and this spectacular architectural buildings, you know, with all of the money. [00:22:11] And, you know, hundreds, or maybe thousands of scientists are working [ph], which is a great [inaudible]—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: Do you see how I get off base?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [They laugh.] That's fine. That's fine.

PAUL REED: But, uh, yeah, the reading and the sculpting [ph] [inaudible]. I don't, uh [ph]—I just read—very curious. They did a new translation on *The Stranger*. I don't know how new it is. Maybe five years? And I—I lent my copy of *The Stranger*, and the person didn't return it, so I figured it was lost. So I go down to the [inaudible] here's a new Camus. I don't—I want the old translation. Gilbert Stuart [Stuart Gilbert] did the first one, which was good. This is much better.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Is it?

PAUL REED: It's a totally different story. You can go line—I looked, compared line to line, and this is so much better. And then Esteban [inaudible] an interpretation [inaudible] *The Stranger*. Okay, that's it. No, no, that's somebody's study of *The Stranger*. [They laugh.] But it was by Oxford, you know, so it was first rate. And so I—I'm reading the interpretation of *The Stranger*. And so, uh, the—Derrida is, sort of, post-existentialist.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: I mean, he's '70s. I don't know what's going on in the '80s and '90s. I don't know what's happening. But the—the article's premise was that deconstruction is dead, and the—the way they arrived at that was to—you know, it's not—not hot anymore in the colleges, okay? And they said, if it's dead—so, it's dead like Freudianism is dead. It just has infiltrated everything [they laugh] in academia.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And it will—and it'll come back to haunt us, probably, in another generation.

PAUL REED: He's still—you know, he still lectures, you know—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Of course.

PAUL REED: —once a month in—in New York [inaudible]. [00:24:01] But I—I guess what I'm saying is that in—in going—[inaudible] should make the tapes, but I'm learning how to do that. I did eight hours with Ed Zimmern [ph] of just, sort of, rambling, much like we're doing now, only Ed was bringing it his—his point of view, and stronger and stronger toward the end of that. [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: I noticed that.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Oh, did you—oh, you—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I—I listened to part of that interview [ph].

PAUL REED: Oh, that's earlier. I've done eight hours since then—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my goodness.

PAUL REED: —on tape, with the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: With the video.

PAUL REED: —with the tape [inaudible] work showing and commenting on the work as it goes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, I see. I see.

PAUL REED: And so—but he was very much, Hans Hofmann as an influence on the color, and it was, to some extent, but Albers much more.

JUDITH ZILCZER: For you, or—

PAUL REED: And Ken. Albers was at Black Mountain [College] when Ken was there, part of the time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: And that—those theories of color, the [inaudible]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you read Albers's theory? Did you read Albers's writings?

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, they only did—book, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: *The Interaction of Color?* Yeah.

PAUL REED: *The Interaction of Color*. I based my color lesson on that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: And, uh, so I know a lot about that. [They laugh.] But when you have 25 students working it out, and finding out where the [inaudible] are, yeah. Yeah. But, uh, Chevreul. I found Chevreul late. Actually, I didn't discover Chevreul until about '63. There was a show at the National Homebuilders Association [inaudible] the—of the, uh, [inaudible] silk screens [ph]. Eva Hesse was a student of ours and didn't work in [ph] silk screens. So she really reacted, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, I think so.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah, and in a very good way. She was remarkable.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes. [00:26:00]

PAUL REED: Albers—that when I first really—now, by dissemination, I may have, but my [inaudible] of the name of Albers, and these were the things that the students did. Chevreul came late. I found the book in, you know, like, in a discount book rack, and that—that has a lot of the basic theory of—of—and then the others, which Goethe did something, and Newton did something, and there were others. But it's really—

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's a very rich field, color theory.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. It, uh—Newton came out of [ph] color, which is what it's about. Um, and French—Venetian correlation [ph]. The, uh—ours was the best, sort of, functioning, working idea of how—what your personal choices would be when you select that second color.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —find a way to [inaudible] on the surface. They can see it, and that's it. Um—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Two questions for you. One, um, you were talking about reading, and I was wondering if there were any critics that you particularly—

PAUL REED: Greenberg. Greenberg. And in fact, about a few months ago, they finally published a full fourth volume—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, [John] O'Brien's edition of—

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —the writings.

PAUL REED: And I had the, uh—the paperback. The fourth volume is called, um, something *With a Vengeance; Modernism with a Vengeance*, I think. And the paperback—I forget. But you know, he could be very perceptive. I mean, and [inaudible]. I mean, he translated Kafka. I mean, you have to—but, uh, in other areas—and Pollock. [00:28:00] He was the first to champion Pollock.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: And David Smith. And then the things he did on even Monet or anywhere along the line. They're all partisan [inaudible] fans [ph]. I've had the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Were you following—you were following—

PAUL REED: Very early, yeah. Very early, I was up on that, yeah. Just as I was—well, I was in New York in the '50s, so I saw some of it. You know, like, before I became—thought it was possible that I could do such a thing.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Did you go to the Cedar Bar [Cedar Tavern]? [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Yep. I met Franz Kline in the Cedar Bar. Only once. I only went once. I went with Melzac. Kline was—he didn't live much longer.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: In fact, this was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: He died in '62, I believe.

PAUL REED: Yeah, this was probably—I don't want to guess at the date, but it wasn't long. But, um, Franz was—I don't know. He bought me a beer, or I bought him a beer, I don't know, but it was a very brief thing, you know. You know. But, uh, somebody came up to him. I think it was a woman. And I didn't hear the conversation, but he turned to me, and Vincent—I was there with Vincent Melzac—he said, "[inaudible] troubles? I don't have any troubles." I don't know what—but you can imagine, because he was starting to be successful.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: He had on, like, a Brooks Brothers tweed jacket, and, you know, he was—that was Franz. But, um, uh, let's see. My—then [inaudible]—the gallery I showed with was, uh, you know, 56th Street or 57th Street, somewhere up there, East Hampton Gallery. That was in '63.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: And then I met a few people. Ray Parker. I met with him, and had some beer with Ray Parker. He was teaching at [inaudible]. Uh, I went up to East Hampton two or three times, and, uh, met some people up there.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[Bertha] Schaefer. [00:30:00] That was my [inaudible], and [inaudible] had a place up at—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] used to rent a place that had a—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: But no, I didn't—um, I showed during the '60s. I did about, I don't know, five shows or so in New York in the '60s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh, early '70s. I did the [inaudible] show in '70, and I did the shapes [ph]. And, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: What did—what did you think about the critical reception of your work in Washington? [They laugh.] If I can ask a leading question.

PAUL REED: Actually, you know, curious enough, John—John [ph] [Donald] Judd did a review. And he said—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Don Judd? Yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah, had done a review. He did the—the—one of the '62 shows.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, I think I've seen—

PAUL REED: '64.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —I've seen that review.

PAUL REED: Yeah. It was a, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Small?

PAUL REED: Small. And not—not—not complimentary. Of course, when you know his philosophy, you have what you expect from—you didn't need all that stuff on there. You can strip it down. Which then I—that was influenced by Judd in the sculpture, the early—the '60s sculpture, the minimalist sculpture. That's what it is. And the paintings, the minimalist paintings, in that sense, if you define them that way. Um, I don't know. I—I've—I—Elizabeth Stevens was here, and she went to work for the *Wall*—she was with the *Post*, and then went to work with the *Wall Street Journal*. And she was very, uh, enthusiastic about my work. Uh, Paul Richard, I don't know if

he [ph] exists any longer. [They laugh.] Uh, but, uh—yeah. I—it didn't seem to make much difference in the way I—anything else. I mean, you always took press [inaudible] wasn't terrible, you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Uh, nobody actually ever said that, but, yeah, [inaudible]. You read it the first time, and then you read through. You read it, and—[00:32:00] But it's, like, that's their business. I—you like to get favorable—[inaudible] the right people, you like to have. Hilton—uh, Hilton Kramer. John Canaday did one review. I don't think I have it any longer. And it was the shaped canvases. I don't know how [ph] they did that. And he said they were—they were stretched very poorly, and they were. [They laugh.] [inaudible] held the stretch [inaudible] me. Phew. That's why—the reason I, um, I did the, uh, the prints of the shaped canvases, which, uh—this—the shapes was—it was '67, I began the shapes. I realized it's hard to find someone to stretch them, and it would just take a lot of time. And after I'd done a couple, I went through, and I was [inaudible] the paintings. I decided I'd better do prints to keep the—have the image available the way that I wanted it, and I wouldn't have spent a lot—I really make paintings. That's why most of my work is unstretched.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: Then the [inaudible], which you selected one.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Here, here.

PAUL REED: You don't have to build the [ph] stretch.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: And that's nice. And you can roll it up, and you store a 5-foot painting in a little tube. And isn't that nice? You protect it, you can ship it for five dollars, and just mail it up a label [ph]. Well. So, um, I don't know what led me into that. Well, that's the reason that I, uh—I didn't want to continue to make paintings that were so difficult to stretch. I had the images, and I had—you know, no problem to paint them, and I was just rolling, but you can't show them very well unless they're stretched. And the stretching—I did get—finally get, uh, Timo Heinz [ph]? [00:34:00] Yeah, Timo Heinz. Great stretcher. He did that stretch painting. And it's—you know, the [inaudible] stretching. And, um, um, I finally found someone that—he didn't—they were—they were still very difficult for him. [inaudible]. He had a good—and he did them perfectly. It was very expensive, relative to what I had been paid, but they were right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And this was way after the fact. This is, uh, into the, uh, '80s—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Really?

PAUL REED: —we were stretching these '60s paintings.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Restretch—having to restretch them, or remount them and restretch them?

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, well, I don't know, but that was part of the, just the technical side of why the shift in [inaudible]. And then the—I lost the large studio I had.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Where was that studio?

PAUL REED: I was right up at, uh—it was up at, um, right behind the Jefferson Hotel, 16th and M? [inaudible] National Geographic there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, that's a nice—nice area.

PAUL REED: Yeah. It was in—it was in an alley. There was a big garage, a double garage in an alley. Actually, it was a quadruple garage.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And—and how long had you had that studio?

PAUL REED: I had that about two years, I think. Before that, it was—I was down on H Street across from—near the Corcoran.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: And that I had for about 10 years. I had the—the studio that I was using with the [inaudible], I just kept and made it a painting studio.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: It was an efficiency apartment. And, uh, these paintings were all made there. The biggest painting I could make was 14 feet.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's pretty big.

PAUL REED: Well, it—well, at that time, I would have gone larger. [They laugh.] Not necessarily successfully, but I would have tried it. The [inaudible] go up to 12 feet.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But I had a big studio then, with a—with a plywood floor, and I could staple them down, and paint. [00:36:03]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: I could paint—I could work on the 5 footers. I could work on probably half a dozen at once if I wanted to. I had that much space [inaudible]—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was it useful to work on—on multiple paintings at the same time?

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I mean, would you—ideas generate—

PAUL REED: Well, see, it was about a four hour drying time for a color.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And if you're glazing—it has to be completely dry to glaze the next color, or else it will mix.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh—and [inaudible] the glaze, and it's all about glaze, then, once you get beyond the shape and the idea [ph], but the layer, the thin layers of paint to shift the color.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], very beautiful.

PAUL REED: And, uh, they kept getting darker and darker. I've got one that you can just barely see the square, you know? [They laugh.] And that was at this time. But I had to move anyway. And I moved everything here. So then there was no more painting [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Was this your home from the time that you—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —you moved back to Washington—the Washington area?

PAUL REED: Uh, no. Uh, we lived out in Falls Church.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: And we came here in '60, so almost—it was—we were 10 years in Falls Church, [inaudible] came here. Um, so then I would—I went with the Corcoran, see, in the early '70s, and we went to Europe. The year before I went to Corcoran, I went over with students [ph] to Europe, just to London, and Leeds, and—Roy took the tour over, and I went over to Paris.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was this your first trip to London? Was this your first trip to Europe?

PAUL REED: Yeah. First and only. Esther went a couple years ago, but I—I don't—well, first of all, I don't know I

can afford it, but the—it has—I like to see if it's going to add up. And it was like going over to the [inaudible] the other day. Kind of, a very—I mean, I parked right in front. That's the first problem. [They laugh.] And it was—it was Sunday, but there weren't many people.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's surprising. [00:38:00]

PAUL REED: So I could—I could walk around. And, uh, I didn't—had nothing on my agenda but to do that tape. And I [inaudible] 20 minutes, and that was—I got just what I wanted. Now, I could go back and do it again, and do it better, uh, you know, and, now—what happens with the automatic exposure is that so much white stuff around closes the lens down, so the sculpture's black. Okay? So until you get up close enough to get rid of the white field, you don't get the—the detail.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: But that's alright. That's fine. I'll show you a clip of it, if you like. I mean, it's—

JUDITH ZILCZER: After.

PAUL REED: I'm very pleased.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Good.

PAUL REED: [inaudible], but—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Alright. Let me—let me see. Um, maybe we can move back to this, um—into the '60s to the Washington—return to the Washington Color School idea again.

PAUL REED: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Um, I gather that the artists were congregating together in—in you and [ph] Gene Davis. Did you feel that you were part of a movement when—when you were beginning to paint, in that way [ph]?

PAUL REED: Well, we knew—we knew we were all—as a group, were working similarly.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You see, um, if you go back, I think Morris showed in Paris in '54.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And Ken. You know, not massively [ph], and not the late stuff, but [inaudible]. He did the—the [inaudible] were shown early.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: New York—I—I had these dates straight, but I—in my memory [inaudible] the French & Company show, the Greenberg [inaudible]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, right.

PAUL REED: Cornelia [Langer] Noland was in one of those shows. [Laughs.] And so they—and the—the [inaudible] in Paris, [inaudible], was buying Lewises and Nolands on a periodic basis and showing them—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. [00:40:04]

PAUL REED: —in the '50s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: So early. And now we don't come—I didn't come on the scene until—well, I was just beginning. They were showing work in Paris, and I was just beginning my first painting, well, I probably did in '58, on some little—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So you would—you might classify yourself as a second generation?

PAUL REED: Second—well, yeah. If that's first generation.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: But there really isn't a full generation's age difference between you and Noland, and—

PAUL REED: Ken is 70, and I'm 75. Gene died at 64. He was a year younger than I am. But Howard was the youngest. He was really young. And he died very young.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, yes.

PAUL REED: Tom was somewhat older, but not much. And of course, Morris was '60—he died in '62. I think he was in his 50s. And, uh—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: You mentioned Gilliam as being still—still younger coming in af—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —into the group, or coming into contact with the group.

PAUL REED: I don't know how old Sam is.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Young—uh, a little bit later.

PAUL REED: I assume Sam is early 60s, now? I don't know. Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you know Alma Thomas?

PAUL REED: I met Alma late, really late.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And she's—she was—I think she was using a cane then, and I was sitting on the floor talking to her. And she said, "You boys are doing a good job." [They laugh.] [inaudible] the boy was [inaudible]. Yeah. That's the only time. Vincent Melzac, uh, made friends with Alma, and I think gave some things to the National Collection.

JUDITH ZILCZER: He gave some things to the Hirshhorn, as well.

PAUL REED: Oh, he did?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Oh, good.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: I didn't know he'd donated anything to the Hirshhorn.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah. If I'm remembering correctly. I know Mr. Hirshhorn also acquired her work.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Yeah. [inaudible] Alma's paintings were on some kind of canvas. They were oil paintings. So that immediately—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Separated her from—[00:42:01]

PAUL REED: Well, yeah. I mean, there was a color investigation, and—but I don't—I don't really know. But, uh, it was very much the dogma of the—the stain [inaudible]. There was very much a—I don't know if you'd call it an aesthetic, or can [ph]. It was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: It was the foundation for—for the group.

PAUL REED: Yeah. It didn't—it didn't vary from that. Greenberg laid down the canon, and you—you watched yourself. [Laughs.] But, um, and it was [inaudible]—in my case, most of the work was transparent. There was very little opacity until later. And, uh, uh, like for instance, that—those colors are over that white stripe, and that's pure transparency.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. It must be very difficult to achieve.

PAUL REED: Yeah, it's difficult to make.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Not once you've mastered it. Nothing then is [ph] difficult. To go back to it is very difficult. You have to relearn.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You have to. And this color changes—the color—[inaudible] the strip changes when it dries. It darkens. So you have to allow for that, you know, itself. So there's a lot of testing strips. You'll say, oh, that's what happens. And then you'll refer to that when you're—when you're attempting to [inaudible]. So definitely difficult, but not when you learned how to do it, like anything.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: But, uh, quite a discipline, yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: But you can, uh, achieve certain results, especially in the expressionistic side, and no other way [ph], [inaudible] people try it with oil and, you know, [inaudible]. It just doesn't work the same way. Not worse. It's just different. And once you—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —want those results and have a way of achieving them, then, of course, that's what you get [inaudible]. So it's really, in a way, the paint. I still get very excited about [inaudible], [they laugh] but, you know, it's—it's—I've looked back enough—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [00:44:00]

PAUL REED: —to turn into a pillar of salt or something. [They laugh.] [inaudible] curious [inaudible], you know? It's how to bring forward [inaudible] all the [inaudible] of the past.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Now, it doesn't mean that—it's like I'm—I'm very interested in these stones, for some reason. I don't want to analyze it any further than that. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. Alright. When—when—

PAUL REED: But, uh, we, uh—we were—we were friends. Like, I would—I was working at the Peace Corps in these years, and every Saturday, I would call on Tom and—Howard. Now, Gene and I fell out around—well, I went to the Peace Corps, and I don't know why, but he—I was working—doing the work for him at AAA, and I couldn't do that anymore. And, uh, that was one thing that upset him. And so, when I was doing this painting, it was in the summertime, and I was on the second floor, and I had the windows open. It was hot. And Flo and Gene—the AAA were right across the street.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: There—he used that same parking lot there, so I'd run into him all the time, [laughs] though we weren't speaking.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, no.

PAUL REED: And, uh, they called up to the window. You know, this—and I was working on this—I remember, I was working on this painting. And I said, "Come up and see the masterpiece," you know. And Flo was ready to come up, but Gene—no, he didn't [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: Yeah. But then I'd go see Tom.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you ever reconcile with Gene?

PAUL REED: A little bit. He said, uh—well, we worked together at the Corcoran. He was not in the—he wanted to come into my first year program, but they wouldn't let him. [Laughs.] But, uh, it really wasn't that kind of a program. [inaudible], so I figured, working as hard as they would go, so they'd come away with something. [00:46:00] And, uh, the ones that were—that this doesn't suit, then, well, but the ones it does, they'll get a lot, and I think they did. I think they were fairly confident by the time they finished. They knew a lot. They'd been through a lot. And we were all proud of them. We were very proud of them. So the lumps [ph] didn't hurt that much.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But—and I was never [inaudible] bad when [inaudible] grade them or anything. One kid was so bad, I had to give it to him. And they—he finally appealed to everybody. He was very, very verbal. And he'd been at the Corcoran since he was a little kid. He figured it was home, see, and he could do anything he wanted.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, oh.

PAUL REED: Well, he was a mess [ph]. He was destroying the class with his arrogance [ph], and I had to come down on him. And, uh, so they let him into second year. And they said, "We're going to let him in." And I said, "Look, I've only got him two more weeks. I can stand him for two more weeks. You're going to have him a whole year." And they kicked him out. You know, he just thought that was carte blanche to carry on.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: Uh, but, yeah. Howard needed—would need money. I'd buy [inaudible] need money. That's the reason I bought it. I didn't buy it to collect their paintings. I bought it to help them. It wasn't much. It was— [inaudible] it helped them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: You know, I didn't have all that much [inaudible]. But—

JUDITH ZILCZER: But you were closest with Howard and—

[END OF TRACK AAA_reed94_6295.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: —Paul Reed on Friday, April 29. This is tape two, side A. We were talking about the Washington Color School and your friendship with Howard, and—Howard Mehring and Tom Downing.

PAUL REED: Yes. Um, well, the—I don't know. It continued—I—I—about 25 years, I guess, from—let's see. The—I first met Tom in—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —early '60s, I guess. I'd have to try to—it was at his Jefferson Place show. And up to the time. And I did speak at his memorial at the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —memorial at the Phillips.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. Right. I think we have a copy of your remarks.

PAUL REED: Yeah, I sent in a copy of that, yeah. And, uh, that, sort of, summed up my [inaudible] Tom, in a sense. I did, um—Tom would move away from time—he lived in New York. We visited him in New York, and it was interesting to see what he was doing there. And, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you sense that he was happier in New York than in Washington?

PAUL REED: He was very happy in New York until he ran out of money. Um, I did—was able to do him a favor of selling some of his work to a collector in Washington.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you remember the name of the collector?

PAUL REED: Smith, General Smith.

JUDITH ZILCZER: General Smith.

PAUL REED: And he was a very—very nice man. He bought a number of my things, and he—when Tom and [ph] I called him, and Tom needed help, and he said—Tom brought a roll of paintings down, or had a—actually, I think it was a roll of paintings that he had left here, just had abandoned, you know. And Bob Newman had taken care of them for him. [00:02:01] They were just rolled.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, um, Tom came down. We went out to Smith's house. He unrolled them. The guy bought them all. It wasn't much. It was, I don't know, \$7,000 or something for at least six paintings. They were the bigger ones [ph]. And, um, that helped Tom, too. He was really behind. He was really down at—and it helped him to get out of New York. He went down to Houston.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Very curious. Jim Harithas was in—Jim Harithas was, of course, our great helper—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Jim, yeah.

PAUL REED: —in those years. Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And he had been with the Corcoran, right?

PAUL REED: He was—he was, uh, uh, he was out—out in—he was curator out in the Phoenix Museum.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And he'd been studying in Switzerland. Jim was, sort of—he'd been up to—I don't know if you want to get into Jim's background, but anyway, Jim—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, yes, sure.

PAUL REED: —[laughs] [inaudible] Corcoran—

JUDITH ZILCZER: He was an important figure in Washington.

PAUL REED: Oh, yes, very much so. Uh, he was up at the, uh—was it the Lincoln—um, one of the—one of the museums up in the [inaudible]. And he came to Phoenix. Curious thing. In Phoenix—our daughter, who is an attorney, moved to Phoenix. Her husband is a professor of special education at the university, Arizona State. And she—they moved to Phoenix, and she went to law school there, and now is in Denver [ph]. She had a—each of the—we have three children. Each of them has a collection of my work. And so she interested the museum and the university to do shows of my work, which was very nice. And Jim was at the—maybe before she even moved there, or close to that time, anyway. [00:04:06] Jim was interested in the color paintings, for some reason. And Bendig, William Bendig, who was publisher of a magazine called *ART Gallery*—I don't think it exists any longer, but it was a little—it was a little, small-format magazine.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And they did a very nice job. And Jim—Bendig saw my show in the East Hampton Gallery in '64, and bought one of the paintings, although not the largest one, a good sized one, and gave it to the Phoenix Museum [inaudible]—they were inaugurating new facilities.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: Okay? Jim was the curator. Bendig sends this painting. So Jim knows about—starts to know—I don't know if he sent him any other color paintings, but he starts to know about Washington Color Painting. I don't know if that's the beginning, but somewhere in there. '64. He comes to the Corcoran in '65.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And he came as curator or director?

PAUL REED: Uh, assistant to the director.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Assistant to the director.

PAUL REED: And then there was the idea that he would become the director, because Williams was retiring. Okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So Jim became the director, and he was very friendly with—not Howard so much, or Gene. Mainly Tom and me. And, uh, he had these parties. It was like an open house. He lived in an apartment across the river. You could walk across the bridge from the Corcoran, one of those high rises there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh, you could walk across Memorial Bridge.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You mean in—in—in Rosslyn, you had to—

PAUL REED: Rosslyn, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. And it was open house, party all the time. [They laugh.] Which was unheard of, because before, the door—the curatorial door was closed. The big white doors were closed.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, and there were no—

PAUL REED: And when [inaudible] came, they closed up again.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Really?

PAUL REED: Yeah. Yeah, you couldn't get to him [ph]. But, um, uh, they were open when Jim was there, and they were open when [inaudible] was there. You could walk in [inaudible]. An artist could walk in, and you'd be received. [00:06:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, Walter Hopps was also [inaudible] during—

PAUL REED: Walter Hopps, yeah. Yeah, Walter Hopps was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And I think—

PAUL REED: —Washington Gallery of Modern Art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: Gerry [Gerald] Nordland. You—first you had Alice Denney and the lady from the national collection, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Adelyn Breeskin.

PAUL REED: Adelyn Breeskin, yeah. She was the director. They had a little tiff of some kind, and Gerald Nordland was brought from California. He was at the University of California.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —that was, um—he knew the Phillips—the Phillips in California—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —as did Walter.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: In fact, Walter sold one of my paintings—I forget his name, but—his collection in California. He had bought [ph] one of my small paintings, and Walter had seen in there. He mentioned it to me that he saw it there. Uh, what was his name? He had, sort of, a—he had a, sort of, a nickname.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Hmm.

PAUL REED: But, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Not the Anderson Collection, no?

PAUL REED: It would be the—no, it was Phillips, Gif—Giffy. Giffy. Giffy Phillips.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Gifford Phillips.

PAUL REED: Yeah, Gifford. No, this is Gifford here, isn't it?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Is this Gifford here? Duncan—

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, Duncan Phillips. Yeah.

PAUL REED: I see [inaudible]. There's Gifford, then there's a brother. And I don't know if—this is [ph] Gifford here, I think, but this man had a—I don't know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, it's Laughlin.

PAUL REED: Laughlin. Laughlin Phillips. Right. Okay.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes. Yes, yes. That's the son, Duncan's son.

PAUL REED: Right. The two sons there. And [inaudible] Nordland came to the Washington Gallery, and he did the color show. Very key to the thing. And, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you were included, of course, in that.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Yeah, there were six.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, um—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —all of the Hopps [ph]—no. Walter Hopps was the—the Phillips collection—connection. He was friends with, uh, Laughlin. No, it was Giffy. [00:08:00] Giffy is the California man.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Okay? I knew he had, sort of, a nickname.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: He was—and he was brought in. The influence of the Phillips brought in—Walter displaced Nordland.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: Brief. It was brief. And then, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you feel there was an openness, um, toward artists on the part of Nordland?

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I mean, you were—you were saying that—

PAUL REED: Well, certainly toward me.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: I mean, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: I was visiting [inaudible], who was up in Milwaukee. We [inaudible] and we had lunch, and, you know, just very open, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Good.

PAUL REED: Well, I mean, when he was [inaudible] we'd go to his house, his parties. Yeah. He didn't [ph] say or

do anything.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So [inaudible], and—and Nordland, and—and Hopps were all fostering the art scene in Washington—

PAUL REED: Yeah. Walter—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —in the [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: —Walter [inaudible]. He had just had the problem in Pasadena.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Okay? [inaudible] architecture [ph] [inaudible] what a good [inaudible]. You know? [inaudible], but they [inaudible] came out an art form.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Walter was looking for a home, I gather [ph], anyways, to bring him in. [inaudible] situation. [Laughs.] Walter, all he needs is a telephone, and the whole world is his.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, that's like Mr. Hirshhorn. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah, right. You can see—go down to [ph] Connecticut [inaudible] see Walter in the phone book. He might be talking to China. Who knows? But he's connected, really well connected [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: At least that's—this is my impression. Walter is—and Walter is very perceptive. Um, the—I—I didn't know Walter well. And he did a show—the Corcoran had promised me a show, which had never come about. They did one. Williams [ph] did one, Jim Pilgrim, and Jim Harithas was there. And they did the—that solo show there of the discs.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: '60—'66.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: The same the color show was going around the country. [00:10:00] And, um—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —the—the reason—you mentioned Walter as director of the Corcoran. Jim Harithas had some set-to with the board or something at the Corcoran, and as—as I remember, he said, "I quit," and they said, "Okay." [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Wow.

PAUL REED: You know, it wasn't, like, don't do that. So Walter was interim. And then Melzac came in as CEO.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Darrow [ph] [inaudible]. Well, he was director, or curator, or something. I don't know. But they have their [inaudible]. And then Roy—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That was pretty—

PAUL REED: —Roy—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Came in and settled things down.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: There was—there had been quite a bit of turmoil.

PAUL REED: Yeah. It was getting, uh, [inaudible] reputation. And then—then, again, with the [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mapplethorpe.

PAUL REED: Mapplethorpe. They had another—again, too visible. But Walter, um, was going to do a show [inaudible] asked me if I wanted to show at WPA. And what I showed was, uh, the oil pastels. I had been working in the oil pastels with the—the [inaudible] photographs.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: And, uh, I did one that might interest you, in that it was [Raymond] Duchamp-Villon's horse, and then a real horse—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: —with a rider. So I'll show you if you want to—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I—I would be interested in that.

PAUL REED: Okay. Yeah, because you—you have an interest in Duchamp-Villon.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes. Yes, I do. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah, right, okay. I'd like for you to see that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I would.

PAUL REED: I've got photographs of them all in one place, and then I can show you the originals at another time when I can dig them out.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Thanks.

PAUL REED: But, um, Walter came and looked. I had to [inaudible]. And there was a [inaudible] 12 by 18 painting, and he just said, "[inaudible]," you know? I [inaudible] act that quick before, so I said, "That's a lot of framing." [00:12:02] [They laugh.] Because I—I'm assuming I have to do all this myself, and that there, you know, there wasn't much time. Walter wanted to do a show [inaudible] bought me into that show, just like that. [inaudible] but when I [ph]—then I framed them, and I had photographs of them, and I laid out—I got the [inaudible], and I laid out—

JUDITH ZILCZER: The show?

PAUL REED: —a decent [inaudible], just like that, and it was very good.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And I had never seen that kind of—

JUDITH ZILCZER: About what year was that? Do you remember?

PAUL REED: Uh, '82.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That was, sort of, the extent of my experience with [inaudible], and I was very impressed [inaudible]. [inaudible]—and then he did the show at the National of the [inaudible]. When they were building down there, they sent the collection up.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And very curious. I don't know if you noticed, but there was a Magritte with a window in it or something.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I vaguely remember this.

PAUL REED: It was a, kind of, a rectangle. Okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: They painted all the walls that color, so the wall moved right behind that painting. [They laugh.] Whose idea—they do wonderful installations there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, they do. Yes, yes.

PAUL REED: They have—they have the experts [inaudible].

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: Then the—I don't know. The years—I don't know what—uh, where you want to go from there. That was, sort of, the Corcoran.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do—do you feel that the Corcoran under [inaudible] and these other—these other directors supported the Washington Color School, or [inaudible] supported it [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: Oh. Um, I think it's a little like the critics, is that you move on to the next generation.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And that's only—it's fair. I mean, different [inaudible]. That's what they're interested in. [00:14:00] I mean, like—it's, like, Jane [ph] comes. She used to just live in California and Houston. Her brother is down in Houston, directing the museum. She's been in California [inaudible], and that's what—and—and—I don't know much about her, but apparently, her writing is very good. I mean, the catalog she did on Howard is excellent. I mean, somebody did it. I mean, that—that was a—she picked that up from—and Mary Swift helped a lot on that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Um, because Mary came and photographed the things that I had [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, [inaudible] an excellent job. She has a keen interest in photography, too—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —and has done some things. I'm not—I don't know that much about—but it, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Could we—yeah. Could you pinpoint the moment at which you feel that the Washington Color School ended? I mean, did it have a—a finite—

PAUL REED: It's still going on.

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's still going on. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: I mean, uh, maybe however feebly. I mean—oh, you mean here.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: You see, it has disseminated. It's not anywhere near the scale of Cubism, [laughs] but it—you know, it's had its little voice. I think it's, uh—yeah. Now, yeah, we know what happens to the individuals, what they're doing. You see what I'm doing.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: [Inaudible] the others are deceased. And, uh, it has disseminated out. And I don't know how many—I've only seen the Arizona influence, and, uh, that's just a small percent.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: New York, yes, sure. New York, uh, you know, was onto it almost as quickly as we were.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: I mean, that's easy. The Barbara Rose article was in '63, "The Primacy of Color," which she took from [Maurice] Merleau-Ponty. [Laughs.] Um—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —at that time, Merleau-Ponty was very popular, very current in the '60s. [00:16:00]

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Current in the '50s, too, [laughs] from what—

PAUL REED: '50s [inaudible]? Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Too, yes.

PAUL REED: His design, uh, essay is very, very good. "Cézanne's Doubt."

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, I have, uh, about six different understandings of Cézanne from different sources. I'm—Greenberg's is quite perceptive. I—I [inaudible]—there's one of them that has, as far as I'm concerned, right on the nose.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, like—and then, in looking at the work and reproductions of the work, [inaudible]. I made it my business to get [inaudible] Cézanne's [inaudible], which, of course, is out of print, but you can track it down. But—and that's a whole different thing. Because they kept referring to it. Well, it's really—I mean, he went—he lived in his studio, and he photographed these things. That's good, and that's useful. [inaudible] composition. [They laugh.] You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, no.

PAUL REED: Cézanne, you know—if you block out every part, you see how neat it is, what he did, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: If you look at [inaudible] you're going put there. Oh, well. So, another thing. Now, he—this method—this is a Cézannian method, right? [Inaudible.]

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: It's putting, uh, now, what—okay. You've got this. What are you going to do now? It's a—it relates to your idea of making your mind up as you go along, as against preconceived [inaudible] geometric—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —as well as the form—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —and to some extent, the color.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Because maybe you're going to do an orange painting, okay? So you cut a hole within it. Don't put any green in it, you know? Because you—you follow through your ideas. It's like doing a silk screen, because you can do [inaudible] variations [inaudible] stay with it as you [inaudible] and move it on through. Then do the variations if you want, but see—flesh out the idea. [00:18:02] If you want to do a 12-foot painting, do a 12-foot painting. You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: A couple of times in our conversation, you've mentioned geometric paintings. You consider yourself—or do—at some point to have been a geometric—

PAUL REED: Yeah, [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: And in the, uh, tradition of geometric abstraction as practiced by Mondrian or Albers?

PAUL REED: Ken describes himself as a geometric colorist.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, yeah. If it's geometry, it's geometry. The, uh—if you use a mirror image, it's a [inaudible]. See, what these are—these started out—I did—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you're—

PAUL REED: —oil past—I did a triptych in oil pastel, coming out of [ph] these oil pastels into a triptych where I combined photographs. There's a rotation. See the black is in opposite corners?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: It's—

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's very—

PAUL REED: —almost—you know the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —symmetrical.

PAUL REED: —Rauschenberg did *Factum* and *Factorum* [*Factum I* and *Factum II*]?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah, two expressionistic paintings that were similar?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Okay. These are two expressionistic [inaudible]. One is rotated.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The other is [inaudible] two basic geometric ideas. When you take—I [inaudible] any further than that as—in that the—but they're basic ideas. If you buy—you have a high school geometry book, it explains those two principles of geometry, and what you arrive at if you deal with it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So, yeah, it's geometric. Among other things, its color is different [ph]. Its [inaudible] subject matter [ph]. [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well—

PAUL REED: But, like, [inaudible] says you do an abstract painting—this is another point I'd like to make.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay.

PAUL REED: He says, people look at it and say, "What is it?" If you have a picture of a Coke bottle, everybody knows what that is. That's his description of Pop art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: And, uh, so you have a subject matter [inaudible]. [00:20:02] People look—they look at any—I mean, a more or less layperson looks at any painting to see what's—what's in there. What is it? You know, like, what is it a picture of? An abstract artist [inaudible] that gets very difficult. There's nothing there. And, uh, [inaudible] expressionistic art. You know? [inaudible] look at [inaudible] and see any [ph] image, so it's either dismissed, or they feel somehow their taste is questioned, because they can't figure it out. I mean, they're supposed to know, right? Anybody. It's simple. There it is, it's a picture. You've got to know what it is. You know?

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: It's not true.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The, uh—there was another point. Maybe I'll remember it.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: So you consider that—well, it—it's quite obvious that in the photograph, and in the more recent work, there's a kind of subject matter.

PAUL REED: Oh, yes, yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: But—but would you—would you think of your—your work from the Washington Color School days in the '60s as having subject matter?

PAUL REED: Only, uh, uh—you would define it differently—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —[inaudible]. See, these—these have subject matter. The subject matter is the prior art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, right.

PAUL REED: And it's [inaudible]. It's tangible. You can—they're small. You can feel the weight of them. You can feel the surface. It's in—it deals with the other senses.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You have the sense of touch, and, uh, the third dimension.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Of course, Greenberg was—was, as I understand it, most interested in—or thought that the highest form of art was the visual, and that the other senses should not be stimulated.

PAUL REED: And Duchamp said he wasn't going to do any more [inaudible] art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Pardon me?

PAUL REED: Duchamp.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, Marcel—

PAUL REED: Marcel. He's written a lot [ph]. [00:22:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: He said, it smells of turpentine. [They laugh.] Um, so, you know, I mean, it's, sort of, a—a—whatever. Well, to the artist, I mean, he can—it doesn't mean he's going to succeed, but he can—he—he's free to do what he pleases. The flatness was a big element with Greenberg in his [ph] theory.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, yes.

PAUL REED: Flatness [inaudible], starting with Manet, compression of the space. And that's what these squashes [ph] are about. Not only is the space compressed, it's obviously because it's compressed—the paint is squeezed onto the paper [inaudible] flat surface [inaudible], and it appears to be, but—but it's actually very shallow.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, an illusion. See, what happened—I—in '67, out of the [ph] influence of Ron Davis, I reinfluenced—uh, reintroduced the illusion of the third dimension.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Now, it's—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Now, that was rad—that was a radical departure from—

PAUL REED: Oh, sure, sure.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —from color field.

PAUL REED: Well, the—the shaped canvas was a radical departure from the—from the, uh rectangle. We—we had flatness, you see, [inaudible] illusion of [inaudible]. What did Stella [ph] say? I was [inaudible] very flat, and I found that I couldn't. It's like when Rauschenberg did his white paintings.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You can't get much flatter than that, but the shadows cast by the viewers activated the surface. So, you know, it—it—theoretically an impossible. It's like Derrida. You can't do it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: The—for you, then, the—you—

PAUL REED: Mine was [ph] conscious. It's, like, um, the conscious thing of abandoning the disc. The discs are

'65.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: '66, I made a conscious decision not to paint any more curves. Everything had been [ph] biomorphic. Just do grids and bands. [00:24:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was there a particular reason for that decision?

PAUL REED: I guess [inaudible] there was just the decision.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I—the—I don't know. I don't know. I guess I wanted to try to go somewhere else with it. Influences, or stuff I'd seen. I don't know. But I—I'd known—I was very aware that was what I was going to do. So I rolled out this [inaudible], a 20 x 30 foot space, with canvas, and mixed up gallons of paint. Put the roller in and started to mess with the *Upstart* series. And then the—all of the grids came out of that, just—just painting with the roller on this. Because you can do, uh—if you have four or five paintings going, and say you're using, oh, four or five-inch rollers, [inaudible] paintings are three to four feet. See? Okay. You've got—you've got blue. You can just very quickly have a beautiful band of blue. You see? Okay. Now you might have orange—

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you have to wait for it to dry, right?

PAUL REED: You have to wait for that to dry, unless you—now, I did some that blend. It was only the Phillips series. Deliberately blend and dripped to show that side of everything [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: But these, I was—I ended up doing tape [ph]. This way they were free rolled. The edge showed a little bit of the edge of the roller.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And then you look, and here you'd have this beautiful blue. What are you going to do now? What size roller, and what color? You see? So I'd—I'd go in the morning. I'd carry my lunch. I'd go in the morning, and then I'd go to work at nine o'clock. Okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: This is at the Peace Corps, yeah.

PAUL REED: I'd come back at lunch, paint a little bit. The color was dry. Paint [inaudible]. At six o'clock, come back. [They laugh.] So I had to work out a system.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah, you know, I'd [inaudible]—get home about seven or eight o'clock at night. I'd be like this [Judith Zilczer laughs] because of all this color, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: It just—you had to be careful. [00:26:01] But I went home [they laugh] to [inaudible]. Um, and, uh, I don't know what that describes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, it describes your method of working, and—

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. The, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you feel—did you feel, kind of, a conflict between your Peace Corps job and your [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: I kept them separate, really, because in that case, I was getting photographs, mainly, and type, typography and—uh, well, actually, you had to—to get a grant, you had to very carefully tell a story. I mean, we were—these were folders, and annual reports, and things for—

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible] break for—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: Lunch? It's break time. Okay.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. You had more—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. We're resuming talking about titles.

PAUL REED: Yeah. The paintings are—are numbered. Uh, and the—the gouaches are just dates. The date is the identifying title..

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So it locates it precisely in time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The very day it was finished and signed. The paintings, some of the series are named, liked Topeka, or Barcelona, where there's more than one painting in the same form, different colors.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. What—what was—uh, led you to choose the place names for those series?

PAUL REED: Just that they sounded—tripped on the tongue, you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Like Topeka. [inaudible] Now, the sculpture, the name is probably the most—this recent sculpture—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —the most important thing is the legend. [inaudible], there it is.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And it's continually moving with new information.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: That's why I was so happy when I made the tape [inaudible] Sunday at the Hirshhorn. I found three new titles.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: I mean, how lucky can we get? [They laugh.] Plus, the sculpt—you know, [inaudible] the sculpture.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So that is the—the—it's so—you do it one way, and then you turn it around the other way—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. [00:28:00]

PAUL REED: —to find a—a new way of moving again. And, uh, after making the tapes, I—I didn't want to go back to gouaches. And somehow, I started doing these stones. Now, I had—there were some earlier ones. I did a *Birth of Venus*, which was a steel and an abalone shell, which I don't have. I sold it. And that was, like, in '84, so there isn't—and in the photographs, the—the mirror-image photographs there is this element.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And [inaudible]. And I would have looked for [inaudible], but that existed, and there's no—all of a sudden I have this idea. All of a sudden, it seems that I thought I'd better do something about this idea that I'd been—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Kicking around. Yeah, yeah. When did you first begin doing the sculptures?

PAUL REED: Well, the earliest piece—probably '66 with the steel.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I had done—I did a—I did a balsa wood one, which I entered into a Corcoran regional show in the '50s, and it was like a takeoff on David Smith's—is it *Australia*?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The one that's like a bird? [inaudible] the bird?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, right.

PAUL REED: Is that *Australia*? No. Maybe. I don't know. But there's one where they had, like, a ribcage, and the long horizontal—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And somebody dropped it, and the balsa, being fragile, it was destroyed. I did—I took aluminum printing plates and tore them, and did mobiles [inaudible], and they would, sort of, not only twirl, but they would, sort of, spring. And they would flex—they would flex.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And this—this—this was also in the '50s?

PAUL REED: In the '50s, yeah, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Were you inspired simply by the possibility of the materials, or had you been looking at other people's mobiles? [00:30:04]

PAUL REED: Well, there was Calder, of course. And, uh, the idea of movement. And I only have—the only thing that survives, there is one photograph.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: [Inaudible.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: We'll continue.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. We're resuming our discussion with Paul Reed on Friday afternoon, April 29. Um, we had been talking over lunch a little bit about sculpture you did.

PAUL REED: Yes, the sculpture of the '60s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, you had—during the '50s, I guess the earliest sculpture that I made was, um, I had a—a—printing plates, aluminum printing plates that I tore and cut, and used them—suspended them on—on string, like a mobile. And, um, but they would also spring, because they would flex. They were long. And none of those exist.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Survived? Yeah.

PAUL REED: I have one photograph of—of one of them, which is typical of them. And, um, um—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —that would be the earliest. And then in the '60s, the middle '60s, into the '70s, uh, welded mild [ph] steel, which were simple geometric forms, like steps, and curves. [inaudible] was a—called a tube turn, which is an elbow shape. And, um, I used that, basically, or actual tubes that were split and torch cut. The—I worked with a friend, Bill Truitt, who was a professional welder. And, um, I would, um, design the pieces, and he would execute them. And, uh, um, some jigsaw-like shapes of flat steel. [00:32:04] Some of the, um—I had some dome-like shapes, discs that were domes, and, um, uh, what interested me there was, when you cut the jigsaw, the edges would flare up where you would split the dome. So it was like when mud dries, like when a—when you have a flood or something, and there's mud, and the mud dries and it curls when it dries?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And that interested me as to replicate that in steel.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: Just, sort of, automatically to close [ph] the dome shape.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, the—in some cases, I combined—I did, uh, um, vacuum form, heat form plastic.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was this also in the '60s, or later?

PAUL REED: Yeah, this was, uh—uh, '60s and into the '70s, which is a—I used [inaudible], which is, like, a 300-degree plastic. It's gasoline station sign material. You can paint it. And, uh, uh, I just used the oven at home. And it's about 300 degrees, and, uh—it melts at about 300 degrees. And the Electrolux vacuum cleaner, which gave me—it could draw the softened plastic into it. Mainly, uh, sort of biomorphic shapes. Or you could drape it over a—a point of some kind and have it break the curved shape, which was the reverse of the vacuum shape.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, um, the, uh—and then in some cases, spraying with metallics and enamel on one side, and, uh, giving [ph] it the color.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: The, um, the plastic doesn't allow much freedom to branch out into—that's, sort of, a natural characteristic, to form it the way that I did, and, uh, it wasn't very flexible. [00:34:08] Like, you know, the steel, you could do almost anything. It might be a lot of work, but you could make the steel form into various things. The, uh, influences on the steel was, uh, oh, Judd, and Smith, and the minimal [inaudible]. But, uh—which related to the painting and the very simple geometric frames [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: I was just going to ask if—if you—there was an interrelationship between the geometry of the painting and sculpture.

PAUL REED: Oh, oh, well, uh, yeah. The—the paintings, the, um, um—actually, the—the—the Coherence series, which was a stepped painting. I gradia—I progressed color from light to dark, or—and the—as you can see out of the others that are very similar to the Coherence painting, is that—there's a small one in here.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Now, in that case, I was painting the, uh, sculpture. But the ones in the yard now [inaudible] bronze paint, so everything's bronze now. Uh, the, um—yeah, there's a close relationship to the form, the circle, the disc form, and the banded forms. Yes, they were. It wasn't too conscious. It just, sort of, happened that they were designed that way [inaudible] form [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: What—what made you want to—to branch into sculpture, have—having begun, apparently, as a painter?

PAUL REED: I don't know. The thing that Smith and Judd were doing, it just—it seemed to me to lock into the painting. Many, many artists and painters have. [00:36:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Noland did some sculpture. He may still be doing it. I don't know. Because he was up there with Olitski, and, uh, and, um, the British sculptor.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Caro.

PAUL REED: Caro, yes. And, um, that's—uh, uh—knowing Bill, having—he willing to set up a studio, and work, and get the—he could get the equipment. He already had some of the equipment. He had the material. He had access to the material. It's—it's like when I lost the large studio, I worked small oil pastels, and that grew over into the photography, the triptychs, and that—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I was out in Arizona and did a—a commission to do a print, and that—the oil pastels translated to lithography very easily.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But there I learned monoprinting, which led to the gouaches, the use of, uh, printing ink, water-based printing ink. And, um, so one thing—it depends on availability and, uh, you know, the atmosphere.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: It makes what you do [inaudible] you making it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you do your own printing for photography, if I can jump from sculpture to photography for a moment, or do you have your prints commercially developed and then—

PAUL REED: I'm not sure I'm understanding.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you have your own darkroom?

PAUL REED: Oh, I used to.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah?

PAUL REED: I used to do, black and white only.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The photography predates everything, in a sense, because it was the commercial use of it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And then the, uh—well, it goes back to the first camera I had was a Rolleicord. And, um, it was, like, in the early '40s. And then later, the 35 millimeter. [00:38:00] So it was the—in—in the late '30s, the Leica, which was the original great 35 millimeter camera, was just coming into usage in photojournalism, rather than old Speed Graphic. The Leica was, sort of—because the quality was so high, and if you did your processing carefully, you got very good images in the enlargements. So the photography pre—predates everything. And when I was in Montclair, oh, there was a great—everybody had a 35 millimeter. I adapted my Rolleicord to take 35 millimeter film. [They laugh.] And, um, so we went around taking pictures of flowers, and people, and, you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The, uh—so the photography dates from quite early. And, uh, I've—you may have noticed on the tape the—what I call the photomosaics—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: —which are the—and that, uh, I've been doing those about 10 years. I've, sort of, tapered off on that. I still, if I get—usually when I travel, because I used to carry, um, materials with me when I traveled. If I was going to be there any length of time, I would work there. I did a lot of things in Arizona. But I found that, um—and I was drawing then. And—but I find that I could make a photograph of something interesting, and then I'd have the photograph and refer to it later. And then I, uh, started the mosaics, uh, I don't know, about eight years ago. And, um, made that a thing in itself, is a way of describing it. [00:40:00] And it was very good to—it's like—very much like the cubist concept.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Because it, kind of—go ahead.

PAUL REED: Because you—you see it in takes. It's a way to look at things. If I look at you here, and then I look at that ramp, and look at the—that's four shots or six shots, or as many as you want to make. If I make a portrait of you, I would make four, see, and put those together.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And you begin to get a—it's the way the eye is, 55 degrees. That's the angle of vision. Now, you have your peripheral vision, but generally where you can focus is 55. Set the camera to 55 and take your picture, and you'll have it closer to the way the thing actually looks to you, you see?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And you shift your eye down to [inaudible] to see whatever you're going to look at. And they—they told us it was a shot [ph], you see?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So, um, uh, then I got into the seasonal thing of summer, winter, fall, and spring. I went down to the park, and take the picture of the same season—same scene each season. So you have a [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That's, kind of, an impressionist series, uh, a way of looking—

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's right. That's the series I did. And, um, I find that I don't have to do all four seasons. I can do two, summer and winter, snow and green. And, uh, the snow is especially good, because it changes the landscape completely. You have, instead of a dark—a dark ground and a light sky, you have a dark sky and a light ground.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You see? It reverses the—the sense of space. And, uh, so it—whenever I travel, I might be in Las Vegas or I'm wherever. This is local, here, and that's Arizona.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, that sense of reversal or inversion seems to be—to be, uh, a constant in your work.

PAUL REED: Yeah, I like to—you see, you have a thesis and the antithesis, and you cross them over, and you get a third thing that permits you to move, in a sense. [00:42:01] See? That's why the stones. The energy came out. It was new materials and a new idea, and I could move. Whereas the gouaches had—I'd done so long and so many, that they'd become very, very defined. Where do you go from there? I went up in scale to 8 feet on paper. That's a pretty good size.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, that's enormous.

PAUL REED: And, uh, it was done in units, but it still was 8 feet.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: And, um, I did the complementary, and sometimes I go back. I still—although I did a thousand of these, I still think it's a very fruitful idea, and I just wish somebody would pick up on it, so that they could carry it on and I could let it go, you know? But it's just so—so much possibility there. And it's like—even like the stones, isn't it? See, you have—that's the collage idea, because you can look at hundreds of combinations. And sometimes you look for days, and you don't find anything that goes beyond what you already have. And then all of a sudden, there's the new image. It's like you found it. And, uh—although you had all the preconditions and the raw material to make it. You've got to have the stones if you're going to put them together, okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But—and there was—and that makes it all worthwhile, you see. But it gets slower and slower as you have more of the background. In other words, you eliminate more. You take—you don't do the lesser things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You've got to find something that really steps beyond, and that, of course, is way more rare than—
[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: So, um, we've talked about sculpt—we've talked about your work in—in a variety of mediums, from painting, to gouaches, to sculpture, and photography.

PAUL REED: Yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And right now, you're—

PAUL REED: The oil pastel came after the painting, between—[00:44:02]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay, between the gouaches and the—

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. And that was—the reason for that was I'd—two things. I'd started to teach at the Corcoran, and I lost my large studio. When I looked for a new space, it was so costly, the enormous salary I was going to get, I—[they laugh] I figured I'd bring it home. If something opened up, I could take it, but, like, I'd better not [inaudible] obligate myself to some kind of a higher rent. Yeah. And the—the Corcoran, I—I worked every morning, five days a week, every morning.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, we—the—I went to Europe with the group before I started teaching at the Corcoran, and you'd just stick a pad in your pocket, and the—and that's—I didn't take a—I didn't take a camera with me.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, so the—they were using oil pastel at the school, so that was a good way to—you know, I wanted to—whereas with the—in the acrylic painting, you don't touch—you don't feel the surface. It's, like—or, like, the thing about Pollock. He didn't touch the surface, only—when he dripped, he was not—he was dripping, but he wasn't actually feeling the firmness of the surface, like under a brush or something.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No. Which is something, for example, that de Kooning always wanted—

PAUL REED: That's right. Yeah, yeah—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —the resistance.

PAUL REED: —the contact, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Okay. Pollock did it some, but generally the dripping was not. He couldn't. It [inaudible]. Now, de Kooning used a sign writer's quill for a lot of his things, which is a long haired, tapered brush, which you can make a whiplashed line. Like, it's the—the brush that they use to stripe automobiles, or used to. And you can put this very thin, consistent stripe, because the brush holds a lot of paint, but it comes to a fine point. And I even had some of those, and made some paintings that way, once I knew that's how they're used. [00:46:01] [They laugh.] I'll tell you, that's all you needed. Well, the, uh, the oil pastels, you use a [inaudible]—you use [inaudible] a charcoal paper, which has a rough laid surface, so when you—you have to push and make it—make the mark. You know, it isn't like—even like a brush. You've got to really feel the surface.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: That was a—it's like the sculpture. It's a contrast to what I was doing. You had actual contact. And then you begin [ph] to draw.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Then I used, um, like, baby oil to make the oil pastel into a film, a wash of color.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my goodness.

PAUL REED: You see?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And—or, uh, bath oil or something, a solvent for the oil pastel, so you get pales, and grays, and things. That's what those flat surfaces are.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: Those smeared surfaces are made with oil and a—and a rag, and the oil pastel. So it's, like, almost like oil painting, in a sense. Different, but similar.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, I understand.

PAUL REED: Because you could do thin washes [inaudible]. You don't do—you have to not use too much, or the oil will spread out through the paper.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], and—and stain, yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. It will make an edge. But, um, the, uh, so then I—

[END OF TRACK AAA_reed94_6296.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: You were talking about the oil pastels [inaudible] done and what—what period this was.

PAUL REED: Yeah, this was, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: You had just started to work at the Corcoran?

PAUL REED: Yeah. This is early '70s.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Early '70s.

PAUL REED: The [inaudible] paintings, the two-part, um, tacked—uh, nailed on the wall paintings—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —uh, I was finishing them. That's when I had the large studio, and I had started the oil pastels, simply because of the way my time was.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, you could—I would just do them and put them in a box. Whenever I had a minute, I would work on them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Not go back to them, but just continue to do them. Very expressionistic, as against the geometric. See? Um, that, uh—and I would buy, like, boxes of pads, 9x12, 12x18, 18x24, so [inaudible]. And I tried different papers, and ended up with the Strathmore charcoal paper, which had the tooth that would pull the—the oil pastel is like a soft crayon, and it's—it's nice to have a tooth. I did some on smooth paper, and that's where the smearing with the oil [inaudible] a little smoother. But the toothed paper gave you that touch and the [inaudible] like charcoal. And, uh, one thing—when I—when I would have time to look back through, I found that—and I did this over quite an extended period of years—I found that I was—it was reoccurring. The imagery was reoccurring unconsciously. But it was similar—very—it looked like it was done right before the other ones.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Now, this might be very—not unusual at all, but it—it was a—it was a discovery for me. So then I—when I displayed them, I put them in series. [00:02:00] Although a year might jump, it was very similar to the next one.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: So I showed them in sequence. So I got into—some of them were as many as 14 drawings long in sequence, kind of, evolving along. And, uh, um, then I introduced into them—I found—like for instance, I, um, would—I was then photographing, and I would—I found that the photographs that I made, I could refer—I could cut a hole in the—I didn't want to paste it on top, because [inaudible] be removed, and there would be the oil pastel. I cut a window in and put it in from behind, taped it in, so that it was deliberately destroying the oil pastel in order to combine these photographs. And I would find two photographs. One was Duchamp-Villon's *Great Horse* [*The Large Horse* or *Le Grand cheval*], and the other was an actual horse with a rider. And put those two, referring to each other, inset into the oil pastel.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: This was what was exhibited at the WPA.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. And that was—you said it [ph] was in '82?

PAUL REED: '82.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But some of the oil pastels were done in the early '70s, that were in the show, like some of the—the completion was 10 years from the beginning to the end, uh, because of the last stage. Like you [ph] generate raw material, and then you draw on that material, and you do it in stages, and, uh, so it might take a long—it might be very brief, or it might take you a long time. The dates are—sometimes there are two or three dates on them, just to signify when the different elements were done.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: [Inaudible.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: That will be helpful to future scholars [they laugh] of your work. I know I—I—I know that—know that you've said this on the tape, because I—I know I've found, uh, works by other artists where there are multiple signatures or multiple dates on a single work, and I don't know what to make of that, so [laughs]— [00:04:03]

PAUL REED: Well, it's, like, you—you went back.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It's—there's some feeling against that, but I don't—what's the difference whether it's 10 minutes or 10 years between the time which [inaudible] something.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, it's your whole creative process at work.

PAUL REED: That's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Which can—

PAUL REED: As long as you—it's yours, and you want to do it. I mean, you can destroy it, or—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That was the—

PAUL REED: —you—you can lessen it, but it's—it's still your freedom. You can choose to do it. And I think it's very valuable, you know, to [inaudible] that way that you can look at an early work and do something else to it. The long—that's the reason for the multiple dates, is to—kind of, an honesty, like, I worked on this twice, and here's the gap.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Okay? Establish that. It's not to say that I did this 20 years ago and I knew this much. The fact is, I did this part then and this part later. It's just—there's enough reason for disbelief without adding to it, you know, deliberately falsifying [inaudible] avoid that. That's why I use date as the identifying thing. This was done then.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That's—

PAUL REED: And—and, uh, uh, I do it right at the time that I sign it, because you won't remember. You'll be confused, and it'll, uh—it won't be as accurate.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, just looking back at old paintings that weren't dated, I can't remember. You know? You have to [inaudible]. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, okay.

PAUL REED: Um, now, the—the, uh, insert photos into the oil pastels, which—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —that's what these are—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. You're showing me the—the oil pastel with the Duchamp-Villon horse and the—and the actual horse and rider.

PAUL REED: Uh, the—I then started doing mirror images of the photographs, reflected images. [00:06:00] Uh, just a simple reversal. Just turn the negative over and make another print.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Simple mechanical thing, which gave me a geometry, a symmetrical geometry. I then paired that with a second photograph, which could have been a mountain or a flea. It doesn't matter. The whole—any subject matter is completely open. That's what was so interesting about it. It was like in a geometric painting. Once you've established the grid, you can make it any size.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It gave you a freedom of scale, which, uh, you could—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —wonderful device to work with. And now I had unlimited subject matter. I could even copy things out of magazines, photographs or things, anything. I didn't do that. Maybe on a rare occasion. I—I—it almost—I think in all cases, I used my—only my photographs. Now, some of them are very ordinary photographs. Nothing—but in working with conjunction with the other parts, hopefully it became interesting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So they were what I called the triptychs. And they went up. And the largest was, um, uh, about 18x36 inches would be about the largest. Uh, and that continued for quite a while. And I must have done, oh, a thousand of them, to the point where it was difficult to find new ones that interested me [inaudible]. And I made thousands of photographs which I didn't use. I selected from [ph] them. So, you know, I've got boxes and boxes of negatives and photographs that—that was the raw material.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It's just like the oil pastels became raw material for the triptychs.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So that was the third stage of—the original drawings, then the going into sequence, then the inset photos, and then the triptychs. [00:08:08]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Okay? So there's [inaudible]—I'm still using that—going on that early raw material. Then I switched. I had a commission to do a lithograph at Arizona State University. And, at that time, I made some monoprints. Well, I went back the next year and made monoprints. And that procedure—then I moved from oil pastel to water-based—first oil-based printing inks, then to water-based printing inks, and water-based silk screen inks.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And designer colors, or any kind of water-based color, which would work. Now, I was dealing then with the viscosity of the paint, how you could print from it, and how you could fill in flatly with it, a little like working with the acrylic color, learning the different viscosities to get the transparencies. And they—I continued with that, and that was quite extended. I did—I worked with the gouache maybe 10 years. I'd have to look, but I think, yeah, [inaudible]. It started around '84, I think.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Hmm, right.

PAUL REED: So it's '94 now, so—and I—the last I did were in '93, so I did that nine years. And [inaudible] when the, uh, gouaches became extremely developed, going up to 8 feet in width, um, and then the very large number of them, I—decided to—or that I'd better—it was time for me—just as in doing this interview, it was time for me to, sort of, sum up and remember more things. [00:10:00] And, uh, um—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —started making video. Got video equipment, and VCRs, and I started to learn how to, uh, photograph as much of the work as I could, and put it in some kind of order, for, uh, future reference.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh, now, uh, oh, I've done nine different tapes. [inaudible], like, one is just of the sculpture. One is, uh, oil pastels. And then some contain everything, and some in edited form.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, so I've slowed down on the tapes. I still am trying to improve them technically. Which, you know, they—they're pretty rough. But, um, then I was starting on this stone sculpture, the found stone—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] um, art historical things, more or less.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Which I find very amusing. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah, well, that's good, don't you think [ph]?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: If it—if someone looks at it and says, okay, I'm going to go look at some [inaudible] or look at some Rodins again, because I know this isn't it, uh, then it will have served its purpose, I think. And also, it's—the—even though they're, sort of, of unpleasant-looking subjects, uh, you know, St. John—if—if—if you look at it from that humorous [ph] side, then I think it's—that's what—that's what they're about, I think.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Good.

PAUL REED: What they seem to be about. And it's wonderful to discover a new one.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: You know? And I put the thing together as a theme, like, and then referred to whatever it refers to, and then mount it to put in context, and put it in, um, uh—[inaudible] the mounting [inaudible] we call red oak. [00:12:09] And red oak has an extreme grain, a nice surface. And there's a David Smith, and it's one of his surrealist ones, early—I think it's in the Kreeger collection—that has a red oak base that's carved to fit the steel. And that's [inaudible]. See, not only is the [inaudible]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: In the stone.

PAUL REED: —the base itself has a—

JUDITH ZILCZER: An art historical reference.

PAUL REED: Well—well, not many people will think about that, but I've thought about it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs .] Well, now, you know, we've got it on tape. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: That's right. Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Let me ask you. Uh, you were talking about, you know, looking back over your work, and—and making these videotape records. Did you, at any point in your career, edit your work? Did you ever destroy paintings or—you mentioned—

PAUL REED: No, not—not really.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Not really?

PAUL REED: I mean, a few, where they were just so bad, or [ph]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: —[inaudible]. And there's a lot of bad ones around, [laughs] you know. Um, uh, that probably should have. I don't know. When I look back at some of the things, I really am very pleased with them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, that's great [ph].

PAUL REED: I know I couldn't do it again, you know, like, there's a certain skill [inaudible] that I'd have to try to recover. I wouldn't [ph] want to, anyway.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I think that's one thing that's typical. The changing is, sort of, typical of—or the—this shifting. Now, I don't know if it's good or bad, but that's—and, uh, but most of it is still [inaudible]. Anything I can, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I imagine that some of the sculpture doesn't really—

PAUL REED: —I—I've—I've protected a lot of it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So that—that anything that's, uh—I mean, whatever it's about isn't too difficult to find out. The work still appears [ph]. For instance, if I did a show, I could either borrow or supply and cover pretty much the spectrum [inaudible]. [00:14:07] The best quality that I did, relative, somehow, somebody else has to decide that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you—did you deliberately hold back works from—

PAUL REED: Not until recently.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —sale? Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Not until—no. Usually I put absolutely the best—what I thought was the best forward. But when you get into a surplus situation, then, uh, I had to select out—in other words, in order to make the tape, I had to

select out.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Now, other people might select different things. But the ones on the tape are what I consider to be the best.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, there's one that I wouldn't—I want to make a silk screen of, that I wouldn't—I wouldn't—someone could own it, but I'd have to have the permission to do the silk screen of it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So therefore, to protect it, I would keep it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Although I think today, under the new copyright law, probably—

PAUL REED: Permits you to—

JUDITH ZILCZER: You retain the copyright unless you relinquish it, even if you sell the work.

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You still retain the copyright unless you specifically—

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, it's—usually most people will lend it back, you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, it's the fact that, if it's across the country, and it's a big painting, it gets to be [inaudible] expensive to—no, I—I, uh—only very few things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, Esther picked out some things, and she wouldn't let me sell them. Not many. And then I start—

JUDITH ZILCZER: For the record, Esther—Esther is your wife. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah. The, uh, uh—now, like, the—the—as I say, on the tape, especially the gouaches, they're a selection, because there were too many.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And there are probably too many, even then, but, like, uh, I had to cut the line somewhere. And they are my—what I consider my collection, although if someone's interested, [inaudible] I'd part with them, because—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —you want the best to go out, anyway. My—my reasoning [ph] was, someone—one collector came to me and says, "I want one from each series. [00:16:03] You pick it out. I want the best you have."

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And I gave—I honestly gave him what I thought—

JUDITH ZILCZER: When was—when was that, and which collector was it?

PAUL REED: Oh, it was a man named Eiler, Dr. Don Eiler, out in Madison, Wisconsin. And he was here at the National Institute of Health. He's an anesthesiologist.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, during, uh, the '60s, I guess. And, um, he collected. He collected [inaudible], and Howard, [inaudible]. Um, uh—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —he got some Downing. Um, and quite a bit of my work. Uh, he didn't—I don't think he got any Davis. I gave him the little Davis that I had, but [inaudible] collect [inaudible] interesting. He continues to collect. He doesn't collect from me anymore, for quite a while. He did get some oil pastels. That's about where he ended.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So that would have been in the early '70s, when—

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —[inaudible]. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I saw him a couple of years ago. He came, and we went to the National [inaudible] Jasper Johns show. And, uh, that's the last time. Yeah, I sent him a tape. And, uh, that's about it [ph]. Uh, what were we driving at there?

JUDITH ZILCZER: I don't know. We were just talking about, uh—your work.

PAUL REED: Oh, yeah. Well, Don I gave—I don't know. He bought about seven or 10 paintings, large paintings. He wanted major things [ph]. And I did pick them out.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's wonderful.

PAUL REED: He since has given a lot of the work to the Madison Art Center [now Madison Museum of Contemporary Art]. And there's the—the museum school—museum, art museum, the Elvehjem [now Chazen Museum of Art], I think—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, at the University of Wisconsin.

PAUL REED: Right. Well, they had given—they had had a small disc for a long time. John English had given them one. And the—then Don had given them some. [00:18:02] He had—[inaudible] 20 paintings of mine. I don't know. He had three or four [inaudible], and, uh—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —So, yes, I have offered—generally offered the best I think that I had.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Now, uh, when you have a surplus, you can—this one is as good as that one, and you keep one. But, uh, I have a—I have a lot of work, and as I look through it, I still find ones that I think are as good as anything [inaudible].

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. It's going. I keep watching the tape recorder [laughs] to see—

PAUL REED: It's still going.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —if it's still going, yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Um, you're not represented by a gallery now, or are you?

PAUL REED: No. Um, I've—I guess I've had about a dozen different galleries.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You mentioned the East Hampton Gallery in New York.

PAUL REED: Yeah, with Bertha Schaefer. I was with Jefferson Place here, and Pyramid, which became the Osuna Gallery. Scottsdale. Yares was—I showed about four times. Most recently with Yares [inaudible] was in the '70s. Uh, about a dozen total [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, I'm not adverse to being represented by a gallery or showing in galleries.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, the, uh, it's—really, it's like putting on a different hat. It's nice not to have to think there's somebody out there, I've got to worry about what they're going to think.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I understand. You have a certain freedom, yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And, uh, I live modestly, you know. I don't have a—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —expenses. I—I—I don't need to sell the work. [00:20:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I'd like to sell it [inaudible]. I—the prices are probably too high, but, uh, once in a while. And, uh—I feel—when I look back at the work—I think it's pretty good. Now, somebody else has to really make that decision, not me.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But I don't feel, uh, despondent. You know, when I read about, kind of, like, Faulkner [ph], and these people that—with great, great—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Cultural figures?

PAUL REED: Yeah. And they—they went to alcoholism, and [inaudible]. You know, it's so sad. It's—now—well, Nietzsche. You know, the last 20 years of his life, he was a lunatic. He was just [inaudible] his mind.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Depressed? Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Now, that is something—maybe it's genetic or whatever, but it's—there were certainly remarkable accomplishments, what they did, but—and they just—you can document hundreds of cases. And, uh, I'm still producing. I'm 75. I'm feeling pretty good. I go do weightlifting twice a week. And, uh, you know, I garden, and I, uh—I live well, you know. I live—I eat very good food. [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, I [inaudible] after lunch. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah. And, uh, and this is—this is fairly typical. She is just great.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh, you know, we have a nice car. We can [inaudible] vacation [inaudible] not grand, but we were two weeks in Arizona [inaudible]. We have invitations, open invitations to go and stay free and to come places, California, Florida. You know. It's never really quite free, but, like, you know. [00:22:01] And, uh, no, I—I'm—I'm looking for the next [inaudible]. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: The next [inaudible]. That's pretty—that's good.

PAUL REED: And it's going to be better than [inaudible]. I'm pretty pleased with my [inaudible]. That was [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah. It's very [inaudible].

PAUL REED: But, uh, no, I'm—and, uh, I don't know what I might—I'll do what I feel like doing next.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's great.

PAUL REED: And I won't have to answer, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, and it—I guess the [inaudible] a little thing in the [inaudible] about it all, called "The Cubist—Cubist Painters," I think it was.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: It had, uh, I don't know. The—the essay was by the famous patron of the Cubists.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Kahnweiler?

PAUL REED: Yeah. And he said that 20th century—the great insight of the 20th—Motherwell [inaudible] was the —man invents himself. That was the great insight. I don't know how much I believe that, because, uh—but it—it —it's interesting that you—self-criticism is pretty much a 20th century thing. And, uh, like, oh, you know, [inaudible] work. But the, uh—that has to be someone else's domain. The critic—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —or the curator, or whoever, has to make those judgments, because they see other things, and they see it—it's like you can't see the wood for the trees. It's, like, if you're inside it, you can't see it. If you're outside it—it's the ones outside that can see it in relation to something else. And that's the way it has to be judged—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —eventually. And that's fine, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Um, I just—I—I read these things that interest me, and I, uh, make these things that interest me, and that's it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Wonderful. We can jump back now in history of what—before lunch, you were showing me that print—that print—color print, um, in the dining room. [00:24:04]

PAUL REED: Yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you were talking about Lou Stovall—

PAUL REED: Yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —helping you with the prints.

PAUL REED: Yeah, that was another thing that—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Can we talk a little bit about that?

PAUL REED: Yeah. It was—I think Walter Hopps was, uh, an influence in that, and Phil Stern, who was the great patron of—of, uh, Lou, Lou Stovall. Because when Hopps came to the Corcoran, or, uh, well—let's show what happened. Stern touted [ph] the—the Museum of—Washington Gallery of Modern Art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] bought that building and put it in there. Okay. Leni and Phil Stern. When the—when the —they closed down the Washington Gallery of Art, and the Corcoran got—they sold the collection to the Oklahoma Museum of Art. Walter was very unhappy about that, because I think the [inaudible] was a hundred and—no, I'm not sure. I might be off. But it was 150—let's say \$150,000, and they had a [inaudible]—a Duchamp [inaudible] in the collection. They had a—they had Klines, they had David Smith painting or drawings, they had all the color painters. Vincent had given one of every color painter to them. I don't know if he gave a Louis. I don't know. He may have, but I don't know [ph]. But anyway, the [inaudible] alone was worth probably a half million. [They laugh.] You know? So Walter didn't—thought it was—either it wasn't enough money, or it should have gone to the Corcoran. Maybe he was right. I don't know. I don't know whether he [inaudible], but I know that he was a little bit unhappy at the time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, it was a loss to the Washington art community.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Right. Uh, Corcoran pressed for funds, wanted the money, was offered the money, and took the money. Fine. [00:26:00] Corcoran's got [inaudible] a Rembrandt that's probably worth two hundred million, or fifty million, or whatever they're worth. [inaudible] got [inaudible] you know [inaudible] enormously valuable things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: That El—what do you think that El Greco in the Phillips is worth? The third Peter or something [*The Repentant St. Peter*]. It is a remarkable, wonderful painting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: I tell you. They got a Cézanne self-portrait. They've got Goya's St. Paul [ph]. Right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And they've got El Greco's *St. Peter*. Those three portraits. Okay. Uh, where were—where were we?

JUDITH ZILCZER: We were—the Washington Gallery of Modern Art being sold off.

PAUL REED: Yeah, okay. Alright. Now, they—Lou Stovall got that building for his workshop.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, I see.

PAUL REED: That's where these prints were made.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: Yeah?

JUDITH ZILCZER: And was that with Stern's backing that he was able to get that building?

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, the—they finally sold the building.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But that was the—the Corcoran put, uh, the senior students up there, part of it, at one point, and then Lou had it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Lou had—Lou was working on [inaudible]? No, [inaudible]. He was in where the old piano company was, there at 22nd and—I guess it was M Street. That's where the first print was made. That's—I met Lou and Dutterer—Bill Dutterer and Bob Newman had made prints with Lou, and they said, "Man, this is—there—there's a dude down there, and he—he's really doing some nice prints." So I got [laughs] in touch with Lou. And Lou was great.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And he stayed up all one night, and he did the first print, which is the Barcelona print.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But I [inaudible] cut it out and put it on the wall, and you have the shape, and you have the image in miniature, but you'd have it, and I wouldn't have to do any more stretches. [00:28:00].

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: So—now, that might have been partially Walter's sponsorship. I never knew. I don't talk about that. But, like, I got the feeling that Walter said, "Okay, you can print for this guy," because at that point, Lou was starting to get support from different [inaudible], and he was doing all sorts of [inaudible]. He was trying to make a living. He was—I don't know what Lou's—he was at Howard. He was driving up to Howard. He was very [inaudible] super [inaudible] and wonderful. I talked—I talk to him about once every six months. [inaudible] called the other day, said he'd been so busy he couldn't get to me. But I—I'm planning—I was, kind of, hoping to make a print with him, a new print.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: And maybe [inaudible]. But, uh, he's really—he's a wonderful person and a great master printer.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So Lou's in the old Washington Gallery of Modern Art, and he's set up. He's got silk screens, and drying racks, and—he's got a gallery. He put a gallery on the first floor [inaudible] and doing exhibitions.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, the Washington Color Show was there, but that was before it was converted. So he made it into a workshop [inaudible]. Anyway—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Workshop art center? Is that what it's called?

PAUL REED: Workshop was in it, I think.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But anyway, we got a couple of Christmas cards for the Corcoran. That was Walter. They gave me a hundred dollars, and printed the cards, and gave me some cards—and then I did these—these other prints there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Actually, then, okay. Corcoran settled the bill. They put the, uh—they put the school in there. I think—I think it was after. They put the senior students in there. Then they sold the building. What does—what does Stern do? You know where the Chinese Embassy is now? [00:30:01] They gave Lou that house. Then [inaudible] for a workshop. So Lou got in there and set up everything. And then I did the—I don't know. I think I did [inaudible] prints there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And then the—his last move, they—then the Chinese bought it. I don't know. Were you ever in that building?

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: It had a swimming pool, tennis courts, and sculptured ceilings. And [inaudible]. It is a mansion.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Then he bought a house up in Cleveland Park, which is where he is now. And then he built a duplicate to the garage that was there, which is his workshop [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I never worked—printed there. Well, I visited in there, but I never printed in there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But you may, I mean, in the future. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Uh, he's so busy, I really—he—Lou is so considerate and so—everything he does has to be so good, that it's—it's hard, you know? It's very time-consuming and very energy-consuming. And, uh, putting Lou through this, [they laugh] although this one—I can show you the—the original, and it's—here, again, it's a selection of what I think is [inaudible] of that period that's probably the best. It wouldn't be that difficult.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It's—the reason I thought about it, it looks—it almost looks like a silk screen—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see, I see. Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And it would translate well, and they wouldn't change much. And, uh, so it would make a—it'd make a—and then I could—I wouldn't do too many [inaudible]. And then I could—I could give them away, or sell them, or, you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The—if people wanted them, they could have them, which they can anyway, but, like, this one would be the one that I would want people to see.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: But I—I've been—when I send out the tape, I send a little photograph of this one [they laugh]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: —to establish it as, this is the—[00:32:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see, I see.

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Does it have a name?

PAUL REED: No, just a—just a date.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Not—just a date now. Okay.

PAUL REED: It might have to have a name if I print it. I don't know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Uh-huh [affirmative], uh-huh [affirmative]. Um, turning to another aspect of the Washington art world, you mentioned that you, in addition to Adams-Morgan, you were also at the Jefferson Place gallery.

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's a—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, do you want—do you want to talk a little bit about that?

PAUL REED: The Jefferson Place? Um, it—I—I—I'm a little bit vague on it, but I think I showed in the group show at the old Jefferson Place, the original Jefferson Place.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I know I showed there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And how did you—

PAUL REED: I don't think it was a one-man show, if I remember. That was probably—I'd say '62. It must have been '62, because I showed '62 paintings, if I remember.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh. And how did you—what was the—what was your connection? How did you hook up with the gallery?

PAUL REED: Oh. Well, [inaudible] Gene was with them [ph], and they had shown Tom, and, uh, it was when Nesta Dorrance took over—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —I think, right after Alice, and I had known Alice.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And there was an American University show, a Vincent Melzac collection. And they—that was the—that was, um, I don't know, '58 or somewhere, maybe earlier. And he showed—well, he showed his de Koonings, and his Kline, and, uh, uh, he had some of Gene's, and I don't think he had any—he didn't have—he didn't know Tom and Howard at that time. Norman Bluhm was there. He had, uh—[inaudible] friends in New York or something, and he showed Norman Bluhm. And, uh, then there was the show that Alice did, and it was in '65. It was, sort of, the first color show [inaudible]. What happened, see, Alice was out, and Norma was in, and Norma did the color show, which was [laughs] Alice's show. [00:34:05] You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh, here comes this outlander and does the show, and did a very good job.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Yeah. But that was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So that was [inaudible] show.

PAUL REED: —Institute of Contemporary Art. It's up on 16th Street.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right, right.

PAUL REED: And she did a show there. There was a man named Richmond [ph], I think, was the name.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mike Richmond [ph]?

PAUL REED: I think he was the director of it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, he—he and Alice did a show. And that was the first of my work, was in the American University show and then the—uh, the—and then these two [inaudible]. And I showed in—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —I guess it was [inaudible]. The, uh, soft [inaudible] expressionistic painting, or the [inaudible]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —the oil expressionistic paintings.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And—hmm.

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: Does that cover your question?

JUDITH ZILCZER: I—I think—I think it does. Are there any other aspects of the Washington art scene that were particularly memorable for you?

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: The '60s were the—was the high time, I think, in the middle—for me.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mid-'60s?

PAUL REED: In the—in the mid-'60s. And, uh, of course, I didn't paint after '72.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So [inaudible] were—I painted them for two years, '71 and '72. Um—as far as the Washington Color School is concerned, um, there were exhibitions continuing, sort of, historical things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: And I guess they would continue from now on. [00:36:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: But, like—for me, the—that—working in that medium was finished—mainly [inaudible] the space. I just didn't have the space. And once you have large space, it's hard to—to, uh, fight bumping your elbows to do that painting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: In a smaller space, yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah, it's—it's, like, that's what you resent the most. Just the economics of it. If you had a lot of money, you'd go get the space, and pay for it, and do it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But if you don't, you have to be a little more careful. You've got family and things, you know. And, uh, you have to be sensible. But you continue the work.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, you don't get mad at the space or mad at everything around you simply because something's been taken away, or you—I mean, you really never should have had it in the first place. I don't know. But yeah, that—that—it's—it's a wonderful way to paint. It was, and—now, uh, when you say, what happened to it, I know what happened to the Washington color painting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I mean, I know some of the dissemination. Uh, down in Florida, I saw paintings that were an extension of it. It's what Gilliam's doing. It's what a number of people are doing.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And it's thick gel painting on plywood. The canvas, or something, is mounted on plywood, and it's gel. It's like [Larry] Poons. Poons is a color painter.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, that's true.

PAUL REED: Where [ph] do you think Poons came up with it [ph]? And [inaudible]. Right? There's a whole section there. They're doing thick gel paintings.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Just as the [inaudible] in '72 were beginning to thicken up, and I was using medium, and, uh, now the—the—the, uh gouaches are thick. That's thick paint that you scrape through to get the ridges. [00:38:00] [inaudible] work [inaudible]. There's a color that's put in, even after. You see? Now, some of these paint—uh, Kenworth Moffett—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: —director of the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art, is great. He's put out a big, thick book on these painters. And I forget what he calls them. But I—I call them the jelly bellies, but that's—[they laugh] that's like saying that, um, I don't know, that the Corcoran was a mom-and-pop museum.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] there. Or, uh, some—there was some mom-and-pop art done [inaudible]. Anyway.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I understand. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah. It's just a [inaudible] thing. But, uh, and I saw, uh, a few in the—in a gallery, and it was very, very striking.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, although it was quite large. It must have been—the painting must have been 10 feet high, and it was all this gel work around. And then there were some enormous red streaks through it, that were, like, really deep furrows through the material, like whatever the background was [inaudible]. And he was—he was structuring the gel.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Like—a little like the gouaches. That's where it went. That big branch of it, standing there [ph] scraping through the gel—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —and splitting, and splicing, and collaging. Um, you know, the [inaudible] color. And, uh, uh, and then the other people [inaudible] break it down, like in Poons. I mean, they were—I don't know. There were maybe 20 painters in this book. You—you may have the book. [inaudible] library [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Very probably we do, yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And that's the strongest branch that I can see of people that have [inaudible] nationally. Maybe internationally. Some of them, I think, were Europeans.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Now, when you think of—it's nice to think of, like, what Cubism—what happened, and it's still happening with Cubism.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I mean, these photographs have a debt to Cubism. [00:40:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: In a sense, these stones have a debt, because they're still collage, in a way. And the—when Picasso did the absinthe [*Glass of Absinthe*], that was 1914.

JUDITH ZILCZER: The glass, yeah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] the actual spoon on it. And the [inaudible], 1914. That's [inaudible] early precedent for found objects.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Okay? Uh, Duchamp said, "You won't find me in a gallery. You'll find me in a hardware store," because he loved the tools, and the shape, and the—the materials, so common and so—I mean, like, I go to Home Depot, and I have them cut out this wood for me. You know, and I buy [ph] big stacks of the wood, and the marble [ph] and the tiles. And they have a big array to select from. [inaudible] it's raw material.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: Okay? I'm not going to go glaze tile that color, when I can buy it already. Why? I mean, I—it's a waste of time, and costs a lot more.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You can buy tile for a dollar [inaudible] beautiful, wonderful tile from all over the world. So you just select what you want [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You know, you choose it, like the readymade things [ph]. Um, yeah, that—that's a very strong branch. It isn't—it isn't like Impressionism and how it filtered out to American Impressionism, and—and still—cubist paintings are still being made.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's true.

PAUL REED: It's [inaudible]. I mean, when I looked at [ph] that [inaudible], and saw that cubist head on that woman, you know, that—the [inaudible], I mean, that's Cubism. And it's still very vital.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: It's wonderful. And actually, the photograph I had of the woman's head by Picasso, uh, it may not have been as good—[inaudible] a very good casting, but some of them round off. And that's not Cubist anymore.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, it's not—[00:42:00]

PAUL REED: It's got to be sharp. It's got to be prickling [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: —not—not the best casting, then, either.

PAUL REED: That's right. It's a—and some of these are perfectly cubist things. The planes are very sharp. They're crystalline. And, uh, they're better than those rounded-off—it's more true to the cubist concept.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: So I, uh—I like being [ph] excited about it. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's good. I want to turn all the way back to your beginning. I brought photocopies of some of the material that you donated to the archives, and I have here photocopies of some your—what I take to be your early drawings.

PAUL REED: That's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And this is a self—self-portrait.

PAUL REED: That's probably what—yeah. I was in Atlanta working for the engraver at that point. And they, uh—I was doing a number in this technique, which is—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative]. Very—very realistic.

PAUL REED: Yeah. As I said, there's an Albers self-portrait that looks like this.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Ah. Were you—

PAUL REED: It's done in a similar—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —were you—

PAUL REED: —I didn't know about [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: No. It's just, uh—

PAUL REED: No idea.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No?

PAUL REED: No, no.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, it also has a certain graphic quality that I associate with—and this is a design, I guess, from your [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, see, now, this one's, sort of—this is '36, so the Art Deco stuff was around, and I may have seen it in a magazine [inaudible], because it's certainly influenced in that way.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I was—well, also, I was—I would—I associate design like this a little bit with Rockwell [inaudible] illustration.

PAUL REED: Absolutely. I wouldn't have known him that—I did know him later.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, uh, especially in Montclair, we were doing [inaudible] illustrations, which were—were—like, in fact, the [inaudible] agency, the fashion agency, had its bookplate designed by Rockwell [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Really? [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Really. Just children with [inaudible] and yeah. And actually had Rockwell print it [ph]. And the man was—is surprising, because the man was an ultraconservative, you know, the—the head of the agency.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Agency, I know.

PAUL REED: And Ken was a [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: A communist. [00:44:00]

PAUL REED: He was a socialist or a communist.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah, he was very, very [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: I mean, he—one of the few Americans to have his work exhibited in Moscow during the Cold War, the height of the Cold War. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So, um—and this is—these are some other self-portraits.

PAUL REED: Yeah, this is a wash, and it's later. And this is, um, kind of, a—a dime store, uh, photo. You know, you get in and jump around the booth?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: And that was just—but that's pretty early, actually.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, you've got '36. That's probably about right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Alright. And you still have these [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: Yeah, I have those, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. And so these are among the earliest extant works by Paul Reed.

PAUL REED: Oh, yeah, these are just about the earliest, yes. Um, uh, I'm working as an artist, or, uh, um, commercially, but these are the first ones, I think, I did just—I did—portraits, [inaudible] self-portraits is a—and portraits interest me. I did a lot of imaginary portraits. I did a lot of—uh, for the Corcoran, I was doing a portrait lesson, and I did take offs from—uh, the guy that did the Isenheim Altarpiece.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Grünewald.

PAUL REED: Uh, Grünewald. And that was very curious, the portraits he did. And I can show you [inaudible]. They're oil pastel portraits.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: And I have no idea [inaudible] second if you want [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Sure, why not?

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. We're looking at some port—oil pastel portraits now.

PAUL REED: Excuse me. Just a minute. There's [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Alright. Just a minute.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. We're looking at oil pastel portraits from—these are from, what, the '70s?

PAUL REED: Um, yeah, it would be in the '70s, right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And you're showing me the photograph of, uh, Thomas de Reineck or Rieneck [ph]. Um, and your painting—and your, uh, drawing of it.

PAUL REED: My Grünewald.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Grünewald.

PAUL REED: Yeah. [00:46:00] I was, um, doing a lesson for the Corcoran on imaginary portraits. We would just make a drawing of a—of an imaginary head, the way that you would naturally do it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And then refer to other types of portraiture. I was surprised to find Grünewald as a portraitist.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, uh—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: These are wonderful.

PAUL REED: —these are in oil pastel, I think [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: And so these were part of your teaching exercises.

PAUL REED: They were, yes. I don't—I don't know how much I used it, but it—it interested me to do it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, I can see it [ph].

PAUL REED: And I was—pleased to find [inaudible] the Isenheim Altarpiece, and I [inaudible] found this little book [inaudible]. So it really—it's—here, again, harks back to the [inaudible] stone sculpture, very interested in classic art or ancient art, [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Making use of it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: See if I have other questions that we might—

[END OF TRACK AAA_reed94_6297.]

PAUL REED: —Well, there's two—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Thank you. So are we. [Laughs.] We're—we're on tape three, side A, on April 29, 1994.

PAUL REED: Yeah, it, uh—it—it affects my future thinking, to say, that's very important. The contact with other art professionals is very important. That's part of the critical or the analytic side of it, which is—you—you lose if you don't have it, okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh, a curator is probably the absolute best person, because their interest, their whole field—

JUDITH ZILCZER: I wish all artists felt that way. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Not [inaudible] specific, but in your attitude.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Your—your—your—your job is to look at and understand art, and why it was done.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You know, and arrange shows, or whatever else. I don't know a whole—what all, but it has to be—the reason you are what you are is because you're interested in—in art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Exactly.

PAUL REED: And why and how it came about.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And a, uh, a very accurate view of what—you know, to—to get rid of, uh, the distortion, or the dishonesty, or, you know, like, actually, it will be your—it is your view, but nevertheless, it's as accurate as you can make it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible]

PAUL REED: Like, you don't want false information, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: You want [inaudible] if you can, as much as you can, out of the actual accuracy.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: So you can make [inaudible] decisions—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: —as to quality, or whatever.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, quality is—is considered a controversial concept at this point.

PAUL REED: It's debatable.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: It's like truth.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It's a matter of interpretation. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Exactly. Exactly. Um, you were—you're talking about the importance of—of interchange. Did you—did you feel like you got that kind of creative feedback from—from the other friends in the Washington art community? [00:02:06]

PAUL REED: Well, I guess I did. It's never as much as you hoped for.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, I know that Tom, last time I saw him, when he had his show at the Phillips?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: You know, he went back, and then he died. But he looked at this, and he [inaudible] interesting. Now, this is a little oil—an oil pastel, a 12 by 18 oil pastel, with a triplicate photo at the bottom of that same drawing, but with a reversal, so you get a new image.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: He was very curious about that, and he—uh, I did, uh, a spiral painting, which one time he came to my studio, and he saw that spiral painting. And then later, he did what he called his helixes. Now, I don't know. He probably—you know, he did much better with the idea than I did. He did big paintings, very nice paintings.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yep, yep.

PAUL REED: And mine was just a little simple swirl, which, you know—And, uh, with [ph] Howard—well, Howard helped me get that first show, and he wrote the little essay.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh, [inaudible]. He must have thought they were useful enough. Now, I don't think he would have—he liked the fact that I had the show in the Corcoran before he did, and I shouldn't have, but he may not have been available at the time, or I don't know what went on.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But he certainly—even though he was much younger than I am, he was much older, more senior, as an artist, as was Tom, because they studied at CU [ph] with—with Ken. Gene, uh, well, it's—uh, we started closer to the same time, although he was much keener, and, uh, much more intense. [00:04:00] And, uh, we started—I started way before any of them as an artist, but not as a color artist, or [inaudible] the particular information that you [ph] finally came upon.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, Gene wasn't—Ken actually criticized some of Gene's work. And he—I guess he—but he went to the workshop. I never went to the Washington workshop, which was the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —the, uh—De Kooning came to the workshop, and, uh, I don't know—and Greenberg.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes. But, well, de Kooning had a—his first so-called museum show at the Boston Museum School, came to the Workshop Art Center in Washington. That would have been in 19—I want to say '53 or '54.

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And Ken and—I think Morris was doing a little teaching there or something. I don't [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: I can't remember the man's name, either, but—

PAUL REED: Leon Berkowitz.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That—

PAUL REED: [inaudible]—yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —that's right. I was going to ask you about Leon Berkowitz.

PAUL REED: Well, Leon was in Spain when the color thing broke.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And came back, and then—in oil paint, picked up on the idea of atmospheric color.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And he was quite successful.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Were you friendly with him at all?

PAUL REED: Yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Well, he was at the Corcoran, and I had—had met—Leon was at every party. [They laugh.] You couldn't help but meet Leon.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, and Leon always had an apprentice in tow, like, somebody sketching, or gessoing, or something. And, uh, no, you couldn't—you couldn't miss Leon if you were on the scene at all.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But, uh, yeah, [inaudible] was a bit much [inaudible]. He didn't realize how much better an artist I was than he was. [They laugh.] And, um, I didn't know any way to make that impression on him.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah. [Laughs.] I understand that—that there was some rivalry among various—
[00:06:03]

PAUL REED: Oh, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —of the—of the Washington artists—

PAUL REED: Well, yeah, sure.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —and that he was one of—at one pole, I guess, and some of the others were in another camp—camp. There was some—

PAUL REED: Well, you have the—the, uh, anointed six.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Who were?

PAUL REED: Yeah. It's all the color show, the original color show.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Uh-huh [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And everybody else trying to claw their way in. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: So you felt like you were among the select?

PAUL REED: Well, there were.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah?

PAUL REED: I mean, it was—yeah, they were very select.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I mean, we weren't—I mean, it—it's interesting. Ken has—I have great admiration for Ken. And in the—in, um, the—the Mehring catalog, he mentioned how, well, kind Ken was. Ken would bring Greenberg to

their studio.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: Ken—I'm sure Ken must have been something to do with introducing Davis to Greenberg. I'm not sure of that, but I would [inaudible] much of a stretch. Ken introduced Morris Louis to Greenberg, you see. And I—I [inaudible]—I mean, I only spent a few hours with Ken at one time [ph]. I ran into him in a gallery, and [inaudible] the only time I've ever seen it [ph], but he was very—very kind, and generous, and compliment—had a few slides. Davis went and looked at my slides. You know, 1963. Told me they were good.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Uh, no, Ken was—Ken, I think, was and is that way. He just remarried.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: I think I—I read something.

PAUL REED: Yeah, something in the *Post*. And there was something in the *Times*. I missed the *Times* [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Me, too.

PAUL REED: The, uh—uh—yeah. The—that's another reason, uh, I guess, that I don't particularly—I don't—you know, or I'm [inaudible] being involved with a gallery or with, uh, seeking out a show. [00:08:07] Somebody calls, and they want to put me in a show. I say, fine, and if I hear from them, that's fine, if I don't, I don't—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You know? I'm really not too concerned. I've done, like, 40 solo shows, and—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, that's a lot.

PAUL REED: —a lot of—you know, in those years. I mean, there are—it's—it's a—it's the other hat that you put on. And it didn't particularly interest me to get involved in—in that. Um, I guess if you sold a lot, and made a lot of money, and, uh, uh, you know, were involved, and—I read these things about people and artists that are very popular, and apparently very successful, and what they've done, it really doesn't interest me.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, it, uh—certainly detracts from the work. I mean, if you're thinking about what somebody's going to think, or who special person [inaudible] that, you're making it for them, and [inaudible] yourself.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And, uh, I think that's just very selfish. But that's, sort of, the way [inaudible] guarantee anything except that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I, uh—I, uh, also should have come [ph]—go back and confirm that, like, is this worthwhile? And, uh, usually when I open up [inaudible] back at the old stuff, some of it is—I think it's quite good, and, uh, it really suits me. And I'm glad I did it, and I'm glad—it's just like the paintings. Instead of making stretchers, I made paintings. Now, the paintings are [inaudible] stretched, but I've got the paintings, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] I see. I see what you mean.

PAUL REED: And, uh, it's the same with the oil past—same with the gouaches, and the rocks. I can always put them in a dumpster, you know. Uh, put them in a box, put them away. I [inaudible] fill up all the space, so that is starting to slow me down. [00:10:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Uh, and, uh, I don't know. But it—it—it's like going to the Hirshhorn. That stimulated me to do three more. Like, and they—they don't take very long. [They laugh.] That's another thing. See, there's no, I guess, drudgery involved.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The sheer, just, labor, which is—you're not making. You're—you're—you're—you're working. And that's okay, you know. [inaudible] to a certain level of craft, which is acceptable. But, uh, it doesn't—I'd rather be reading something, or thinking, or trying to think about what I might do next. Now, that, again [ph], doesn't guarantee anything, but it's a nice position to be in.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: See? That's the—and when one—you know, when one comes off—I was so pleased when I found my stores. You know? It just—just, uh—see, Jim Pilgrim did a Stores [ph] show at the Corcoran—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, I—

PAUL REED: —[inaudible] I don't know—early.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And that was my introduction to Stores [ph] as such. I may have seen—I knew, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So in a way, you were—

PAUL REED: —[inaudible], and I knew the—some of the things, but to [inaudible] and hear these things. And so I've, kind of—he interested me, because I did some copies [ph] of, uh, [inaudible] cubist things.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, um, uh, so the—the cubist interest goes way back for me. That was done in the '50s. [inaudible] with the balsa wood, but I liked that concept of form. And it's the same in the rocks.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] same crystalline form. And, uh, so the, uh—that—that's the—you know, it's like to keep moving—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —to keep doing something. And, uh, um, it's like when I say to a curator, you know when I say "Stores [ph]" what I'm talking about. But nobody—[00:12:00] You're talking about exchanging information. Nobody in my circle knows the name of John Stores [ph]. I'd have to—and that's why—you know, when they come in—this is—this is James Joyce, okay? Here's James Joyce. [inaudible] James Joyce.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, yes.

PAUL REED: And here's James, [Judith Zilczer laughs] you know? [inaudible]. Here's [inaudible]. This is [inaudible] form. Feel the weight and the smoothness of the rock. It's didactic.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: I've got a—you know, I—I've got to give them a—they demand a lesson. [inaudible]. I don't know. [inaudible] photograph.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: This is a—you know, like, African—I mean, I—I don't know [inaudible] knew he had a bunch of African stuff in there [ph]. Well, I got rid of all that. It's upstairs in storage. This is Vincent [inaudible] and his ear's missing.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] Vincent [inaudible].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] this is all [inaudible] Duchamp-Villon. Okay? I mean, it's from there [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: You know, and it's from [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: It's ordinary [ph] [inaudible] enormous [inaudible] that they [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: So they either stay away, or they listen to that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Yeah. [inaudible] was a kid, you'd give it to them.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: And then when they—see, it's a—it's a thing of discovery. It's, like, [inaudible] discover a Coke bottle in the world [ph], but if you just [inaudible], you're going somewhere. You know what I mean? When you see a [inaudible], it's going to—you're going to have a—you're going to start thinking about how good that is, and, you know, um, Rodin. You'll start looking at Rodin. [inaudible] walk past it [inaudible] that's Rodin. I know—and you—you think about, maybe, his erotic subject matter or something. But you'll think about Rodin [inaudible] wonderful form this is, you know? How great [ph] and powerful it was. And that's what I want to happen [ph]. [00:14:00] [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, so, that—that's what your current work—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —is—is about.

PAUL REED: Yeah. It—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Can you see yourself moving beyond the sculpture to something else at this point, or—

PAUL REED: I can't—I don't see anything.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, this is—in a way, I guess, it happens to everyone, this, um—I guess it's part of the thing of life [ph]. You wouldn't want somebody to copy you. You have an i—a fairly decent idea, and you—you—you flesh it out. There it is. Somebody comes along and copies it, and goes on, and you feel like you've been robbed of something, see? So you wonder if you'll ever have another good idea like that, or if you only get one, or—it's like Davis. You know, he took one idea, the stripe, and he does remarkable and refined [ph] things with it. It's—it's pretty much [inaudible]. If you look at the other work, it's—it's not—[inaudible] not anywhere near as significant, you know? So you—like the stones was a—a [inaudible] idea.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] certainly of old art, old historic art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And previous of my own art.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: You know, the idea of using historical things. The idea of allusion [ph], alluding to, uh, previous art. Um, and you wonder what the next idea—now, this doesn't mean it's—it's a great idea or extremely significant, but an idea to—to energize you enough to produce some work. So I don't know. I don't know what it might be. Um, that's, sort of—the stones, sort of, make themselves, in a way.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: There's another big difference. I really want to make this point. The idea of compulsion, you know. I can sit down and make—uh, uh, [inaudible] skills, I can make oil painting, I can make any kind of a—satisfactory art. I'm very highly skilled in dexterity, and—and memory, and I have very high skills [ph]. [00:16:01] That's, sort of, a virtuoso side, which I don't use much of. It might show up from time to time. But—I'm going to lose my—in the preamble, I lose the thought.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] Take your time.

PAUL REED: Uh—

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay.

PAUL REED: The idea of compulsion in—in work. Now, the, uh—I was saying [inaudible] it's no problem. I could do another color painting, or another oil pastel, or another whatever. There's no compulsion in these rocks. They make themselves. Actually, just—I just stay there—it's like you say, the next thing I'm going to do. It's like when I went to the Hirshhorn. That generated three, which I like. I mean, they're okay. Um, no compulsion.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was there compulsion in the earlier series that you [inaudible]?

PAUL REED: Not really.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No?

PAUL REED: No. See, I walk in the woods every morning for about an hour. I go down this—this—this trail goes all the way to the river down here [ph]. It goes down to—you look over ravines, and enormous rocks. And, uh, people walk their dogs and, you know, they say good morning. And I got the—I've been in the creek bed from the beginning all the way to the river.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I've searched those creek beds. I can't—that was one stage. It wasn't a matter of finding. It was a matter of searching, looking. And [inaudible] look, and look, and look. Nothing is there. All of a sudden, right at your feet, there's the Mona Lisa or something, huh? And it's like finding a big chunk of gold, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And that's not compulsion. See, it's a totally different thing. Now, I bring all the rocks back. It's a matter of [inaudible], because they're heavy, and I'm—I've got to go uphill now. That's—[they laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And I've already walked for an hour to get there, okay? So it was a matter of the steady [ph] [inaudible]—[00:18:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible] just another kind of physical—physical strength. You were saying it—talking about the physical aspects of painting, and—and stretching canvas, and all that.

PAUL REED: Yeah, well—

JUDITH ZILCZER: This is another kind of physical demand.

PAUL REED: —no, this isn't—this is, uh—you walk because it's good for you.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You see? And you eat good food, and you rest, and then it's because you [ph] feel better, and you—whatever you're going to do, you can do it better. Okay? So [inaudible] they make themselves [inaudible]. And, uh—now, in the—you might say that—I saw a Chuck Close, the great big silk screen head that he did? I don't know. It's just a—it's a new—it's probably a [ph] new thing. Now, there's compulsion. I mean, here's a guy in a wheelchair, and he already [ph] [inaudible]. Now, I—I can never match that compulsion.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Nobody—any—[inaudible]. Now, he may have an apprentice do it, or whoever. It's still an enormous amount of—that's what I don't want to get involved in. See? Now, um, in the—when you have a—when you do a series—see, when I conceived a [ph] series, I conceive of it in two ways, the color and the scale.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You know, I start out the [inaudible] using a roller big—this big, and I end up by using a roller this big. So there's a certain—if you want to get to the end of what you—sort of, [inaudible], there's a certain compulsion to move you through that. There are periods [inaudible] where you have to, sort of, push on through.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Go unconscious, and—and, uh, just do the work.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: You know, and remember all of the technical things in order to not mess it up. The oil pastels—you go to the Corcoran, you teach, you come home, you do an oil pastel. That's a, kind of, form of compulsion. When you do a thousand of them—that's [inaudible] bit of a—[inaudible] the gouaches. It's a lot. I mean, boxes and boxes of them. And, uh, you know, you—you—you squeeze out the paint, you mix up the color, and you do the print, and you fill it in. And then it's, like, I don't know, it was nine years? [00:20:02] That's a compulsion. [inaudible] like, not high compulsion. Not Chuck Close. But it's—it's a certain degree of pushing through without thinking.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, uh, now, some painting—another thing about these. Expressionistic paintings, it depends on the unconscious, much more so. These are very conscious.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: It's like a collage. You move it around until you've got it where you want it, and then you glue it down. Okay? It's open ended. It's not a straitjacket. You can—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You know. And, uh, it's like these [ph]. You know, you look at hundreds before you get one, see, that's open—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —that's flexible, and then you say, okay, that's it. You're very sure [inaudible]. And, uh, so that I like that abse—compulsion also relates to, sort of, uh, what I call, uh, brutalizing labor, like much of the modern world is people [ph] that work in factories. You know, it's just terrible what it does to the [inaudible], and, uh, I'm not saying anybody's wrong. [inaudible] seems to be no better system, but it is brutalizing.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And, just, you know, they drink, and they do whatever they do. They bowl, or whatever they do, watch TV. I do a lot of that, too. But, uh, um, you know, that's what I'm saying. But these have a—very little sweat [ph]. Sometimes the—the adhesive isn't working quite right, [Judith Zilczer laughs] [inaudible] a little nervous, and that's about the extent of it. Or I might have to stand in line to get the lumber cut. That's the extent of it. All the rest is visual. My memory, what I've seen, and what I think is worth doing. That's nice. And if somebody else likes them, that is really nice. See?

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] Okay.

PAUL REED: And that's [inaudible]. That's [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. [Paul Reed laughs.] Alright. Um, let's pause for a—

[Audio Break.] [00:22:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Um, let's talk a little bit about the Gilport paintings. You've referred to them several times in the interview.

PAUL REED: Yeah. They were divide—it's a divided painting, a two-part painting. Uh, there are other earlier two-part paintings in the '63 and '64, [inaudible] a satellite, a small canvas similar to the very large canvas—maybe a 6 foot canvas and a 15 inch canvas off to the side, off to the left of the—and I showed these in New York, uh, probably in '64.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Um, the idea was, it's like the shaped canvas. The idea is to involve the wall with the painting. Like, you take a shaped canvas, and any wall you put it on, it'll—it'll structure that wall. The negative space—you—you become conscious of the other space. Whereas in a rectangle, you're conditioned that, just read within the rectangle. Okay? And once you [inaudible], you notch the edges, and you, sort of, have to figure out [ph] how to

look at the notch.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, so the—the—the Gilport—of course, it was shaped canvas. And it goes beyond that, in that it's nailed directly to the wall, and the center of the perimeter functions as a corner. The illusion—like, in the optimal [ph] side, which is 7 feet, the—if you look at it—if one looks at it [laughs] a certain way, that will appear to be a box, a cube.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: That you're looking at a corner, and that rectangle is floating out from that corner. So it's an illusion of freedom action [ph]. Aside from just perspective, or linear, or Renaissance perspective, it's an atmospheric illusion. Um, the, uh—so there—there's that aspect. And it's a really extended series. Two years. I did some oil pastels, but no other painted image, except maybe finishing up the Marmara, or some of the canvases that were almost finished. [00:24:02]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But mainly—I had a very large studio. Like, it must have been 20 by 30 feet of floor space. Which I—I'd staple it down to the plywood floor, and mix up a lot of paint, and roll it out, and have three or four of them going at the same time. Most of the series are the—are 5 footers, and the reason for that is that I moved very quickly. They started out on paper, 12 inches, and moved up to 2 feet, 3 feet, 4 feet, 5 feet. I jumped up to 7 feet, and I was too quick. I had to back down. The—I lost them, because this texture of the canvas—and the paint remained the same size. The canvas just gets bigger.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So you don't—you can't jump up the scale, the texture of the—of the canvas. So it functions differently, so I had to—to back—that's why there's so many 5 footers. I backed down to 5 foot, and wallowed there for a while, until I really had a handle on it, and then went up. And I ended up with two 12 footers, 12 by 12. Which—that was about the end of it. And the 5 footers had become darker and darker—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: —until the—the—this rectangle almost disappeared. And they were like Reinhardts, you know. I really liked those. Nobody else liked it, but I really liked it. You've got to look for the rectangle there. And, um, then I—unfortunately—[refers to ringing phone] that'll record. Um, unfortunately, I probably was close to the end of the series. I—what had happened, they had dark—started to darken. The—the early ones and the small ones were very bright. [inaudible] fluorescent color [inaudible] high [ph]. And there's some that I didn't carry the under painting. Would someone be calling you here?

JUDITH ZILCZER: It's possible.

PAUL REED: Okay. We'll listen to it, then. It's over.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay. Oh, shall we stop? [00:26:00]

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: I'm sorry to interrupt that interesting technical explanation of the Gilports.

PAUL REED: Yeah. The, um—the—they—they darkened. The—some of the early ones—[inaudible] has one—it's on the tape—of a very brightly—a very French 7 footer. You've got a, kind of, an interesting one, I think.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, yeah.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] that was, sort of, middle-late period, which is about as sophisticated as the dot [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, um, then in glazing—see, the way you lose a Gilport is you glaze too much. It starts out very bright, and it's very—it's much like—well, the later—what I call the gel painters.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah, the thick—the paint was thick. And, uh, you start with it thick, and then as you put the glazes

over, that resists the glaze, where the canvas is [inaudible], and the glaze—the paint underneath will be lighter, because it's not letting the paint through to the—to the bare canvas. Um, so they, sort of, got rougher, and rougher, and darker, and darker.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, once I had the large ones, I then, uh—I didn't—I don't think I did anymore. I was driving toward that scale.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, they're more or less—they're very close to being square in shape on the wall, and 12 feet, you're starting to run out of places you can hang them. And, uh, um, the—I did, uh, some divided sculpture, which were pieces [inaudible] sort of—there's sections cut on a V out of a pipe. Here. There's a small—small versions of it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: If you take a pipe, and you cut about [inaudible], you'll end up with this nice shape. And I—I saw that as a—almost like a model for something that would be big enough to walk through, something that was 12 or 14 feet, that you would stand in the space, the concave space [inaudible] space. [00:28:02] A simple [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And so then you [inaudible]. Now, they were done—hmm. They'd have been done close to the same time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] seeing them as being related, but there they are.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: And, uh, now I found some tiles, some octagon tiles [inaudible] put those on. And the—the [inaudible], of course, are octagons.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So—

PAUL REED: So it's an echo back—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —to, uh, [inaudible]. It just reinforces that sense of form. The, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Are there other series—you mentioned—you'd spoken of other series that you've [inaudible]. Did you want to talk a little about those, too? Um, those that preceded the Gilport and—

PAUL REED: Well, these are—yeah. The, uh—I think only the shape—uh, no, I did the Upstart series, which is very—this is—that was when I decided not to do any more curves or discs. The Upstart, that means that I was starting up a new sort of thing, and that's when I did the free roller, okay? That—so that had a title. And then in the grids, I—I—in order to—they were—they were pretty close to each other, so I had Interchange, Intersection, In and Out, and Inside Out, which separated—now, the Interchange, I thought that the color would go out, and then it comes back in and it's changed, you see?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It just sweeps back and forth. And that's a—an extension of the Kline idea of going off the edge of the canvas, as against whirling [ph] around within the rectangle.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: He—he kept on going. See, the interesting thing about Pollock, which Greenberg mentioned, was that Pollock didn't go off the edge. He stayed free of the edge, in many cases. He kept within the edge. And, uh, it's very interesting, because it's a—then it becomes a compositional thing. [00:30:02] It just isn't all—an all over painting. He's placing that within a rectangle. And it's a very interesting way to look at that [ph]. He's a very remarkable painter, very great [ph]. Uh, the Intersection was just the [inaudible] right angle grid, okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: It was—and this is, uh, Emerging. And Emerging relates to this sculpture, which, if you place it in a certain position, it seems to be coming up out of the floor.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: See?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Uh-huh [affirmative].

PAUL REED: So the—the—some of the sculpture was multi-positional. Or this—or this one, also, can rest on a table, you see?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And it—of course, it has the different other positions.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: So this is related to the Emerging painting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, let me ask you about the—your two-dimensional works. Do you see them as being oriented in multiple—in multiple ways, or did you always—for example, this painting is—

PAUL REED: Yes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —meant to be seen horizontally, or—

PAUL REED: Yeah, right, [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: —or could it be a vertical?

PAUL REED: That's right. Uh, no, that—here again, that comes over a long period of time. I would change my mind about that. Not anymore. But like the Gilports, which are the five-sided paintings—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —hung by the point.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And I like them in that position.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Uh, the—the, uh—of course, the, uh [inaudible] is obviously, because it—this is isometric perspective. Its isometric [inaudible] suggests it's Renaissance perspective, because it tapers.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: This is—this is parallel. This is [inaudible] architectural perspective. So you get a warp. It looks like it's twisted. And that's what happened to cubist paintings. [inaudible]. [00:32:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: It twists.

PAUL REED: Because it's—it, um—it moves laterally. And the bigger it got, the more it started to buckle. Here's the buckle. And, um, uh, so this was isometric to get that twist. Like, if you look at some of the Downings, he did some diamond shapes.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, I—I—

PAUL REED: The—the discs look like they're wobbling [inaudible], because they are truly round.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: But the shape forces them to [inaudible], and it's an illusion. Maybe not desired, but there it is.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Did you and he talk about that?

PAUL REED: No. [They laugh.] Uh, you know, I—I wouldn't, uh—Tom could be very—just charming [inaudible] the other [inaudible] just a southern gentleman. You know, when he looked at that painting, I just felt so good that he would look at it. [inaudible], you know? And then, it's like he threw a switch. Unbearable.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Really?

PAUL REED: You'd either have to hit him with something or get out of there. Just terrible. And, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was he—

PAUL REED: I—I, sort of, let him get—and he—he would [inaudible]. Like, I know—I mentioned it in the memorial that I know if he was standing there, it would be a big joke to him, you know? Talking about him being dead. He would take it as humor [ph]. He wouldn't be depressed at all. But I didn't know what he might do next as an artist. [inaudible] unpredictable, in a good way, in a good sense that he was very creative. But, um—I don't know. It, uh—see, everybody—each [inaudible] their own trip. Not really getting into being critical about each other's work. [00:34:04]

JUDITH ZILCZER: So that was—

PAUL REED: I mean, you may be privately, to yourself, or—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Like the disc might come out of—might consider coming out of just a simple occasional dally, one simple [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Yeah. He did the dial [inaudible]. You have a dial. Didn't you have a dial? Yours is a dial.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: [inaudible]. And, uh, yeah. That's—people, sometimes they look at my things, and they say, "I never saw anything like that before." And I say, "It doesn't make any difference whether you did or not," you know? It really doesn't.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: You can't worry about that, not now.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah, now. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Then, you could worry about whether it's too close to somebody.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: Not now.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: It's, uh—there's always precedent. I could find it all [inaudible]. [inaudible] present. It's unknown, it's unconscious, but it existed before. You've got the dials, you've got the stripes. And even the color sets.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: I mean, there are only so many colors, and there are only so many color sets. It's bound to repeat if it's ever been colored [ph]. And, uh, but that's not what's important. You can't really worry too much about that. Uh, at a later—at a late—at a late stage. Earlier, possibly. Yeah. I would. I mean, you have Picasso doing—what did he do? He did—well, he did [inaudible]. You know, he was 70 years old, and he [inaudible]. And you could see his [inaudible]. It's not like mine, where they're original. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, do you think that's an aspect of, um—that, um, as you gain in experience, you—and you have a certain confidence, you can look back—

PAUL REED: Yeah. [00:36:00]

JUDITH ZILCZER: —at older art, and—and come to it with a—you know, a lifetime of—of your own work, then? And—

PAUL REED: Yeah, you don't have to be concerned that, uh, you're copying somebody, or—you know, you're not concerned. I'm not concerned about originality. Somebody else can make that decision. I don't—it's, sort of, like, madness lies in that direction, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, it's like paranoia. Try to avoid it. It's not healthy. The, uh [inaudible]. I am—these interest me, because it has, first—first of all, I start doing the tapes, and I have to look back at it and get things a little bit straight in my mind, in case people ask me a question, like today.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Right.

PAUL REED: I'm much better off because I've been through all that labor on those other tapes, because I've been asked some—you know, I have to surface up and gather together those things to mention [ph]. Um, I lost the thread again.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you want me to stop the tape while—while you remember? [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Yeah, maybe.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: We're talking about—

PAUL REED: About, uh, copying or being influenced, or going back, and, uh, um—it'll—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, it—it's—

PAUL REED: It just keeps going, doesn't it?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Only when you speak.

PAUL REED: Is it going now?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes. Do you want me to turn it off?

PAUL REED: No, it's still going, isn't it?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, well, I turned it on.

PAUL REED: But—oh, only when I speak will it—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right.

PAUL REED: —will it record?

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's right. There—it seems that there is a time delay. In other words—

PAUL REED: Oh, I see.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —it will continue to turn for a little while after you stop speaking.

PAUL REED: Alright. Let's be quiet and see if it stops.

JUDITH ZILCZER: It will.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: [inaudible]. That's good. I've got to get one of those. [They laugh.] So it takes out the gaps.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, it does. It—it, uh, prolongs the—the amount of tape that you need [ph].

PAUL REED: Yeah, that's much more efficient. [00:38:00] Um, well, it—the—making the tape stimulated me to go back historically, what I'd been thinking of doing, and verbalizing it with someone provoking questions.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Sympathetic, but provoking questions. Not antagonist, uh, so I became [inaudible]. I had to [inaudible], essentially, with [inaudible] at some point, because he was bringing up Hans Hofmann, which you might say the Gilport rectangle was Hans Hofmann, and he could be right, you know? Hans Hofmann used too much red. [They laugh.] But, uh, uh, yeah.

[Audio Break.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Roger Sel—you were saying Roger Selby is your—

PAUL REED: Roger Selby was educational director at the Corcoran.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I see.

PAUL REED: And, uh, we were friends during those years. [inaudible] very—very nice, very encouraging. He went up to Hartford, to the [Wadsworth] Atheneum. And he [inaudible] and accepted two paintings. They already had one, a disc, a small disc in the collection. And they accepted a 4 by 5 disc and a Topeka [inaudible] Atheneum.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And then he goes up for the—they—they built a new wing or something, or a renovation. I don't know. Anyway, we went up and stayed with him, and, um—

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible]

PAUL REED: Put that doorstop there so the wind doesn't blow that [inaudible]. Um, it's a curious little sideline there. We were invited to the director's house for an after-opening party. [inaudible], I guess, was the main speaker. He was at the Met then. [00:40:00] And, uh, um, Barnett Newman was there. And Barnett Newman—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was he—

PAUL REED: —I went over the following morning to look at the collection, and my painting was hanging next to—they have *Concord* or one of the small Newmans. Well, Newman [inaudible] always felt had to be enshrined, like, isolated, so you could study it as a painting. And Newman's there looking at the painting, so I introduced myself. Well, he—he was very short. [They laugh.] [inaudible] faced a big one like that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: But anyway, he was at—he then came to the party, so he did give me a nod at the party. But he came to a—curious thing. He came to—see, he had—*Broken Obelisk* was in the corner of the Corcoran?

JUDITH ZILCZER: I remember that.

PAUL REED: Okay. He didn't have District friends [ph]. Now, his obelisk is down in Houston, one of them. I don't remember. There could be about three made. I'm not sure. He was at a party, at one of these get-togethers [inaudible] Harithas [ph]. And I made the thing of not speaking to Newman [ph]. And they had one of my discs hanging on the wall. Jim had a—he did a, uh—Newman did a silk screen on Plexiglas of the very narrow—one of the very narrow, um, stripes that he did.

JUDITH ZILCZER: The zips?

PAUL REED: The zips, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: I don't know. It was probably an edition [ph] or something. And, uh, he—that was hanging, and my disc [laughs] was hanging there again. [inaudible] what was hanging next—it was a Topeka was hanging next to his. He looked at my painting. And, uh, [they laugh] so I didn't—it just [inaudible]. Well, Roger was down at Boca Raton, Roger Selby, the director, who's not—he's executive director, like the CEO, in other words. Uh, different and additional powers, I guess. But anyway, he's got this great big warehouse that the—the man who did Habitat, the architect, has designed a new museum for Boca Raton. [00:42:08] And Roger's involved, and, uh, putting that together, getting the funding in.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, exciting [ph].

PAUL REED: And he's accepted—he has two Gilports and a—uh, I think a shaped, and then a couple discs, and a lot of [ph] oil pastels, and triptychs, and—he's got a lot of Reeds. [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, that's wonderful.

PAUL REED: And he—he—[inaudible] the museum's a little tiny museum. He can't show hardly anything [ph]. One half of the museum is a wing [inaudible] by a collector who gave the [inaudible] with the stipulation that his work [ph] always be hanging—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: —and so they [inaudible]. [Laughs.] And, uh, that call was from the gallery. [inaudible] galleries—gallery there [inaudible] just [inaudible] it [inaudible]. Now they're asking questions. I don't know [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. What's the name of the gallery?

PAUL REED: Baker—her name is Elaine Baker, and it's the Baker something something [Baker Sponder Gallery, now Sponder Gallery]. They just added a new partner, so it's three names. It's Baker—[inaudible]. That's how much I'm interested in it. [They laugh.] But, yeah. I—I don't mind it. I like [inaudible] and seeing—I just don't want the hassle that goes with it. For instance, I hung the—the Gilport. I took a 5 foot Gilport. [inaudible] hanging for the first time, and they're, kind of, impressive if the space is nice.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Okay.

PAUL REED: So I hung—I hung about—and it was next to a Chadwick or something, and the angles, sort of [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, that must have been—

PAUL REED: I think Chadwick is, sort of, big [inaudible] multiple bronzes [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: The owner says they're too far apart. [They laugh.] Well, I put on the back, and I put on the diagram, that it's the same distance as a rectangle. Okay? That's very simple. [00:44:00] You just measure the rectangle, and that's the distance. She wanted to move them closer together.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] close. No, that's too close. [inaudible]. So that's why galleries [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I should think that—that the artist's intention would be the guiding principles in the installation.

PAUL REED: I mean, change it after I leave. Don't ask me to change it. You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: No, no, I don't—I don't think that it's honest to—to change it after you leave. I mean, that's—as a curator, that's not what we're supposed to do.

PAUL REED: Yeah. It's curious, because I found that you let the curator, if they want to, hang the show. If they want you to hang the show, hang it. If not, let them hang it. Just get out of the way. And it's always better.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Rudy Turk, who was director of Arizona State University museum, which was—now they've built a brand new museum [inaudible] center of the arts [inaudible], like the Whitney or something [ph]. And, uh, the—the lady that was at WPA is now director there. Rudy has retired. And he's [inaudible]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, I—I know—I know the lady you mean, and I can't remember her name.

PAUL REED: Well, she's—she's gone to town. She's got, uh, great big Cindy Sherman photographs. [Laughs.] And she's going to [ph] shake them up, because, uh, uh, Arizona—Phoenix is—there's a lot of Mormon [inaudible] those people talk about the desert, Salt Lake City and all that. I don't know if you're Mormon, but—

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: —but they're different. They don't drink or smoke. They're, sort of, like Baptists. You're not Baptist, are you? [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: Okay. Um, that—that's nothing against Baptists. [inaudible] Bill Moyers is a Baptist. [inaudible]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was it interesting working with Bill Moyers, now that you bring him up? I—I have to ask that. Was it interesting—interesting working with him at the Peace Corps? [00:46:01]

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, Bill—Bill was the big boss. I was with Lloyd, mostly, and then Bill left. And, uh, yeah, Bill was—I mean, he—Bill worked [inaudible], which Guggenheim—[inaudible]—Guggenheim Museum. And, uh, Bill—I gave Bill a [inaudible] painting. And, uh, I asked Bill, I said, "If you give that—since you—you're buddy-buddy with [inaudible] Guggenheim, give it to the Guggenheim, and I'll give you another one. You see? And you can take it off your taxes, because I can't." The Guggenheim refused it. They said, "If we want a Reed, we'll buy one. We don't want one given to us." So—but that was the end of that. But Bill was nice. And I still—[inaudible] not in touch with Bill [inaudible] intermediary I—I hear about Bill. But I'm sure he would be very—of course he's very busy, and everybody's coming at him. And he had, recently had, a serious heart problem, so I don't know what his health is now. But he is—Bill's a very, very nice guy, the little I knew him.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Uh, some of the other people that you knew in—in Washington were—I wonder if we could talk a little bit about people like Nesta Dorrance and Alice Denney, people who, well, sort of, were the movers and shakers behind the scenes in Washington.

PAUL REED: Uh, not really. We—I showed there, and they were—they were—they were okay. I didn't lose any work or lose any money. I didn't sell that much. You know, I didn't—I don't know. Jefferson Place I did—[inaudible] it's on the list. I don't even remember how many shows [ph]. I did maybe three [inaudible] Pyramid. I think Pyramid went out of business in the last couple years. [00:48:03] I heard [ph] [inaudible] list in the paper about galleries.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: So I don't know. I, uh, I'm not in touch. [inaudible]—if a gallery expressed interest, I'd give them a tape, and never hear from them again. [They laugh.] So that's a good—you know, it serves a purpose. It doesn't waste time.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: There's the work. If you want it, if you don't, cool. So, I don't know about that. I really don't understand, and I don't want to think—have to think about it. Like Bertha Schaefer said, "These paintings are too violent. Do—[inaudible] more quiet paintings."

JUDITH ZILCZER: This is when you were painting, uh, in what—in what—

PAUL REED: She was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —what—what was she speaking of? Which series?

PAUL REED: Uh, must have been some red paintings I made. I don't know. Uh, she came to the large studio one time and complained that I wasn't showing very much work. Well, I started unrolling those 14-foot paintings. You know, like, [inaudible]. I—the nearest thing I can tell is, they have to be oriented to the collector, because the expense is on the galleries. Any—any kind of a decent gallery, it starts at a hundred thousand. The wrap, the foam, the shipping, the assistant, and your salary. It has to be a hundred thousand dollars. That means if you're getting 50 percent, you've got to sell two hundred thousand dollars' worth of work a year just to break even. And that's a lot. And that's got to be forward in your consciousness, unless you have unlimited resources, and most of them don't. They have an idea they want to run a gallery, and might have a bit of a collection. I don't know. [inaudible] private. Oh, one other big deal. [00:50:00] One other—it wasn't really a gallery. It was a private dealer, Phyllis Hattis. Do you know Phyllis?

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: Well, Phyllis is very, very nice. She—Park Hyatt Hotel has the color painters?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: Okay. It's Morton —something or other. Morton something or other. He was the man who was doing Columbus Circle, or trying to. And the *Post*, *New York Post*, I think he bought the *Post*. I don't know. [inaudible]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: He's a big man. Boston. He had a house in Georgetown, a townhouse, very nice. And Phyllis was—

her idea to do a hotel [inaudible] Washington Color painters, and art that's in Washington museums, in the rooms. Reproductions of, uh, [inaudible], or Monet's Venice, or whatever, you know? Nice. Very good idea. And it worked. I—she took me through. And she wanted—she—I didn't—I don't think I had a gallery at that time. But she came direct, and she bought. She bought from [inaudible] house. She bought two paintings from [inaudible] house in, uh, Georgetown. The—she bought what I called a Plimsoll. It was a little like the Hackensack. It was a shape [inaudible]. And that's hanging—has been hanging there now, and [inaudible], Plimsoll being the line on a ship that shows you the load limit.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And when you get to the Plimsoll line, you don't put any more on there. Uh, she then commissioned me for every landing—I think it's seven stories—to do a triptych. To come over and photograph the hotel, and the gardens, and the fountains, and whatever, and then—

JUDITH ZILCZER: A triptych?

PAUL REED: —one of these for each floor.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, that's great.

PAUL REED: Which I did. And they're—they're hanging there. [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's wonderful. And when was—when was this? Um, it must have been, what?

PAUL REED: '90—uh, '89 or '90, somewhere in there.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So fairly recent.

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah. And paid full price. She took, uh, 40 percent.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And she is real classy. She—her—her, uh, apartment, you look out the front door, and there's the Metropolitan. And—

[END OF TRACK AAA_reed94_6298.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: This is track number six. And we were talking about Phyllis [inaudible].

PAUL REED: Oh, Phyllis Hattis.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Hattis, yes.

PAUL REED: Yes. Phyllis Hattis is a friend of Bill Rubin's. And of course, Bill Rubin is the outstanding curator of the Museum of Modern Art. He's emeritus now, but, like, he did the Picasso show. He's now doing, I don't know, somewhere or other he's doing a new show. He did the—he actually has a place in southern France, and knew Picasso, and—oh, his new book. His book—he's talking about—in—in the current *ARTnews*, there will be an article of Bill Rubin talking about Picasso and this Murphy woman.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Gerald Murphy's wife [Sara].

PAUL REED: Gerald Murphy's wife. Yes, okay. Alright.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes, I remember reading about that.

PAUL REED: So, um, Phyllis has, as I guess a number of people do, access to the Modern when it's closed on Wednesday.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And twice, I went with her and brought friends, to go through the Modern when it's empty. The Klee—I was there for the Klee show, and then when the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible]

PAUL REED: —they were installing, and when they were—Rubin lectured. There was a private lecture on this install—on the new installation, when he was installing the Picassos, for about an hour, and, uh, that was very, very interesting.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I bet. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: [inaudible] wonderful. So that's Phyllis. And I haven't heard from her for a long time, but, uh, [inaudible] the way it goes. But she bought two of the—two or three of the gouaches, full sheet [ph] gouaches, and she sold [ph] a couple of discs and a number of things [inaudible] sort of [inaudible]. [00:02:01] So, yeah, that's the—I guess that's [inaudible]. It's like, uh, when some [inaudible] and Phyllis [inaudible] sorts of people. [Laughs.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: I understand, yes.

PAUL REED: You know, like, uh—and, uh, just a [inaudible] for other sorts of curators. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my. Well, you certainly know how to make a girl feel good. [They laugh.] Ah. So you—you would rate those, uh, Vincent Melzac, and—and people—

PAUL REED: Yeah. Vincent—I met Vincent through Gene, and, uh, went up when Vincent—Vincent was, uh—he worked for the Atomic Energy Commission, and then he went with a television—um, he sold—he sold television in Canada, *Lassie* and some of the—you know, like the syndicated shows, and did very well. And he—since he was a—I don't know you ever met him, but he was a super salesman.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I may have met him once, once or twice.

PAUL REED: Hold on to your wallet, because Vincent, oh, he'd go to—he'd really drive through. I mean—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah?

PAUL REED: And, uh, I, uh, you know, I—I have pretty good—pretty good resistance against such things, but very persuasive.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, I went up to help him bring his paintings out of his apartment. He was closing his apartment in New York. He had a [inaudible] loan business, student loans. And [inaudible]. He moved across the street from us in Falls Church. And we had a dinky little [inaudible], even dinkier than this, there. And—but Vincent had invested all his money. He bought a Kandinsky, one of Kandinsky's Four Seasons.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Hmm.

PAUL REED: And I'm with him. [00:04:00] We call up Joe Hirshhorn. He—he—what he did, he contracted for the Kandinsky in Switzerland, with the idea of reselling it.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And he called up—I was with him. He called up Joe Hirshhorn, because Hirshhorn was known as a great collector. Told him he had this Kandinsky, Four Seasons. And—and Hirshhorn turned it down. Hirshhorn said, "I'm a sophisticated guy." I didn't hear the—this is from Vincent. Vincent called up—I think he called up [inaudible], who's a Hollywood man.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible], yeah.

PAUL REED: Yeah. [inaudible] bought the painting. And he said, "[inaudible]"—

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible] was our loss. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: He said, "Well, that's five thousand dollars more than you paid for it," when he told him the price. He said, "Don't I deserve something for—" [Laughs.] [inaudible] says, "You're right." And he bought it [ph]. That's Vincent, on the phone. Never saw the man [ph]. So we bring back—this is when I—he lent me the de Koonings and the [inaudible], one each. He—the little house didn't have room to hang them. [Laughs.] And he had stacks, right? Uh, I guess I'm explaining my view of Vincent, okay?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Uh, he moved—when we moved here, he moved over there. [They laugh.] Just over [inaudible]. Uh, he—then when he became director of the Corcoran, I, sort of, didn't contact him, because I figured that was—I was going to—I was teaching there. That was a—I let him—[inaudible] let him do it, because otherwise, it would look like I was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: You didn't want to appear—

PAUL REED: —going over Roy's head or—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: —you know, [inaudible]. So I would see him from time to time. [00:06:00] And, uh, oh, he didn't—in the beginning, he bought some work, and then over time, he—once in a while. Almost if you showed him something, he'd buy it if he liked it [ph]. I mean, he had a very good eye. Show him 12, and he'd pick out the best one, according to my view. And you'd better not show him—if you didn't want to part with it, you better not show it to him, because he could see it. [inaudible]. Okay. And then I did—and I—actually, I—we were [inaudible] in Crystal City. [inaudible] had two apartments, one to store the paintings and one to live in. Um, I saw him then. I don't know what the occasion was. But then, I didn't hear from him [ph] for a long time. I didn't contact him, he didn't contact me. And I heard he was sick, and I—at any rate, he was. He was [inaudible] seriously. And, uh, so I called, but I had the wrong number. I kept getting a busy signal, and I thought—well. And finally I looked the number up, and it was wrong. [inaudible], and there he was.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Come on over, bring some stuff. You know? So I went over to his, you know, [inaudible]. And, uh, he bought [inaudible] painting. He bought—he said, "I want to give something [inaudible]." He says, uh, "I need six things, two for me and four for them."

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh.

PAUL REED: And so [they laugh] I brought a box of stuff [inaudible], and he picked out some stuff. And then he died. And, uh, so his widow, uh, honored his thing, and, uh, I delivered [inaudible] framed, and she paid [inaudible]. I mean, she's still friends. She calls. We keep—he had an apartment in, uh, [inaudible]. [00:08:01]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, it was just filled with art. I went and I photographed it for her, everything. Gave her color prints [inaudible] the IRS, the settlement, and then taxes [inaudible]. We went up to the farm, and we unrolled [inaudible] we unrolled, and then Linda [ph] [inaudible], and, you know, we had to get an appraiser [inaudible] went up there for a day. And, uh, Sheila, Sheila Melzac.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: But that was—and he was—you know, [inaudible]. And he was, just, "You [inaudible] that you were mad at me." I didn't [inaudible]. [They laugh.] Me mad at him? No.

JUDITH ZILCZER: No.

PAUL REED: But, like, it's—you know, it's a tricky one.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: He took me to meet [Leopold] Stokowski. [inaudible]—I think it was Stokowski. Anyway, he takes me backstage to meet the maestro. Well, I—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Was this when—uh—

PAUL REED: Oh, it was some time—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —in Washington, or in New York?

PAUL REED: Here. Here. I think that it's when he was director of the Corcoran. He said, uh, "Come [inaudible] the Kennedy Center [inaudible]." Well, I'm not—I have—I have hearing aids. I don't wear them. But, uh, I should, probably. So music, I have to—I'm not—I don't have that much knowledge of music. It's, like, um, very narrow [ph] in the visual thing [ph]. And, um, we went, met the maestro. But that's Vincent. That's the way he was.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: You know? He, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Is there anybody else that you—you remember particularly from the heyday of the Washington Color School?

PAUL REED: Well, I—I guess the big [inaudible] were Vincent and—and, uh, Jim Harithas, and Roger. Roy—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, Roy came, actually, later. [00:10:00] It was already—

PAUL REED: Yeah, Roy wasn't—wasn't, uh—he had a lot of gears to shift.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] one job [inaudible] become an American citizen, and whatever. Now he's [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's [inaudible].

PAUL REED: [inaudible]. Roy—well, you met Roy. You know Roy.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: A lot of energy, and very, very good. He, uh—I think he was an excellent [inaudible], because he put the Corcoran on its feet. [inaudible] serious track and got it accredited. And, uh, uh, you know, he really had ambitions for the school. And, uh, [inaudible] that was good [inaudible] whatever else. And I worked mainly with [inaudible]. She was very nice. I—I don't know where she is now, but I guess she's [inaudible]. She didn't, at that point, have—wasn't a citizen. I don't know if she—she had to go home every six months, or go to Canada every six months.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: Yeah. That's the alien [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: Bill Williams I knew a little bit. He was very nice. He bought a big disc. And they reproduced it. It's maybe in the papers [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Bill Williams was—was—he was, um—

PAUL REED: Director [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: —director before—

PAUL REED: Yeah, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —before [inaudible].

PAUL REED: He came [inaudible], had a couple of scotches, and bought—bought the painting [inaudible]. And, uh, it was reproduced with one of his drums [ph]. He was a medievalist, I guess. He did the armor, and he was more of a Metropolitan-type fan. And he had this drum, and he has this big disc, you know. Full color, full page [inaudible]. You know, that'll—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That'll get their attention.

PAUL REED: That's right. He loved that. He—that was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: He was pretty adventurous.

PAUL REED: —I don't know. This is just the beginning, right?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: It's not at [ph] the end. [00:12:00] [They laugh.]

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —but, um, that—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you have any special memories of the Corcoran annuals, the biennials, or—

PAUL REED: No. I was hoping to be in the one that Barrow [ph] put together.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I thought they would accept the Gilports, but they didn't, so that was a disappointment. I was working in the school and didn't get consideration. That was when Jane Barrow [ph] was—I don't know. Jane [ph] must have—I don't know what Barrow's [ph] job was. Was he curator or director?

JUDITH ZILCZER: He was—I think he was—there was some sort of awkward—

PAUL REED: Yeah, [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: —administrative—

PAUL REED: But Jane [ph] had just come in. Jane [ph] was—of course, Harithas knew Jane [ph] in Houston, through her brother. Um, but there was some—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL REED: —kind of political connection. I don't know [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right. What about, um—you—you had mentioned Rockne Krebs earlier in our discussion. Were you—

PAUL REED: Yes. Rockne was—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —friends?

PAUL REED: —yeah, he was a friend, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah?

PAUL REED: Rockne—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Of course, he's been quite active since, and I—I think they're trying to get the Corcoran to be more responsive to the—

PAUL REED: Yes. Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —to the Washington art community.

PAUL REED: He invited me on a panel [inaudible], but I, uh—but they didn't want to discuss—it's like the, uh—what happened to the color school, thing. If they don't want to discuss beforehand what they're going to talk about, it's foolish to get up on that stage and have them come out of left field at you. And then, it's, like, my rehearsing this has helped me to smooth [inaudible] a little more efficient for you. Uh, I—I declined, because I didn't want to get trapped in this blame, with something that I didn't—hadn't thought about or didn't really agree with.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: I don't—I've done—you know, I've done some lecturing, and some—some panels. [00:14:00] But—but I really don't—

JUDITH ZILCZER: What about the Washington Project for the Arts? I mean, you mentioned you had—

PAUL REED: Well—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —just one show there.

PAUL REED: —that was really the only contact, really.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That was the only contact?

PAUL REED: That was from Walter.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: I had gone there, and seen the shows, and I knew the place. They had a very good bookstore. Maybe they still do.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, they do.

PAUL REED: Some [inaudible] off-beat books, that you couldn't find anywhere else except the [inaudible]. Um, that's—that was my—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you—

PAUL REED: [inaudible] the man who was there was very nice. [inaudible] he had an assistant. But later they moved to [inaudible] or something like that. [inaudible] Mills? No. Something in Los Angeles. The art center, or—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. What about, um—how do you feel about being an artist based in Washington, I mean [ph] most of your career? Your career, though you did have early years in New York, was centered in Washington. Could you—

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —give some thoughts to—

PAUL REED: Well—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Aside from the—specifically the Washington Color School. I'm thinking in broader terms—

PAUL REED: —well, I think that—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —about being an artist in Washington.

PAUL REED: —I think it's still true. Uh, that's why I went to New York, because that's—I was in advertising at the time, [inaudible] art, commercial art, and that's the peak. You go to New York if you possibly can, because you put your best up against the—the best. And the same is true in painting. New York's still the center. Los Angeles, second city, but not in the class of New York. But you have to be young. You have to be pretty well funded. It's very expensive in New York. And, uh, you have to—[inaudible] you have in New York, in many ways.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Uh, when—when I was there, we considered moving into the city, so the—in that case, closer to the advertising scene. [00:16:00] But, uh, we had a young child. And I had the choice of New York or Montclair. I went with [ph] Montclair, and Montclair was [inaudible]. And for—for Gene, [inaudible]. And then it worked out fine, because I went back to New York [inaudible] four years, but then I went into the top agency then. Uh, as an artist, I think, yeah, but the—it's very costly, in many ways.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, you get very short tempered in New York. The people that I knew, when you talk to them later, they don't have time for anything, you know? It's very grim. They, uh, uh—I don't know. I think that—I guess, if you—if I had started young enough, and was there, then you could acclimate [inaudible] certainly not now, or anywhere over the last 20 years. No.

JUDITH ZILCZER: You talked about New York. What about the specific virtues of Washington, if any? [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Well, it just—it adds up, because historically, you're here.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: That's why they wanted me to move to Arizona, but that's around [ph] them. You feel better if [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And, uh, yeah. I mean, you—you—you came, you see, because I'm in Washington. And that's—that's—that's it. I mean, things happen.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Um, um—from the national collection came. You know—you know, [inaudible] convenient enough [inaudible]. See, and also, there's a knowledge of this Washington Color School [inaudible] that's—everyone has [inaudible] some of the information. It was significant. And the, uh—it's had its influence. And, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you feel that it—because it's a smaller city, a smaller community, there is actually more—

there was, at least maybe in the '60s, more opportunity to get to know the—the major figures in the—in the arts scene—[00:18:06]

PAUL REED: Yes. Well, uh—

JUDITH ZILCZER: —than would have been the case in New York?

PAUL REED: —Greenberg [inaudible]. Like, uh, I think Ken Noland was [inaudible] key. He should get a lot of credit. But not that Morris wasn't great, either, but he introduced Morris to—to [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Right.

PAUL REED: And that—that was the key. That's the only reason I could go to New York, and get a gallery, and [inaudible], or two or three galleries. [inaudible]—I was first with [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: I didn't know that.

PAUL REED: [inaudible]. Yeah, but I wanted a one-man show. God, he was showing Jasper Johns, and [inaudible], you know.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: That was—that was '63.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative], mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: He said, "If you want a show, call this guy." And that was the show. [inaudible]

JUDITH ZILCZER: So [inaudible]—

PAUL REED: [inaudible] does the work, and the ability to do the work, and then there's the—

JUDITH ZILCZER: The business side, yeah.

PAUL REED: The business side. [inaudible]—I had to do—I had to—I was still developed [ph]. I didn't—I probably just—it was '65, I was doing mature paintings and [inaudible] that span. And, uh, as far as I'm concerned, I'm—I'm still getting ideas, and I hope that they never stop. You know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] I join you in that—

PAUL REED: Good or bad. [They laugh.] But, uh, that's what it's about for me. And if I can—I can—I'm still breathing, and then [inaudible] I'm comfortable. I can buy most anything I want. Not a Rolls Royce, but, like, if I want a—you know, I'll get top quality electronic equipment. I can afford it. [00:20:00] So, you know, I—I'm fairly content. I mean [inaudible] it's like [inaudible] said, because I can—I've got—everything is satisfied but my conscience. And I—I have to—what he—what he was talking about—and this relates to the [inaudible], because he was talking about anthropomorphism. Now, that's a human tendency, to humanize everything.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: [inaudible] we name a mountain. Mountains are there, and they don't have a name. We'll be gone, and it won't have a name again [ph]. It's—you know, the—there are things that are eternal, that, like [inaudible] said there are no masterpieces in eternity. And it's true. It's purely a human historical phenomenon. Right? It—it's going to be—we're going to—this rock is going to be going around the sun, and you're not going to be here. [They laugh.] As an individual, or as a race. Yeah. And one day, it will fall into the sun. We know that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah. We know that, but we don't really have to worry about it [inaudible].

PAUL REED: No, we don't have to worry about it, but it's—it's the truth. It's true.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: Okay. Uh, he says, "I"—he was talking about, well, anthropomorphism, like, that's what minimalism is about, anti-anthropomorphism, a specific object. You can't read—I guess you can, if you want, but it's hard to read a figurative [inaudible] human. That's just what it is, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Like Tony Smith's *[Black] Box*. It's just a box. It's not what it is, it's what it isn't that's so important.

It's not anthropomorphic in that [inaudible]. Okay. So I deliberately make these things anthropomorphic.

JUDITH ZILCZER: So you would feel [ph]—

PAUL REED: [inaudible] by the type, by the look, by the selection. [00:22:00] See? It's just, like, that's—yeah, that's so-and-so, and that's that. Okay? Consciously anthropomorphic, knowing that it's anti-minimalism. Understand?

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] Yes, I do.

PAUL REED: I'm not caught on the thing that it's—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: —what I say it is. Okay? And he said that—he was talking about tragedy. And [inaudible] talks about this, too. And he said, if we give in to tragedy—and it's a little—a little to do with Derrida. If we think that life is a tragic situation, you know, all the—you think of all the miserable, bad things, he says, then you just roll onto the anthropomorphic trap of humanizing tragedy. You've got to look at it that way. He said, now, I may be wrong, but it's the only hope I have to escape this tragic concept of life. And that's what Derrida says. We cannot know. Don't think that you're going to get to the end of it, because you're not. There—there's something out there. We can only know so much, and that's all [ph]. And it's nice to search, and nice to try and find a pattern, but don't think you're going to reach the end of the ultimate, uh, whatever it is. Because we aren't—we're not equipped. We don't have the equipment [inaudible]. So this—these are very aware of the—now, the people who come in and see these, the friends, see, they—they want to see that anthropomorphic side, not this side that I'm talking—[inaudible] tell them about it, they won't—they don't really want to listen. So they have a double edged significance for me. And they're, sort of, endless, because—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: —as I say, the titles can change. I'll find a new rock that has other interpretations. But then I'll move one [ph]. Then I—I—I don't see as they're changeable. [00:24:00] There's another sense in—[inaudible] the illusion [ph] of a painting, you know, painting on a surface, which can [inaudible]. But it's an illusion. These have weight and form, and you can sense them in the same way you do a painting, like it's a [ph] historic thing, or an aesthetic thing. But you can also lift it up, feel the surface, or some other sensing. And the—I guess, the sense impressions that are formed by a painting are musical. Here again, they are, sort of, intangibles. This is a—reaches another [inaudible]. And, uh, now, if you can do that in such a way that it's a new experience for someone, it's pretty good, right? Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible]

PAUL REED: I don't claim to have done that.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, I don't know.

PAUL REED: But that's a nice goal out there. Yeah? And especially [inaudible] someone that's inexperienced. You know, like, you as a curator have experienced a great deal. It's been your business from—from the beginning, to look at lot and consider a lot of things. Uh, but to someone who hasn't, it's really a discovery for them. You know, imagine someone discovering Rodin for the first time, and being able to go to the Hirshhorn and look at the stuff. That's [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: One of—one of the satisfying aspects of my job is being able to see the public respond in that way.

PAUL REED: On the way to the office, you can—yeah, yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: That's—and—and that's—you were saying about Washington. That's why Washington. We have some darn good museums here.

JUDITH ZILCZER: That's true. It is a good museum [inaudible].

PAUL REED: I mean, next to New York, it's probably as good.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: And, uh, I've only—I've been to the Louvre a couple of times during that trip, and, uh, I know that

when you see the—well, when you see the *Mona Lisa*, that's the standard. Everything is downhill from there, right? [00:26:00] In certain ways, that's it. Um, but we have some very—and you look at that El Greco. You look at it. It's awfully [ph] good. And the Titian, and [inaudible] the sculpture in the Hirshhorn. The—the paintings that I see—Esther—we were going through the other day, and she said, you know—I say, "Well, this is why it's so hard to get on these walls, because stuff is so good." [They laugh.] You know, it's so good. And they've got stacks of stuff just as good that isn't hanging on the wall. Now, how can I get on the wall, you know?

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, you were on the wall.

PAUL REED: That's right.

JUDITH ZILCZER: We did have you, and we did have—

PAUL REED: That's right [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: —the most recent, uh—

PAUL REED: Acquisition? Yeah?

JUDITH ZILCZER: —acquisition on—on the wall. That was actually for quite a while.

PAUL REED: Yeah.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Well, we appreciate having it.

PAUL REED: Yeah. Well, I appreciate you having it, because it is—it is—I enjoy a lot—always have enjoyed the museum. I remember the old one. And I went to—they had three or four openings, but I went to the, I guess, I don't know, the most popular opening. But just, I sat at the top of the escalator, and here comes [inaudible], here comes Motherwell, here comes Frankenthaler. You know, they're being delivered up to you.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, this—this is the—the opening of the Hirshhorn.

PAUL REED: The Hirshhorn, yeah, yeah. But it was just so—

JUDITH ZILCZER: That was—that was before my time. I joined the staff a month after [laughs] the opening [inaudible].

PAUL REED: But you can imagine, though.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: You know? That they'd just brought the world to the Hirshhorn.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: And I think that [ph]—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Do you—do you feel that the Washington art world changed with the, uh, opening of the—

PAUL REED: Oh, absolutely.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —the Hirshhorn, and also the east wing of the National Gallery?

PAUL REED: And, yeah, it made the National get on the ball. You know? The Corcoran had some—Jim had—that's what Jim did. He made the Corcoran into more of a modern museum—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yes.

PAUL REED: —by bringing in contemporary work. But that had its effect on everybody.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: And the—the Hirshhorn, even though it's really part of the National—in a sense, it's all Smithsonian—it forced the National to show living artists. [00:28:01] And, uh, yeah, it—it—you know, like, we want your customers [inaudible]. We want your—

JUDITH ZILCZER: So competition is good for the art business. [Laughs.]

PAUL REED: Sure [ph]. [inaudible]. And, uh, it—the Hirshhorn didn't popularize itself to do that. It just had quality, you know? And—and the—the physical plan is so easy, because you ride the escalator up, and you come down, then you [inaudible] escalator [inaudible]. You can ride up or down. You know, it's—physically, it's easy.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, you're the first—one of the few people to compliment the architecture. A lot of people find—found the architecture difficult.

PAUL REED: Well, the architecture around—the curved wall is against flat paintings—

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL REED: —of course. It's like the—the Guggenheim. And they've had to do some—like, the Guggenheim [inaudible] both ways, so you've got to shim up all the sculptures when you show it. You know? It's, uh, the ego of Frank Lloyd Wright. But it is—

JUDITH ZILCZER: [inaudible] great—great building.

PAUL REED: Yeah. And the fact that you can ride the elevator to the top, it's effortless to stroll down.

JUDITH ZILCZER: In fact, there is a, kind of, a built in momentum because of the slope of the ramp.

PAUL REED: That's right. Keep you going [ph]. That's right. And the restaurant's down there. [They laugh.]

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] is the—handles the restaurant, which is the great fancy food store [ph].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Yeah.

PAUL REED: They have [inaudible].

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, I haven't—

PAUL REED: The old firehouse.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL REED: Great, uh, pasta sauce. At eight dollars a jar.

JUDITH ZILCZER: Oh, my goodness.

PAUL REED: But, uh, you can get special things. Their green [inaudible] very good.

JUDITH ZILCZER: [Laughs.] We've now got that for posterity. [They laugh.]

PAUL REED: Yeah, right. Well, you'll—we'll—

JUDITH ZILCZER: No. [They laugh.] Well, I think that we—we've had a very productive day of—

PAUL REED: Yeah, we did.

JUDITH ZILCZER: —of talking, and I've enjoyed spending the time with you.

PAUL REED: [inaudible] thank you very much.

JUDITH ZILCZER: And I thank you for—for sharing your memories with us, and—

PAUL REED: Thank you.

JUDITH ZILCZER: I think we'll—we'll conclude this afternoon now. [00:30:00]

PAUL REED: Good. Okay.

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]