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Oral history interview with Anthony Barboza,  
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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Anthony Barboza on 2009 Nov. 18-19. The interview took place at the Jolly Madison Towers hotel, in New York, N.Y., and was conducted by Ann Shumard for the Archives of American Art's Oral History Interviews of American Photographers Project.

Anthony Barboza has reviewed the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

ANN SHUMARD: This is Ann Shumard interviewing Anthony Barboza at the Jolly Hotel Madison Towers in New York City on November 18, 2009, for the Archives of American Art. This is card number one.

Tony, let's begin with the basics.

ANTHONY BARBOZA: Okay.

MS. SHUMARD: When and where were you born?

MR. BARBOZA: I was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on May 10, 1944. My parents' names are Anthony and Lillian Barboza.

MS. SHUMARD: All right. Were they natives of New Bedford, or had they come to that community from someplace else?

MR. BARBOZA: My grandparents, all four of them, came from the Cape Verde islands off the coast of West Africa, off Senegal. But my parents were born in the States, and I'm the oldest of eight boys.

MS. SHUMARD: What were your parents' occupations?

MR. BARBOZA: My father was a Fuller Brush man, salesman, and my mother was a housewife.

MS. SHUMARD: A homemaker, as we would say now.

MR. BARBOZA: Homemaker, okay. Homemaker.

MS. SHUMARD: And how many siblings, then, did you say you had?

MR. BARBOZA: I had seven, seven.

MS. SHUMARD: Brothers and sisters?

MR. BARBOZA: All brothers. I'm the first of eight boys.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. And was your home an apartment or a house?

MR. BARBOZA: The very first one was a small apartment. It was a house, but it was small, yeah. And we moved periodically. They were all homes, though. They were, like, in tenement homes.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. I was wondering if you could tell me what kind of town New Bedford was when you were growing up there. Was it racially and economically diverse, or what are your impressions of the community?

MR. BARBOZA: We lived in a Cape Verdean neighborhood, meaning that there were a lot of Cape Verdeans in that neighborhood. My family was lower middle class, not upper, so my father didn't make that much money. He was just a salesman. Neither my father nor my mother had any education other than high school. And I don't even, to this day, know if my father graduated from high school or not. Or my mother; I never really checked on that.

New Bedford is a — I wouldn't say there's any racial divide, but there is a thing where each community does their own thing. So there's the Cape Verdean community, the Cape Verdean church, and so on.

The only time I found out that there was even such a thing as racism was when I realized that, when I came to New York, that, gee, I was never really encouraged in school to go on to higher education. They just said, "Oh,

you should just get a trade." And that happened to a lot of, in my years — and that's like '58, '59, '60, '61 — so I was never encouraged.

To me, when you're teaching someone, and especially young kids, there was never a point where the teachers would encourage you. It was almost like, you go to school and they teach what they set up. And they just get their paycheck and they leave. I've given a lot of lectures and been on a lot of colleges, and my idea is always to inspire the students. I never came across that when I was in school, never.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, did you go to public school or —

MR. BARBOZA: Public school, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: And was art a part of the curriculum at all when you were growing up? Do you remember if there was any art component to your education?

MR. BARBOZA: I know that we had art classes. It's so long ago, I can't remember, but at one time, my father did get us some classes. There used to be a school called the Swain School of Design, and we went one time for some art classes. But that one time that we went there on a Saturday, I wasn't —

MS. SHUMARD: How old do you think you were when you did that?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, just, it was almost like a semester. But I couldn't draw. I'm not very good at drawing, and I always thought, growing up, that you had to be able to draw. And that's not necessarily true and that's what I mean: the teachers never fully explained anything to you about anything. Of course, when you're younger, you don't always listen either, so I can't remember for sure what I was told and what I wasn't.

But when I graduated from high school, I sat up in the auditorium and observed all these students getting all these awards. And for the first time in my life, I sat there and realized that, gee, I'm kind of dumb. I have really not accomplished anything. But I felt that that was a good point in my life to even realize it then. So once I got out and I came to New York, I educated myself in many different ways.

MS. SHUMARD: Let's talk a little bit about the time just before you come to New York. Were you interested in the visual arts from the early age? Do you remember anything about being attracted to the visual?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, there's some very special, to me, spiritual things that happen to each person when they grow up in life. I know that I was interested in visuals because when I was in junior high, I used to walk three miles back and forth to school. So I would stop in this used bookstore.

And they had all these magazines and books, and I would look at the *Look* magazine, *Life* magazine. And I realized that, oh, I'd like to travel. And *National Geographic*, I like photographs. So once school was over, I decided that I would go to a school in New York. But after I had graduated, I didn't know what I wanted to do. I was just interested in those visuals.

During that time, though, I think something happened to me that I never forgot. It's that my grandmother used to have this book. It's a religious book. They had all the drawings in it of Lucifer and the angels and all, through the whole Bible. That wasn't so interesting to me. It was the cover. The cover had — and I noticed it — a mother and her two children, and she was reading this same book to them. On the cover of her book was her reading to them. And on the cover of that book — it was like infinity.

MS. SHUMARD: It's all these different —

MR. BARBOZA: And that's the thing that shocked me about that, because I never went to any museums or anything. That's the thing I remembered most, about how this was like a never-ending illustration. And that fascinated me.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, did you have access to a camera before you went to New York? Had you done any photography when you were in New Bedford?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I was in the Boy Scouts.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. Well, that's good, knowing you just —

MR. BARBOZA: I got all these 23 merit badges.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. And when did you start in the Boy Scouts - when you were pretty little?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I think I was about 12, or something like that. And the funny thing is that I guess I was kind

of lazy at the time because I got all these that I figured were really easy. And then it came to photography, and you had to do all this stuff, so I never got the photography merit badge. But I did take some photos and make little contact prints. So it was just a quick thing.

I would take some of my friends there, in the neighborhood, but it was for a fleeting moment. I must have had a Brownie camera or something like that. But I wasn't really interested in that.

MS. SHUMARD: But clearly you did, at least, have a little experience. What made you think about going to New York? What was the incentive for that?

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, my aunt was going to New York, I think the year before I got out of high school.

MS. SHUMARD: I should probably ask you what the name of your high school was. Do you remember?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, New Bedford High School.

MS. SHUMARD: New Bedford High School, okay.

MR. BARBOZA: So she was in New York, and she was working as an assistant buyer at Lord & Taylor. That's what it was, Lord & Taylor. Okay, but she was afraid of the city, and she stayed in a hotel on 55th Street, which later, I found out, became — not in the years she was there -- but, like, a prostitute hotel, after that.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, my goodness.

MR. BARBOZA: But not when she was there.

MS. SHUMARD: Right. But it was not the greatest neighborhood.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, no, it was fine then, when she was there.

MS. SHUMARD: She was okay. But she was still nervous about being in the big city.

MR. BARBOZA: Big city, yeah. But it was not — I don't think that happened to that hotel until the '80s or something like that. But then I was there recently. They remodeled it and everything, and it's fine, because I met some people there and stayed there. The thing is that she would come home once in a while, and she brought a New York telephone book. And I looked in that telephone book, and that's where I saw the New York Institute of Photography.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. So she just brought that when she came back to visit you in New Bedford. She brought the phone book with her?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and I went and looked at it, and it was night school. So I must have been thinking a little bit. And I wasn't when I was in school. But I decided, well, why not go to New York?

MS. SHUMARD: How did your family feel about this? Were they supportive?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it was fine. What I would do is - when I decided to go, I had graduated. So the next six months, I worked on one job in the morning till — the whole day — at a supermarket, packing bags for the customers. You know, grocery bags.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, bagging.

MR. BARBOZA: My father would pick me up; he'd drive me down to the south end of the city. And I worked at night at — they had these, fabric — and it would be like, I would be staining the fabric, any fabric you could buy —

MS. SHUMARD: You said dyeing it?

MR. BARBOZA: Dyeing it, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Now this was still in New Bedford, right?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. I would put the thing down. I would do one color, and then somebody else would do another color. And I'd do this back and forth; the color would come off.

MS. SHUMARD: Sort of like a squeegee? Was it sort of like that?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And I'd put the next one and keep going down. The rows were, like, I would say about 200

yards long in this factory. So I worked on all of that for six months, and I saved all my money. And, I'm going to go to New York.

MS. SHUMARD: You had a plan.

MR. BARBOZA: My father's going to drive me to New York.

MS. SHUMARD: And this is 1963? Is that right?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, in the latter — it must have been like September or October '63 — he drove me to New York. Where am I going to stay?

MS. SHUMARD: Was your aunt going to offer you any advice on this?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, she was up in the hotel there, but I wasn't going to stay far from her because - she had a little room. I mean, the room was like —

MS. SHUMARD: Just tiny.

MR. BARBOZA: Tiny. The bed was there and she had a little kitchen; she had a little hot plate.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, just a little, tiny studio apartment. Yeah, a residential hotel.

MR. BARBOZA: So I stayed on 49th Street, at the Hotel Chesterfield. My parents dropped me off. I got a room.

MS. SHUMARD: Was it sort of scary, or was it really exciting?

MR. BARBOZA: My room was small. No, I'm an adventurous person. I thought this was interesting. My room was really small, and they dropped me off — that night, well, by the time we drove here. And of course, my mother — I'm the oldest, so my mother was, you know, kind of sad about this.

But my mother was very open about things that you'd do. I remember in 1956, we had come — the three oldest, me and the next two — come to New York for a visit, like, a holiday for a few days. And we stayed in a hotel up on Park Avenue, up in Harlem, in Spanish Harlem, called the Park Avenue Hotel. I never forgot, because I looked at it afterwards and I said, "What kind of place did we stay in?" I can't remember anything about it.

But I remember we were walking down the street, me and my two brothers and my father and my mother. And my mother's a very beautiful woman. I mean, she looked like a dark-complexioned Elizabeth Taylor. But she wasn't very dark. I mean, she was about my skin color. People came up to her and said, "We want to put you in a movie. We want to put you in a movie." My mother looks and says, "I don't want to be in any movie. I just want to take care of my sons." So she was only about taking care of her sons, all right? She's quite a woman.

MS. SHUMARD: So coming to New York as a 19-year-old, it wasn't your first time, obviously, then, in the city.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but I was — in '56, I was —

MS. SHUMARD: You were pretty little then. But had that been the only time you'd been to New York beforehand? Okay, so just one prior visit.

MR. BARBOZA: That had been the only time. My father and mother had been there because my mother stayed some summers when she was younger, a little girl. And my father met my mother on the ferry that used to come from — I guess it was from, Providence, Rhode Island, and would come to New York. And my father used to work at a newsstand. My mother was 16 when he proposed and they got married when she was 17. So my mother had stayed in New York.

So they dropped me off, and oh, I'm excited. By the time they dropped me off and I'd got everything set, getting my room and stuff — I wish I could remember — because right now, whenever I go to hotels I stay in, I mark down the room number. But I don't remember which room that was. So they left. I don't know if my mother cried or not; I can't remember about that. That's the kind of woman she was.

So it's nighttime and Times Square's right there. I walk down and walk around Times Square, looking at all this. This is wonderful; this is a big city.

MS. SHUMARD: Bright lights of the city.

MR. BARBOZA: And I'm walking around by myself and all of a sudden, I started hearing this tap. Somebody behind me had taps on his shoes. And anywhere I go, it seemed like they were following me. So I'd stop and look

in a window, and then the guy would go past, and then he'd stop and look in a window. And then I'd walk on, and then he'd follow me.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, dear.

MR. BARBOZA: So I'm getting very nervous about this. I've got to get rid of this — what is going on here? So what I did was, when I got near my hotel entrance, I stopped just before it in the window, and I looked in the window. And sure enough, he walked past me and he's looking in the window.

When he looked in the window, you know, I ducked into my hotel. [Laughs.] And he was waiting for me to go past him again. He never saw me. I never saw him again, anyway. But that was that first night.

MS. SHUMARD: A little bit disconcerting introduction to New York.

MR. BARBOZA: New York, yeah. So the next thing I know, I stayed and I got a job.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, now, I was curious. How did you support yourself when you first got to the city? Do you remember how you found your first job and what you were doing?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, it must have been my aunt, because I went up — I was on 49th Street. She stayed on 55th Street. And I went there, and sometimes she would make soup on the little plate there, and we'd cook it. And she'd call it "505 Soup," and we'd have soup. But actually, she told me —

MS. SHUMARD: Now, why did she call it 505 Soup?

MR. BARBOZA: Because her room number was 505.

MS. SHUMARD: It was 505, okay.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. Or was it 605? I think it was 605.

So she gave me the idea about going to Macy's. Maybe I could get a job because it's Christmastime and they're hiring — it's getting close to Christmas and they're hiring people to — in the basement, way down, so many levels, they were packing — people bought stuff and they were packing it, to ship it to different countries and different places.

So for the season, I got the job there. And I was one of the last ones to get laid off after Christmas and New Year's. Because they finally laid everybody off. But I would do that; I would wrap all these packages. I learned how to wrap packages.

MS. SHUMARD: I'm sure it's a skill that has been useful the rest —

MR. BARBOZA: Well, folding things. Yeah, I remember some of it.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, did you look up the school, then, that you had read about in the —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. New York Institute of Photography.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay, so did you do that fairly soon after you got to New York?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because I had some money. But I had to have a job because that was a night class.

MS. SHUMARD: Right. So the first thing, and the most important thing, was to get a job that would allow you to afford to stay in the city.

MR. BARBOZA: And that's interesting. It was pretty easy to get a job, boy. I was surprised. There were jobs in New York; there were no jobs in my hometown. What happened?

MS. SHUMARD: So you got through the Christmas season.

MR. BARBOZA: No, because in November — I was in Times Square that night that President Kennedy got shot.

MS. SHUMARD: I was going to ask you about 1963. It was such a momentous year in so many ways.

MR. BARBOZA: The two most memorable things on Times Square - after that guy following me - were - they had a [television] newsman on 42nd Street or wherever it was — I think it was, I can't even remember, 42nd, 43rd, 44th — it was around 44th Street. And the newsman was out, and I was in the crowd, but I didn't talk to him.

MS. SHUMARD: But he was doing, sort of, man-on-the-street interviews of people's reaction.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And a lot of people back home saw me in the crowd.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, did they?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, yeah. That was memorable when I lived over there.

And also what was memorable is that one night, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor went to this play on Broadway, and they had a limousine that, after it was over, they got in. And people just chased the limousine down the street. They jumped on the back of the limousine to look in the window. I thought, oh, this is unbelievable.

Those things stuck out in my mind. But I did go to school, but I didn't learn much at school.

MS. SHUMARD: Do you remember where the school was located?

MR. BARBOZA: No, not in those years. I cannot remember.

MS. SHUMARD: No? Well, it's probably something that can —

MR. BARBOZA: But I remember it being something like 31st Street, but I don't remember where [192 Lexington Avenue].

MS. SHUMARD: And again, the name of the school was the —

MR. BARBOZA: New York Institute of Photography. And they teach you photography. I mean, what is this course? I only took one course. I dropped out after that because I had found out that they're teaching this course, and you're using plastic reels — and you shouldn't for developing film — because they get stuck and everything; it's better to use the stainless steel ones.

But I found that out because my aunt had a friend who — my aunt's friend, named Eleanor Pointe, also had friends in New York. And one of her friends was a photographer named Adger Cowans. So they had told him that I was young, I was 19, but I was a very sensitive person. That's what they said, okay? [Laughs.] So he took me to — I met him; he took me to a meeting of a group, in '63, called the Kamoinge — K-A-M-O-I-N-G-E — Workshop.

In that workshop was a group of black photographers, and the president was Roy DeCarava. I used to go to their meetings, and I found out things about photography that - why am I paying for this school when, first, they're teaching me how to develop film the wrong way, with plastic? It was like a joke, really.

MS. SHUMARD: This was the real deal, what you were getting.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. So it was like I had professors in this group — Lou Draper - they weren't really professors, but they were my professors and this was my college.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: Kamoinge, so Lou Draper, Herbie Randell, Adger Cowans, Al Fennar, Roy DeCarava, and Sean Walker. They were like a family. And I have been in that group even up to today, now, and I'm the president of the group. So we've been around for longer than even the Photo League [1936-51].

MS. SHUMARD: That's remarkable.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, we're the longest-running group in the history of photography.

MS. SHUMARD: That's fascinating.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: And the group had really just gotten established shortly before you came to New York, is that right? It hadn't been in existence for very long at the time. It was brand new.

MR. BARBOZA: It was like fate to me. They started '63; here I am. They might have started in the early part of '63.

MS. SHUMARD: And where did you meet? Any particular place?

MR. BARBOZA: They meet at someone's loft, but I can't remember whose loft it was. One of the artists lived in a

loft. I can't remember whose loft it was.

MS. SHUMARD: So this was lower, way downtown?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I think it was on Sixth Avenue, downtown somewhere. I can't, for the life of me — I could check with some of the older members to find out whose loft it was at first. But it was educational. It was like it was meant to be, to me, because I not only learned about photography, but they taught me about life, about literature, about films, about art, everything. Then I started going to the museums, reading books.

At that time, I got a job, after the Macy's — how did that work out? Oh, I got a job at the Microfilm Corporation, where all I would do is just — the companies would send their papers, and we'd have to duplicate it, send it back. Yeah, I did that for a while.

And then I got a job as a messenger for the Hearst Corporation. And it was near magazines [magazine publication offices], but it was a Photostat [photocopying] place that they had on the ground level of one of their buildings. And we would go, I would go to *Cosmo* [*politan* magazine] and Avon books and all them, and pick up their stats [copies of designed pages then used in magazine production process], how they're going to lay out, and bring it to the guys that were working the machines. And they would copy them on the Photostat and I would take them back. So I got to see these magazines. But I was a messenger.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, it wasn't just handing somebody an envelope and leaving. You were actually getting to see what was —

MR. BARBOZA: Well, we could see what was in them.

MS. SHUMARD: Because if someone says they were a messenger, you think that must have just meant that they were carrying —

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, they didn't just hand me an envelope. I got to know the guys there, and they knew I liked to run around and take photographs and all.

MS. SHUMARD: So I'm sure they enjoyed the opportunity to let you take a look and see —

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, no, they were right in the open. You could see — until the next message that had to be sent out to pick up something - just see what they were doing. By that time, I moved to 21 West 70th Street, a little lodger — what do you call it — studio apartment. And the rent was like, [\$]125. But I had a guy I knew from New Bedford who came, and he and I shared rent.

MS. SHUMARD: So you could share the costs, yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: Then, of course, I started discovering the Village and going to the coffee houses and all that, looking for women in the street in the Village, things like that.

MS. SHUMARD: [Laughs.] Well, you were young, and this was your opportunity to just explore and experience as much as possible.

MR. BARBOZA: When you come from a small town, it's a lot to take in. There's so much going on. It was exciting.

MS. SHUMARD: Getting back to the workshop and these sessions that you had, did you get to have a lot of interaction, then, with Roy DeCarava and the others? He was, as you said, the president of the group, or there —

MR. BARBOZA: By that time, I'd bought a little \$20 camera — SunScope, it was called, made in Hong Kong.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. So, 35 millimeter?

MR. BARBOZA: And I would go — it was 35, by the way; it's real small. I would go into where I worked. Central Park was right there and I would go in there and take photos. And one time, I saw Rock Hudson and Claudia Cardinale doing a movie, and I took some photos of them. I took photos anywhere. I took photos in Times Square at night. I was one of those members that got into Kamoinge — because now you have to show a portfolio — I didn't have a portfolio. I didn't have anything.

MS. SHUMARD: Were you one of the youngest people associated with it at that point? You were just, like, 19. You were really young.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I was young. I was 19. I was young. [Laughs.]

When we had the meetings, you would bring your work, your prints. You'd put them up, and everybody would go



around the room and criticize them, analyze them, tell you what's wrong with them. I learned a lot about photography and what to look for and things like that. And I learned that this is really an art form. Taking travel photographs, it can be an art form, but it's not just pretty pictures of a sunset and stuff like that. So I learned a lot.

MS. SHUMARD: Where were you doing your printing? Did the workshop have a darkroom that you could use, or how were you doing that?

MR. BARBOZA: No, no. Gee, where did I do the printing? I had forgot all about that -- in my apartment, there's a closet; I did it in my closet.

MS. SHUMARD: In your closet, in your apartment?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I got it enlarged and stuff. Oh, my goodness, I completely forgot about that. I got it there. I did it there, had little pictures of stuff, wow — and had the little bath. I started making prints.

So we're going into about '64, all right? So I went to those meetings, and this was the time that I really realized that I had something I could offer, that I had some talent for some reason, because I didn't know anything about anything. And this is when I really started reading and going to museums and looking at things. It was like a whole new world to me because I — we don't have a museum —

MS. SHUMARD: In New Bedford, right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. We don't have an art museum.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, there's a historical society, but —

MR. BARBOZA: And nobody even goes there to look at the art books and stuff like that. So it was really a whole new world.

MS. SHUMARD: Are there any particular exhibitions or museums that you remember spending time in?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I went to the Museum of Modern Art. I know that, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Galleries really weren't showing photography in those days.

MR. BARBOZA: No. There wasn't much at the museum, either, but I did see photography at the museum. Where I found the photography was mainly in books, but you see a lot of art and see modern art. And I would go there. There would be certain exhibitions, but I can't remember what they were at that time.

And then some of the members would be in exhibitions in different places, but I can't remember where. And I would be part of the exhibit; I'd put up my photographs. Well, Studio Museum [The Studio Museum in Harlem]; we used to go to Studio Museum, that's right.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we'll get through to your exhibition history as we go along.

Now, at some point you met Hugh Bell and he was an influence. Was that during this time period or later, because it wasn't clear from what I was reading when you knew him, or if indeed he was influential in any way. He was apparently known for his fashion and his advertising and editorial work. He was publishing images in places like *Esquire* —

MR. BARBOZA: Right. I'm trying to remember what time that was. Oh, I know what happened. Okay, I wanted to know how to print better. I wanted to know more about photography. I wanted to see what they do in the studio. I was trying to be an assistant to a photographer, and I used to call up. And they'd ask you if you have any experience, and I said, no, that's what I'm looking —

MS. SHUMARD: That's right, and then they'd —

MR. BARBOZA: I mean, how can I?

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: So I couldn't get any job. Now, I can't remember whether or not I actually did that at that time or when I got out of the Navy. I think I did that when I got out of the Navy. What I did was, when I worked in the Hearst Corporation as a messenger, I remember seeing Hugh Bell's photographs in one of the cafes downtown in the Village. And there was a photograph of, a portrait of, Sidney Poitier and some other people.

And I came up with this idea: I said, well, I've got to learn more about this. So I approached Hugh Bell — found where he was, his studio. And once I went into the studio and I saw this table and all these photographs on the table — big prints, there was a photograph of Ernest Hemingway there — wow, I was, gee. So I said, I'd like to work for you, but I'll work for you for free, at night, if you teach me how to print. And that's what I did. I would go at night and learn how to print in his darkroom.

MS. SHUMARD: He did advertising work; he did editorial work.

MR. BARBOZA: Photojournalism, advertising.

MS. SHUMARD: One of his photographs had been included in *The Family of Man* [MoMA exhibition and book, 1955]. It was —

MR. BARBOZA: Right, the jazz photograph. So he was good; he was a good photographer. I learned a lot from him.

MS. SHUMARD: So he really was sort of a mentor for you at that point.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because I — you get to learn everything. It's not like — in high school, I didn't want to do my homework. This was different.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, it is different. Now, going back to — I'm always going to be self-conscious about saying it, Kamo —

MR. BARBOZA: Kamoinge.

MS. SHUMARD: Kamoinge, all right. Kamoinge, were the members there receptive to the commercial side of photography? I understand that they were dedicated, to some extent, to finding a place for fine art photography for African-American photographers. So were they okay with the commercial and the advertising, or how did they think of it?

MR. BARBOZA: They were almost like purists. Roy didn't like that kind of photography, but some of the other guys did. Because we used to talk in those days — sometimes they'd look at *Harper's* [ *Bazaar* ] design. They'd see [Richard] Avedon's work and Hiro's work. And it was creative.

So they didn't put it down, but none of them were commercial photographers, except Adger Cowans used to do photographs, journalism for magazines. So he would do different magazines, and he'd do all that. He wouldn't do advertising, but he'd do — but they used some of his photographs. I think he did do some advertising, too, as well.

MS. SHUMARD: Maybe more editorial work, then, than advertising.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, more editorial work.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, clearly there's always been this tension. You know, is it art? Is it commercial? Are you selling out if you're doing commercial work? And you could certainly go back to the early years of the 20th century, when people like Alfred Stieglitz and Edward Steichen ended up going in different directions. And it almost, sort of, broke down over this notion of purity, and could you still be pure and do commercial work?

MR. BARBOZA: I think so, because what I realized is that I want to do photography, like, 24 hours a day. And I just liked putting this camera up to my eye and capturing an image. So whether it's commercial — and I learned a lot about people by doing commercial work, because you're confronting people to do these things here. And look, Avedon did work. Okay, a lot of the advertising that you do may not become art, but there's a lot of — I did a lot of editorial, too, so that —

MS. SHUMARD: Well, and the compositional elements are the same. As far as I'm concerned, a good photograph is a good photograph.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: And if it's a really good photograph, it can move across these boundaries.

MR. BARBOZA: And usually, it does. So I wasn't concerned about that. I had to start thinking for myself. I'm thinking, I see things this way. I'm not about being a Sunday painter; I want to do this all the time. So I figured the only way to do it is that, you make money; you can buy film. And when you're not doing your job, you can go out photographing. That's what I used to do. In the daytime.

So I didn't think nothing of that at all. But Kamoinge is very instrumental in shaping my life because I met positive people. You know, guys in the group — there were no females in the group at that time — that not only knew about photography, but they educated themselves with music and everything, so it was wonderful.

I couldn't think of a better college for me, because this is the way it was for me. So this is what I thought. And I don't regret not going to college at all. What I understand is that God chose this path for me, and I just have to make the best of it, that's all. It's one of those kinds of things.

So what period of my life are we up to?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we've kind of gotten up through 1964, if we figure that Hugh Bell was part of your experience before you went into the Navy.

MR. BARBOZA: Right. And then I got the bombshell.

MS. SHUMARD: Was there a draft? Were you a —

MR. BARBOZA: I was drafted in the Army in '65.

MS. SHUMARD: And this is, obviously, Vietnam [War] escalation. This is serious business.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, but let's not forget, in my life, for me, women were very influential to me. My mother, grandmother, so on, and then I had met a lady that worked in Hearst magazines as a receptionist. I used to talk to her, and we started dating. And then I got the bombshell.

Oh, her name was Maria Correa. She was of Puerto Rican heritage. Then I got the letter that I am drafted in the Army. I was dumbfounded. I didn't like that at all. I had to leave New York — by that time, I had moved my apartment to 78th Street, where I stayed by myself because that guy got too —

MS. SHUMARD: Your roommate had moved on?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and my photography stuff was in the way, too. It was only one —

MS. SHUMARD: Well, I guess so, if you were using the closet for your darkroom. That made it a little bit tight for your roommate.

MR. BARBOZA: I think it was — now I remember. It wasn't the closet. When you stay in the apartment, there's a hallway, and there was a closet there that nobody used. And I used that, and I said it was a little darkroom. So, oh, my God, I loved New York so much. And I used to go to the Village and Washington Square Park, and I'd take photographs there. I had friends down there. I made a lot of friends, had a lot of friends. But when that came, I was in shock.

So I packed up and went home, and I ran to the Navy. And the Navy said, oh, okay, we'll take you. Do you want two years, three years, or four years? And they said, if you take two years, you've got to go in Reserves afterwards. If you take three years, there's no Reserves. If you take four years — I jumped on the three years, took three years. Later, I found out that they had cut out that program.

MS. SHUMARD: But you were —

MR. BARBOZA: Because too many people took the three years. [Laughs.] So I was shipped to the Great Lakes [Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, IL].

MS. SHUMARD: The Great Lakes? [Laughs.]

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, boy. And that time — now, I'm 21 now, all right. And everybody was drafted, and we were sworn in in Boston. So we had to take the plane. Everybody from New Bedford that was going had to take the plane to Boston, and I'm over in the plane drinking wine. You know, the other guys were younger than me.

So anyway, we were sworn in in Boston; then we were shipped out to the Great Lakes. That's their boot camp. Ten weeks, unbelievable. There was a thing where you — we had to wash our own clothes, and then we had to hang them on the — it's all about discipline — on the line a certain way. We had to take it, no clothespins, and take the little rope and had to turn it around the thing so many times.

And I said, oh, this isn't — I got three years of this stuff? So bingo, that's over. I run back. I'm missing my girlfriend. I want to get married. And of course, when you get young and everybody tells you you shouldn't get married now, you don't listen to anybody. Too young! But I got married.

MS. SHUMARD: So did you do that on leave? Yeah, on leave, you got married.

MR. BARBOZA: And now my first station of duty is way over in the panhandle of Florida, Pensacola.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. Now that's a culture shock, I'm sure.

MR. BARBOZA: I don't have a car. [Laughs.] We took the train all the way down — me and my wife — all the way down to — I think it was Jacksonville [FL]. That took the whole day.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, I'm sure.

MR. BARBOZA: Then we had to go across the panhandle, Tallahassee and so on, to Pensacola. And that took another day. And wow, I look out the train window and I'm looking at palm trees. I'd never even seen a palm tree before. I'd never been out of the country; I'd never been anywhere, except New York.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: And I'll never forget that, because it was like the old days. You saw the train station, the palm tree. You saw the porter standing out there with his cap on. So I said, well, this is really — but I had my camera. So I went to the Navy, and what did they give me as my occupation?

Now, I had mentioned that I did photography. I don't know how they do it. On the base I went to was a photography school for the Navy — same base, at Pensacola. Why did they give me structural mechanisms, and they gave these guys photography and they never knew anything about photography? I was upset. All I remember is that this is 1960 — what is it, '65? We lived off base, me and my wife.

Of course, I made another darkroom, and I took the photos that I took in New York. They had a sidewalk art festival there, and I put photographs up on the wall, you know, along panels. I won some ribbons and stuff, and some people on the base saw it and they decided that, well, you can't go to school because it's too late for that, but we'll give you on-the-job training. You can work in the lab. So I was taken and put into the lab, which I loved.

MS. SHUMARD: And you probably wouldn't have learned much at the school itself, I mean, based on what you already knew when you went there. So going —

MR. BARBOZA: I don't know how extensive the school was. But I became well known, even with the school, among the teachers at the school, for my work.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, what kinds of pictures were you making at this point?

MR. BARBOZA: Pictures of people in the street, all that stuff, nudes of my wife. And then the Jacksonville Art Museum asked me to give an exhibit.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, that's amazing, isn't it?

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, that is. [Laughs.] It's kind of shocking now.

MS. SHUMARD: Really, you probably did —

MR. BARBOZA: I mean, if I look back at those photographs — I don't know. Some of them are still — I've used one of them, still. I was really intense about my work. I'd do it day and night. They offered me a show, and then they sent the exhibition off to — what's this woman and man that have this gallery and a museum in another part of Florida? Their name is famous. Emily and, Lou and Emily — do you know anything like that?

MS. SHUMARD: I don't know, but we can —

MR. BARBOZA: Emily Logan? Yeah, I can't remember so many years ago. They sent the exhibition there. So now, some of the instructors at the school want me to talk to them about photography. [Laughs.] I don't know anything about this here. Finally, they needed a new staff photographer for the station newspaper.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: And I got to be the staff photographer. So I had no more duty at night, just day. And I could go home every night, unless there was an accident I had to photograph. But I would do picture stories around the base. I was the staff photographer. And me and this guy developed — he was a cartoonist. He worked for the *Gosport* [Naval Air Station], Pensacola paper.

[Side conversation.]

So I went and I developed working picture stories and ideas, and sometimes I'd get with the cartoonists; we'd do covers. And people loved the stuff we were doing. I still have those somewhere.

MS. SHUMARD: Do you?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. I don't throw anything away.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, that's good.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I have everything. Oh, but I've been giving stuff to Cornell [University]; they have a lot of my stuff now.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, it's important for it to go into archival collections.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And I got a lot of practice doing that, and it was just wonderful. Then I got transferred because my two years were up.

MS. SHUMARD: So you had one year left.

MR. BARBOZA: And my wife had to go — I had 10 months left. My wife had to go back to New York and I had to go somewhere for 10 months. They sent me to [Naval Air Station] Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida. I was only there a few — a week or so at their lab. There was no station newspaper, but they sent me to the Jacksonville station there. Cecil Field was a little outside of Jacksonville. So I spent 10 months there with all my negatives and my little '58 Ford that I had, and all my equipment in there.

MS. SHUMARD: So you got a car at some point? You said when you'd gone down, you just —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I bought a car for \$100. And I had that, and great, because now I've got 10 months and — I worked in the lab there because there was no station paper there. I don't know —

MS. SHUMARD: That you could work on there.

MR. BARBOZA: They didn't give me any station paper. But I would get my car and drive around, photographing fashion. I found models doing fashion. I found a girl that looked like Twiggy.

MS. SHUMARD: Before Twiggy, because — well, I guess Twiggy really kind of came in, like, '67 or so.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. I did photographs of fashion of her and I even did nudes. They had someplace out that you'd go with the rocks and the water and stuff. And I did nudes there. I got very scared at times, with a white girl in Florida and — [laughs].

I would do all kinds of creative stuff. Larry Colwell at the Jacksonville Art Museum gave photography classes, and he got to like my work. He was in his 70s then. It was only 10 months, but we kept in touch. He used to take me to his home. He had photographs by Edward Weston, Brett [Weston] — and he knew all of them through — and Wynn Bullock — he had all that. Do you want to stop it?

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, why don't we just take a little pause here.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay.

[END CD 1.]

MS. SHUMARD: Okay, we're back in business. This is Ann Shumard interviewing Anthony Barboza at the Jolly Hotel Madison Towers in New York City on November 18, 2009, for the Archives of American Art. This is card number two.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, what I should mention is that I worked in Jacksonville on portfolios and did fashion, news, and art, and I got further instruction, because I missed being back in New York and the Kamoinge. I would take the classes from Larry Colwell, and he was great.

I learned more about printing there, and I got a lot of work done because my wife was up here and I didn't have — oh, I did have — I forgot to mention that my first child was born in 1966, November 8, in Pensacola.

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: So they both went up —

MS. SHUMARD: Now was this a daughter?

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: And her name?

MR. BARBOZA: Her name is Leticia Barboza. So she was born November 8, 1966. So for the 10 months, I worked constantly. But for research purposes, I should mention that each person that does any art form has their — what I could call their heroes, people that influence them.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: First of all there were people in Kamoinge that influenced me, Lou Draper, Herbie Randall, Adger Cowans, and Al Fennar, Shawn Walker, and of course, Roy DeCarava. So I always looked at their work, and I missed being up in New York. But I also had other people that I always looked at their work. I admired Edward Weston's work, Bill Brandt's work, Cartier-Bresson's work, and also at the time, for painters, Matisse, Picasso, and in literature James Baldwin, mainly James Baldwin.

But then later on I got to know other writers. But that was at that time. So the thing that I noticed in those years, from my own observation, is there is a certain — and I learned this from Kamoinge, because Kamoinge — and I would study the history of photography.

Kamoinge had a certain way of photographing that - you can't call it a black aesthetic, but it was something that I learned beyond the image, like if you have Cartier-Bresson's image, it's about a decisive moment, right? Okay, Roy's images were about everyday things. His decisive moment, I later realized, was there's no such thing as a decisive moment. For Cartier-Bresson, the decisive moment was when he figures that all these things work together. But any moment that you click the shutter is a decisive moment to you.

MS. SHUMARD: That's right.

MR. BARBOZA: And there was a certain mood and a certain — it was like jazz music to me. In other words, the photographs didn't look like jazz music, but there was another meaning, another feeling behind the image itself. When you listen to music, and you might go to the same cut, you listen to it once. Another time you listen to it, you have another entirely different feeling from it.

So there was a certain mood that the Kamoinge members did that I could recognize right away in my own photography when I hit that kind of mood that I was looking for. There's no way of describing it.

MS. SHUMARD: You just felt it.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but I could view the image and see it. What I developed later on in life is that — for me, I call it eye-dreaming. I developed a certain phrase for it, and I found out in later years that everybody does eye-dreaming. You take up a camera and you photograph.

When you take a photograph, sometimes you shoot something; you don't know why you shoot it. You just take the picture. It's your subconscious working on your consciousness, and if you go back later and look at some of the photographs, you might find that as you progress in life and evolve in life, you learn more things about yourself.

But some of those things are told to you beforehand by you clicking the shutter. It's a very psychological thing. So there's an eye-dreaming, but there's also a certain mood, and each person that's a photographer develops a certain style and a certain feeling about their work. If you understand and can talk about your work, then you evolve and go further and further down the line. Some people do the work, and they do the same type of work through their whole life.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: Some people, like Picasso, kept changing. It's influenced by women. Matisse changed as he went along. Most of the great artists do, to me. If you look at Delacroix's work, there is — Delacroix comes very close to what I'm talking about in photography, because it was the image he did, but there was also something beyond that if you had to look. And I never went to any art classes to study that. I just looked through my eyes.

MS. SHUMARD: Intuitively.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. He's saying, this is almost like the illustration, but it also says something about his feelings about people and things that happened. It's all right there. Now, I'd have to sit down and look at the painting and tell you what I see in it. It doesn't mean it's what he saw in it, but I get certain things from it, just like you might hear the same music I have and so on.

MS. SHUMARD: Sure.

MR. BARBOZA: So I was influenced by a lot of literature, music, and art, as well as photography.

MS. SHUMARD: And it all informed what you did.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it all did. So I thought that I should mention my influences in those days. I learned more about Wynn Bullock and Edward Weston and all of that whole scene on the West Coast from Larry Colwell because he knew all of them.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, what was his position at the museum?

MR. BARBOZA: He was an instructor there for classes.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay, so they had an art school that was associated?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, it was like classes, Jacksonville Art Museum. He was quite the guy. He was a commercial photographer in the '50s, and he used to photograph for the New York City Ballet when [George] Balanchine was there and all of that. He did that, and he did commercial work. He said that he had done Tuesday Weld when she was younger.

Then, I guess he made enough money, and he decided he was going to go off. He moved in the '50s to California and became friends with Wynn Bullock and Edward Weston and the group there, and then later on he went to Europe and lived there for a while in Spain, and he did things there. He was published and had exhibitions, and he was quite good.

He did 8x10 camera [work], and I have a lot of his work because he had me hold it, because his wife went a little crazy and she would just throw it away. So he called me in the '70s - he had moved up after I'd already been back to New York. He had moved up to Connecticut and he was teaching up there and he told me, "Tony," — it was the same thing Ed Weston told him years before.

He said, "Larry, I'm not going to see you anymore. It's the last time I'll see you," and he did the same thing to me. He said, "I want you to come up and — " - he was in his 80s then — "I want you to come up and take and keep in your possession what I think is some of my best work." And I went up and packed it all in an automobile and brought it back to New York, and he died.

It was sad. But he was a close friend to me and I still have a lot of his work. He has work in the George Eastman House [Rochester, NY], and he has work in the Museum of Modern Art. He was quite good, but he never had a book — I had promised him and I'm still going to do it — that I would try to do a book of his work. But I had to hit the lottery.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, publishing is a whole other beast, really. The costs of that are difficult, and the economics in the publishing industry now make it particularly difficult. Maybe there would be a way to do some kind of an Internet publishing. Maybe there would be a way of doing something — a virtual publication as opposed to a —

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, but every person who works in photography, especially to me, if they do a life's work —

MS. SHUMARD: A book is —

MR. BARBOZA: A book, yes.

MS. SHUMARD: It's true, and it does have a life beyond the —

[Cross talk.]

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it does

MS. SHUMARD: Publishing, obviously.

MR. BARBOZA: So we're still in Jacksonville and I'm working on portfolios. I want to have exhibitions. I'm very ambitious. So 10 months are up, and boy, they couldn't handle me in the Navy lab there because I'm ready to go home.

So when they had the muster, I would — 10 days left and nine days left. So there was another gentleman that got out the same time. He lived up in Massachusetts. And on June 7, 1968, I got out of the Navy.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: I couldn't wait. We drove up in a little Volkswagen, all the way up nonstop to New York, and that was the end of the Navy. But I did get a lot of experience by being paid to take photographs.

MS. SHUMARD: Sure.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, so.

MS. SHUMARD: While we were taking the break, I was looking at your exhibition list. I had a couple copies of your earlier résumés; I figured that that might help. And it had indicated — let's see; let me flip to the right page — that your first exhibition was at the Pensacola Art Museum, that you had a one-man show in '66. I don't think we mentioned that.

I think we were talking first about Jacksonville, and I was wondering if — and according to this list — Jacksonville's a little later.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I did say —

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: I did say the Pensacola Art Museum, and there's the — the Emily Lowe Gallery was next.

MS. SHUMARD: At the University of —

MR. BARBOZA: At the University of Mass, the Emily Lowe —

MS. SHUMARD: Miami, University of Miami.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, I remember the name Emily Lowe.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, you got that.

MR. BARBOZA: So that was — I did mention the —

MS. SHUMARD: No, I think we were talking about — we sort of jumped to Jacksonville, but we didn't talk about the first show at the Pensacola.

MR. BARBOZA: No, I did because —

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, you did? Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, because I said to you that after I had the exhibition at the Pensacola Art Museum —

MS. SHUMARD: Then it went.

MR. BARBOZA: Then it went to the Emily Lowe.

MS. SHUMARD: Great, okay, all right, good. I just wanted to have that chronology.

MR. BARBOZA: I did mention that. So then there's Morgan State [University, Baltimore, MD] here too.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes.

MR. BARBOZA: State college, I don't know — I don't remember that. My brother went to Morgan State, so I might have sent some photographs there. So we're up to '60?

MS. SHUMARD: Sixty-eight, you said; we've gotten to June of '68.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, why does it have '69 here?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we can go back over it and refresh.

MR. BARBOZA: This is wrong.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we'll make some corrections to the exhibition list before we're done.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because I got out of the Navy in '68.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, so that can't be right.



MR. BARBOZA: So the Jacksonville Art Museum, I also had an exhibition there. That's how I met — I had forgotten that. That's how I met Larry Colwell, and we used to go photographing together, him and I. He liked to go to junkyards.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: All the automobiles there, and some of them are — he was working on abstracts then. So I did that too. I did it with 35 [millimeter], and I think he did it with a larger format. But we would find rusty cars and they had the paint peeling and all that. He was doing that. So I learned how to do that. And we did cemeteries. So I have all these photographs of cemeteries and junkyards, and we would do that all the time.

We would go down on the weekend and shoot, and then I went — when I was still — I forgot to say this — when I was still in Jacksonville, I used to drive around and look for photographs. And I came across this black family that looked like it was going back to slavery times. They were so poor. And I approached them, and I started hanging out with them and doing photographs.

It was unbelievable how they lived. I would bring them food, and I would photograph them every day at their house and their kids and all that, everybody around. I even used some of those photographs in a recent show called *1968* that NYU put on. And I'd photograph everywhere.

But I did them and I'd go there all the time. And someone in the Navy told them that I was doing this, and they forbid me to go there anymore because too political. I couldn't do any more photographs there, yeah - because I was working on picture story.

When I got out of the Navy, I had some photographs of there. I did portraits of people in the Navy, in the streets and stuff, and that was my first publication in a photography magazine up in New York. I think it was either *Camera 35* or *Popular Photography*. They gave me a page of photographs, my first publication that I remember, other than the newspaper that got published.

But I was out of the Navy and back to Kamoinge Workshop again. I lived in the Village on Christopher Street with my wife and my daughter, and I was constantly doing photographs. Then I opened up a small studio on 163 West 23rd Street. It's a little loft space and had a side skylight.

I built a room for a darkroom, and I began to do fashion photography. But I wanted to work for *Life* magazine, and of course, *Life* magazine was folding around that time.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, the heyday of the big picture magazines was waning then.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, so I decided I would — well, I've got to make some money to take care of my family. So I started doing fashion. I found out where the model agencies were, and I would test the models. I used some photographs in the beginning that I had from the Navy. You first have to show the model agencies that you're legit.

MS. SHUMARD: Sure.

MR. BARBOZA: So they saw what I did and they decided that, "Okay, we'll send you female models and male models so you can test."

MS. SHUMARD: So this was enabling the models to put portfolios together? Was that — yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: You did the test of the models. You got a print for your portfolio and they got a print for their portfolio.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and I just did everything. I took my very first portfolio I did in the studio, and guess what, I took it to *Harper's Bazaar* and they hired me to do the shot "By Mail," in the back [of the magazine], every month, for \$125. But I'd do it for anything to get published.

MS. SHUMARD: Sure, yeah, absolutely.

MR. BARBOZA: So I started doing photographs for them. They'd give me side jobs. One was in the front of the magazine - they have these combination ads where they have a watch, and they have another picture in there. So it was like the companies would call and say to the magazine, "Can you do an ad for us?"

So I would end up shooting watches in this little studio. These watches were so expensive that - first I started photographing the watches in black and white, and they'd put them over there. I did a beauty shot of a female

model that came out so beautiful. They started giving me more work, and they published those. Then they decided they're going to give me — this is a Boucheron, the watches. You ever hear of those watches?

MS. SHUMARD: I'm afraid not, but that doesn't mean anything.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, so they're expensive watches.

MS. SHUMARD: That's probably why.

MR. BARBOZA: So they wanted me to do a catalogue of all their watches.

MS. SHUMARD: All their watches? So this is still life photography, right?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I'd do still life or anything, and I would put it on this piece of paper and make sure that I didn't see any reflection from the watches. I think that they took — a guy came there and took out the faces of the watch.

MS. SHUMARD: So that you wouldn't get the reflection?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but they had all these watches, and they were worth like — I'm in this little junky studio, and they're worth like a quarter of a million dollars. I had to sleep in the studio and a guard was there with me.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh my.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, we had to stay in the studio overnight, and I shot these watches, with a 4x5 camera I think it was.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, is this when you're first using a different format than the 35-millimeter? Do you know at what point you moved beyond 35? Was it all 35 while you were in the Navy and you were —

MR. BARBOZA: No, we did 4x5.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: What I did in the newspaper, I did 35. That was in Pensacola. When I went to the last 10 months and I worked in the lab, I was the photographer who went out and photographed the accidents and everything -- and the "re-ups," they called them -- the people who sign up again, extend their — which I thought was crazy. And I had to use a 4x5 with a flash.

They even sent me my first job to go shoot a dead body, because they had — oh no, that was in Pensacola. In Pensacola, when I was working in the lab, before I started working at the newspaper, they said, "Well, Tony, you're going to photograph — we have a treat for you. You're going to shoot this." And I used to see the photographs come out.

The young pilots were training on that base, and they would have accidents and die. And you'd be shooting — the photographers would shoot a hand over here and all this — all gory.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, dear, just sort of to document the accident

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, so it was my turn to photograph and they sent me to the morgue. I expect to see the body parts and all this. But the guy walked — I'd never been in a morgue before. He walked to a drawer. He says, "Oh, yeah, here he is." He pulled out the drawer and there's this whole body here. I think I saw a dead body when I was small in Cape Cod [MA].

But I looked, and the shocking thing was that, to me, this kid was just alive a minute ago. Now he's dead and all he has on him is a hole right here in his throat. He died in the crash and that's how — his whole body was together, though. But it was just shocking to me to see — pull out a drawer, and this dead body - I mean, they're used to it, but I'd never seen it before. That really upset me.

MS. SHUMARD: I think that would be unnerving.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it upset me because, you know, it's somebody's life, and I couldn't even joke about things like that. This kid had parents, and he wanted to be a pilot, and he's dead like that. So that was kind of shocking. But now we were in —

MS. SHUMARD: Wait, you were doing the watches, and I had just asked you about shooting 4x5. And I had asked you when you started doing that. So that's how we got back to a little bit before.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, so I did do 4x5 in the Navy. But this is 4x5 on a tripod. It's different, different lighting.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: And I figured out the lighting. So I would do — and I worked for them — oh, gee, let's see. I opened that studio in about — I got out in '68. I think I opened that studio in about '69. So '69 — after I did my first portfolio, within a few months, I got the job. They liked my work. I didn't know how to use strobes. I didn't know how to have strobes. Most of the photographers had strobes. I used 500-watt bulbs -

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: - with the reflectors. And I just lit that way. They didn't know and that's how I did — because I couldn't buy a strobe unit. So they hired me. They liked my portfolio. I worked with *Harper's Bazaar* for a number of years. I can't remember how many but at the time I did — when I was in that little studio, I did my first advertisement. I had a rep —

MS. SHUMARD: Do you remember what it was for?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it was for Viceroy cigarettes and it was a model named Pat Evans. And it was — I had to rent another studio to do it. There was supposed to be a model sitting there and a photographer who's lighting a cigarette. That's what it was.

Now, before I go — because I had favorite models when I was doing *Harper's Bazaar* . I even did my daughter when she was very little. I had to shoot jewelry sometimes and — and I had to put — boy, it must have been expensive, all diamond jewelry that hung like this here, and I took it and I put it on my little baby this way, hung this way —

MS. SHUMARD: Sort of around and to the side.

MR. BARBOZA: On her skin, but you only saw it from here to here.

MS. SHUMARD: From her armpit to sort of her waist.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and they published it. They loved it. So I worked with them for a number of years. But a female model came to me one day and I liked her look. Her name was Pat Evans and I started doing tests for her. She had hair down to here.

It's a black model. And she came to me one day and she said, "Well, Tony I'm going to cut all my hair off." I said, "You're going to cut all your hair off? You're not going to get any work. You couldn't get any work now." But I went along with her on this, right? And I photographed her bald-headed. I had a rep at that time, starting out, named Barbara Pizick. She'd take my book around, and she happened to take my book around to Herb Lubalin Design, and they wanted to use her in a national ad for cosmetics. It was a breakthrough.

MS. SHUMARD: It must have been.

MR. BARBOZA: So here I am. This is like '70, 1970. Now, I don't think I shot that until I moved. So before I go — I moved about '71 to a bigger studio on 10 West 18th Street. Okay, I did the test in that smaller studio.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: So I know I was in that smaller studio until '71, only because I got an assignment from *Essence* magazine to shoot Miles Davis. And that's a whole long story.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. Well, we should hear about that when you're ready.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but okay, I shot in '71. I was still in that studio, and I know that it was '71 in that studio at 163 West 23rd Street because he used to send me women to photograph that he knew. And his wife, Betty Davis, at that time - and Betty Davis was the queen of the underground in the Village because of her dress, as the best dressed of the underground. She was voted the best dressed. And I would photograph her, and she did some modeling. She had wonderful clothes.

So I know that it was at 163 West 23rd Street, that I was still there in '71 because that's when Miles used to call me every week, "How you doing, Barboza, what's going on? Are you messing with the girls that I'm sending you?" I said, "No, Miles, I'm not doing that. I'm just photographing them if you send them to me." He was funny.

But I met him in '71, because *Essence* hired me and I went to — they called me for the job and I got excited. Wow, Miles Davis, I'm going to go to Miles Davis's home to photograph. Then I started calling people up that

knew Miles, or knew about Miles, and one of them told me a story that, "Oh, yeah, you don't know; he's very unpredictable. One time a photographer went there, and he let him in and had him sit in the living room for four hours before he even came down."

It must have made the guy really nervous. So I was prepared for anything. So I get there and I knock on the door, and this man, Miles, opened the door. And Miles is only about 5'7" at the most. I thought he was taller than that. He says, "Hi, you're Barboza, right," and I said, "Yeah." He says, "Well, there's a friend of yours here." He says, "Well, come in," and there was a guy named Finnie, who's a hairdresser who did some things for Miles, did his hair sometimes.

Finnie was working in the kitchen on some soup, fish soup. I didn't pay him any mind. But I said hi to Finnie. I didn't know what they were cooking or why. I said hi to Finnie, and Miles was very cordial to me. I spent the whole day there. I photographed him in his bedroom with his closet with all his clothes. It was sort of like a Miles and fashion statement for *Essence*.

They wanted to see some of the clothes he had. We had a great shoot. Then we became — he was very friendly to me. He was not at all like the people who told me about him. He wasn't like that to me. So we did shootings.

The ground floor was the kitchen, and the next floor was, I think, like a living room, and the next floor — I can't remember; it was so long ago. His bedroom and everything was stucco walls. He liked stucco. And he had a lot of shoes and clothes in his closet; he told me that he would buy a shirt for a concert and then have to throw it away because he perspired so much that it got drenched.

But he was really wonderful to me, and in the end, we sat down to have fish soup. He had made the fish soup. Miles had made it, but when Finnie finished the hair on him, fixing his hair, Finnie would stay downstairs and watch the soup. But Miles had a French cookbook about that thick. It must have been about 2,000, 3,000 pages. It was unbelievable. I had never tasted a fish — and I had been to Paris — like this since.

It was the best soup I'd ever had. It was unbelievable. He was quite a guy. So he got to like me. And I gave him my phone number, and he would send me his wife and send me other girlfriends he had at the time.

So I remember it was then. But to go back now, so I know that's '71 I started photographing Pat Evans in that same studio. And that's when she cut — first I started her with hair. I photographed her a lot. But then afterwards I did some when she cut her hair. Then I moved to 10 West 18th Street. So that must have been about - '72 I think it was.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: And I got this job to photograph Pat Evans for a national ad and we did it and it came out wonderful, and matter of fact that was in — it came out in '71 or '72.

MS. SHUMARD: And what was the advertisement for? But you said this was —

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, the ad was for Astarte, A-S-T-A-R-T-E, Astarte cosmetics, and it was in *Essence* and some other magazines. And I won an honorable mention for it from the Art Directors Club for that ad.

MS. SHUMARD: Were there particular art directors that you were working with at this point that you can comment on?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, Herb Lubalin's people - but I can't remember. It was Mr. Smith that worked at — Herb Lubalin was a famous designer, and he had another guy named Smith that I did the ad with, and I worked with another director, art director, for the Viceroy cigarettes.

So I was starting to do some work. But when the ad came out for Astarte, I had Pat Evans. I also did her at that same shooting because the clients were there. We painted her whole body from here up solid black because she wasn't that —

MS. SHUMARD: What did you use?

MR. BARBOZA: They used makeup on her.

MS. SHUMARD: Makeup and just —

MR. BARBOZA: But she was a little darker than me in skin color. You can say she's a medium brown because you guys won't see me. [Laughs.] So we painted her black and I did some profiles. We also did her that way, too, matter of fact, in the new book, *Posing Beauty [ : African American Images from the 1890s to the Present, 2009]* that Deborah Willis did, they had that photograph in there of her black.

But this got national attention. Now remember, in the history of fashion, there was never a bald-headed model. So what happens? We get film crews coming from as far as Australia, France, and other countries to interview me and her — sometimes just her, but me, too, in my studio. I have never seen those interviews. I don't know what happened to them. But they were in different countries.

So it became really a big talk, and she went on to do shooting sessions with Helmut Newton and other people. I was a little upset, because I photographed her and *Essence* goes and hires Helmut Newton to do the shoot. Why can't I do the fashion shoot?

So I got a little upset about that. But she got to be really famous and popular in those days. So right after that, Rudi Gernreich, the bathing suit designer in California, came out with his two bald-headed models for his thing. So she started that whole thing.

MS. SHUMARD: And it was launched in your studio.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. So I became famous for that for a while, I guess. I don't know. But she was famous anyway. That was unique. So now if you look back at all of these things, it seems like they were all — now, this is my own belief — they were all prepared.

It was like, why did they fall into like that? It's very strange to me when I think about that. This happens and this happens. It's amazing. Well, we're about '71, '72. I think that's where we are. Okay, you've got to have the truth about everything, right?

MS. SHUMARD: Absolutely, yeah, we want the unvarnished -

MR. BARBOZA: - outrageousness, okay.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, that's right.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, so now I'm getting to the point that all these beautiful women — we moved to a new studio; we couldn't afford Christopher [Street] anymore. So by that time, my other daughter was born —

MS. SHUMARD: And her name?

MR. BARBOZA: Laryssa Barboza. So here we are in the loft, and the loft is only — at that time when I moved into this loft — 3,000 square feet, \$341 a month. Boy, that's great rent, and we had living space in there or had like a bunk bed thing that I built.

I don't know how this happened because I can't remember so far back — whether we moved out of Christopher Street, or we still lived there and I did shooting in the studio. I'm not sure. But at any point, I met this girl, this fashion model from South Africa with freckles, beautiful girl, woman, and she had some black in her. I guess it was very little, but it came from way back, maybe a couple of ancestors back, a couple of generations back. But we sort of like fell in love. Boy.

MS. SHUMARD: So that complicated life, evidently.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, so all I remember is that one day when I came from somewhere, and I came back to the studio - and you have this seamless paper that's nine-foot long - and my wife had taken a chalk and wrote the whole note or letter —

MS. SHUMARD: On the seamless paper?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and had bags packed, and out the door the three of them went. Oh, boy.

MS. SHUMARD: That must have been rough.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, but it must have been rough on her. I begged them to come back and it didn't happen. She never came back. So that's about '72.

MS. SHUMARD: In looking at some of your photographs, is that the first year that you went to Africa? I was wondering when you first went to West Africa and photographed.

MR. BARBOZA: You know some things about me.

MS. SHUMARD: That may not be the right year, because I've learned not to trust dates. But I thought I would ask.

MR. BARBOZA: That's '71 then.

MS. SHUMARD: Seventy-one.

MR. BARBOZA: So all this happened in '71. So that means that has to be — when I connect that, it had to be '71 that that happened because Miles Davis [was] done in '71, but then I must have moved. So we're probably in beginning of '72. Wow, so okay, now I know I did certain things in '72.

So my wife had to be gone by then, because then another woman walks in that wants to be a model, came from Boston, originally from Cleveland, Ohio, and she left her son and her husband and never went back. So who sent her to me?

Only God did this; it could only be God. So here it ends up that her name is Ming Smith, And she becomes a model and I'm her photographer. I do a lot of photographers of her for jobs and stuff, and she lives in the studio with me.

So I know that's '72, because soon after that in '72, I get a trip to Mexico for a magazine called *Tuesday* magazine, I think it was. It's a supplement that goes into the newspapers in Chicago - I know it was in Chicago anyway - but not to shoot Ming, to shoot this other model in Mexico, near the pyramids. Oh, my goodness. So Ming can't be on this shoot. But she's done some stuff, so I have to go, and this is my first assistant.

Now I have a studio that's bigger. My first assistant is Sirji Kakizaki. He's the first one to walk into — I wasn't going to be like anyone else. He wanted to be an assistant, and I hired him. He showed me his portfolio. He came from Japan.

MS. SHUMARD: And how old was he, do you think, roughly?

MR. BARBOZA: He wasn't that much younger than me. He still lives in the Village. I don't know. How old was I then? I was 24 when I got out in '68, 25 - I'd say probably about 27. So he might have been about 25. So I fly down, me, and I have an afro that's —

MS. SHUMARD: Huge, Jimi Hendrix size?

MR. BARBOZA: Bigger than that.

MS. SHUMARD: Bigger than Jimi.

MR. BARBOZA: Because when you test it, your hand when in. My hair was so soft.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes.

MR. BARBOZA: People would just put their hand in my hair and it would disappear. But I grew my hair because when I got out of the Navy, I never wanted to cut my hair anymore. I didn't want short hair.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, you cut it really short, obviously, when you're in the Navy.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, in the Navy - so, gee, you walk in that door.

MS. SHUMARD: And it was also the time. That was the time, I guess.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, that was the time, so — and Sirji had hair down to here.

MS. SHUMARD: Shoulder length?

MR. BARBOZA: Long straight black hair, right.

MS. SHUMARD: Long, straight.

MR. BARBOZA: So they told us, "Oh, you're going to Mexico. You all better hide your hair, because they'll call you - " and I think the word was *papito* . I don't now, some word in Spanish that — and they'll give you trouble that you're gay. They'll give you trouble at the airports.

So I plastered down my hair and put a knit cap on, and Sirji took all his hair and put it up in a hat. We went on the plane and everything. So we got through the airport. Nobody ever said anything. But once we got there and we took off our hats, people in the street were calling us whatever that Spanish word is.

MS. SHUMARD: That you were gay.

MR. BARBOZA: "Faggots," gee, it was funny. So I would do some of my own photographs, but we — I'm at the hotel and I look out. What in the world? Ming had flown down there on her own money.

She didn't trust me — jealous, standing out there. I couldn't believe it. I could not believe it. I could not believe it. So the lady — I think her name was Annette Samuels — was the director. So Ming ended up traveling with us, but I didn't photograph Ming. I photographed —

MS. SHUMARD: The model.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: In front of the pyramid there outside Mexico City, did different fashion shots, photographs there, and they ran them in the newspaper. I went back. So now it's '72. I know it's '72 now. But that could have been the beginning of '72; '72, *Tuesday* magazine wants me to do another fashion shoot, and they liked Ming, so it's Ming and me and Sirji and Annette Samuels, and we're going to go to Dakar, West Africa.

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, that's where we went. So I know that's '72. And I went nuts.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, I'd love to hear about what was it like for you to have this first encounter with Africa.

MR. BARBOZA: We got there at night, and we were checking into the [Hotel La] Croix du Sud, the Southern Cross. Wow, I'd never seen anything like this. This was — but I didn't see it in the daytime - and I'm really excited.

So we get in my hotel room, and Ming is staying with me. The sun comes in the window, and the first thing I do is grab the camera and I took a nice nude photograph of her right on the bed there. It was really nice. It was memorable.

We went out the door of the hotel, saw all these cripples, wheelchairs and cripples and things — they would say, "*Cadeau* [gift], cadeau, cadeau." What I had heard was that the families, parents of the families, they would put one child out, break their legs so they could go out and beg. Yes.

But that was shocking to me. How could you do that to your own children? But they're starving. I don't know. I'd rather rob someplace, but you don't rob. Those are Muslims there. I was there one time and some kid had stolen something from a market, food or something, and all this whole crowd of people, maybe about 50 people, would scold him and chase him down, throwing rocks at him and everything.

You don't steal. Muslims don't steal. That's against their religion. They'll cut your hand off. One time I left a camera bag in the canoe or something and, "Oh, I forgot my camera bag." We went back. The camera bag was still there. We thought it'd be stolen. It's amazing.

But, oh, it was beautiful. We went to a little village. It was a Catholic village. It's called [Joal-]Fadiouth, F-A-D-I-O-U-T-H, and I photographed everything that I could see. And then I still had to do the fashion.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, but obviously, this was an opportunity to take personal pictures.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, I shot some photographs I still love.

MS. SHUMARD: Were you working in black and white exclusively at this point, or was there color too?

MR. BARBOZA: I shot color too. We went on Gorée Island. I'm shooting everything. We went there to have a nice lunch there. I don't even remember where I photographed Ming. But I got those other photographs and I photographed in color.

MS. SHUMARD: And of course, Gorée Island has such history.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I photographed color, black and white. Wow, I just — it was amazing. I wanted to stay there and keep photographing. It's interesting that —well, I think that's the next year. But I developed into shooting people.

So it was nice shooting people, and everybody was so friendly. We'd walk around, and it was just a wonderful experience. I think by that time — did I — no, I didn't meet tourist board people until later; yeah, because I went back a number of times. I've been there a number of times. I really love Africa. I love photographing people, and

any chance I get, I like going back. So we're at '72. Can we pause it for a minute?

MS. SHUMARD: We sure can. There we go.

MR. BARBOZA: I've never done this much detail. Wow, this is, like, things I've forgot. It's a wonder I remember some names. I just loved Africa. It was inspirational. Everything about it — [phone rings] -

[Audio break.]

MS. SHUMARD: Okay, we can continue.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, I've been to Mexico, and now it's the first time I'm going anywhere else, and that's Africa. And that's completely different, because I was inspired not only by the bright, beautiful colors that the Africans there wear - the women, they were so beautiful - but also how graceful they walked in these outfits.

One of the things I noticed was that they would have their skirts down to the ankles - now, when you have a skirt that that's long and you walk, you take smaller steps - and you have another beautiful rhythm about the body because you have to move a certain way, and it was just beautiful to see. But there would be something you would have to capture in film, a movie, instead of stills because you couldn't really — but it was interesting.

So it was the people, and a lot of the Senegalese are very slender and tall. They're beautiful people, and the clothes were just wonderful to me. And the artwork that was done there, they painted figures on a glass plate. So I bought a number of those, and they were like three dollars in American money. And from this day I still have this.

MS. SHUMARD: A bracelet?

MR. BARBOZA: Feel how heavy that is.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, my goodness.

MR. BARBOZA: I bought that in '72 in Senegal.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, that is really —

MR. BARBOZA: So I've had it all that time on my wrist.

MS. SHUMARD: Kind of like a link to that time for you.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, '72. So it's quite an experience. I was more excited about shooting the people than —

MS. SHUMARD: Than the work.

MR. BARBOZA: Than some fashion, yeah. I would get up early in the morning, and both Ming and I, we'd walk around before we had to go do the shoot.

MS. SHUMARD: How much time in the day would be taken up with the shooting that had to be done, and then how did you —

MR. BARBOZA: I know that we had to drive somewhere and shoot somewhere. We didn't do it in the city, but I can't remember where we went. I don't even know where those photographs are.

MS. SHUMARD: Did someone else scout the locations so that you knew where you —

[Cross talk.]

MR. BARBOZA: They picked a driver there from the tourist board and they took us somewhere. But I don't know. I don't remember any of that. I was just excited about the other stuff, the other people, people photographs that I wanted to take. I don't even know how long we were there, maybe a week.

MS. SHUMARD: Do you remember what time of year it was?

MR. BARBOZA: I have no idea, because it's always warm there.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah. I guess there's a rainy season at some point that sort of comes through in West Africa. But I think that's kind of between March and June.

MR. BARBOZA: I'm not sure.



[END CD 2.]

MS. SHUMARD: All right. This is Ann Shumard interviewing Anthony Barboza at the Jolly Hotel Madison Towers in New York City on November 18, 2009, for the Archives of American Art, card number three.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay. Well, we go back to Senegal and I realize that my first love was reportage photography. I only went into the other so I could make money to buy film. And when I was with Kamoinge — I am still with Kamoinge — I learned how to shoot in the street, and you had to shoot very fast. They called it Ashcan photography. So that helped me a lot because some people didn't want to have their photograph taken. But I was very quick —

MS. SHUMARD: A cultural taboo?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because they thought it would be captured and, you know, sold. So I was very quick with the photographs. I didn't know what I had until I came back and started studying them and saw, you know, as they were developed.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, because you couldn't do any processing when you were there.

MR. BARBOZA: No, no, no.

MS. SHUMARD: You just had to take your film back and do it.

MR. BARBOZA: So I shot for myself and I shot the job, which was in color.

MS. SHUMARD: And the work that you were doing — your personal work was black and white?

MR. BARBOZA: Right, but I also shot color on that, too. Whatever film I could get, I would shoot. But the idea was, in a natural state in which they were in, to try to photograph them without them seeing you. Sometimes I did portraits of the people there, especially in Fadiouth. I have them pose. Everybody wanted cadeau so I would get some cadeau, a little change pocket.

But I got some experience doing it that way because in the street — I remember when I got out of the Navy, and one, I wanted to get back to New York and photograph in the street. So me and Lou Draper from Kamoinge went one time to Spanish Harlem. And we were shooting — this is like soon after I got out of the Navy. We were on one block shooting. A lot of people didn't want their photograph taken. By the time we got to the next block, they already knew we were coming, through the grapevine.

Finally somebody stopped us and wanted our film. We had no choice, but we had to give — I had already pocketed some film. I had to give one roll to them. We lost some film that way. So you know, it is kind of dangerous. And it just probably still is.

MS. SHUMARD: Now I think people are so focused on getting permissions to take anybody's picture. And that wasn't the case then.

MR. BARBOZA: So I did learn from street shooting how to shoot in Africa. I was just fascinated and overwhelmed. And I was dying to go back. So now we go back to New York. So I know it is '72. The next money I make, Ming and I are going to go to Egypt and Ethiopia. Now, these are the days there was no digital. We went in '73 to Cairo. I was amazed at all the dust there. We had a reservation for a hotel. And when we got there, they said there was no room. We didn't know where — we found someone and we ended up staying on the top of the building in this one room.

We had a tough time. But before we even got out of the airport — now, I want to carry all this film. This is exciting to me. I opened one of my suitcases for the customs and all hell broke loose. It was all full of film. You know, that is about 400 rolls of film. They called over everybody to come look at all this. They thought I was smuggling in film.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, no.

MR. BARBOZA: And I had to explain that no —

MS. SHUMARD: You were going to use it all.

MR. BARBOZA: I was going to use it and bring it when I come back. We had to sit there and count all the rolls, and they marked it down.

MS. SHUMARD: And they were going to inventory it when you left?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: And make sure you went out with the same number that you came in with?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And so we finally got out of the hotel and we couldn't get a room. We finally got a room. And then we got a guide. The same thing, I am photographing everywhere. And she was photographing, too. She liked photography. Ming Smith is now and still is the first female member of Kamoinge. Kamoinge members loved her work and they wanted to bring her in. She was the first female in the group. There are other females now, but she is the first.

We had a guide and he took us all around. We are photographing everywhere. Finally, he takes us right in the whole city; the city is really large in population. I mean, there are so many people in the street that when the cars go by, they just automatically, gracefully move out of the way, and the car goes by or the taxis or whatever. But this was like a city the size of Baltimore that has a population of New York. So it is really a lot of people.

MS. SHUMARD: Very dense.

MR. BARBOZA: And we are driving along a little bit outside the city and we get stopped by the police, because I would shoot out of the window at times. They thought we were going to photograph a military installation. But the guide told them that we weren't, so we were let go. We went to the pyramids. There was a dust storm there. We rode the camels anyway, and I am photographing from the camels, photographing the pyramid. There was a dust storm. You couldn't go up on the pyramid.

But we are shooting everything we can and everywhere. The guide takes us to some friends. Right in the middle — not in the middle, but right in the city proper, there are these irrigation canals, and some people live in almost like huts. And there are all these irrigation canals for the farmland that is there, whatever they are growing. I took a lot of photographs. And the guide says, oh, the people are so nice. They are making tea for us.

So we sat down on the bank and he said that, you know, it is very impolite to refuse to drink the tea. We got a little teacup and the tea was lukewarm. It wasn't even hot. And we drank it. And wouldn't you know, we both must have got really, really sick, so sick that we had to get out of there. But, I mean, we had pains in our stomach. Oh, gee.

So the next day, we went to the airport. I had bought tables, all kinds of stuff. Some of it was going to be shipped. The guide helped us get this person to wrap it up and ship it. We might not get it for three months or so.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, surface shipping.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And what ended up happening, we only got one or two of the pieces because the rest were stolen. But I had to pay. The guide got somebody — I had to pay somebody to sneak us through customs because they might confiscate the film that we shot.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, dear.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I paid someone and we got through customs all right and we flew right to Ethiopia. Wow. We were sick, really sick. But we finally recovered in Ethiopia. What was it? We took a plane to Addis Ababa, the capital. So we decided we were going to go to — on the outskirts, a long ways from the capital, near the border of the other country — I can't remember what country it is — Gambela [region]. So we were going to take a plane there and go more in country.

We get on the plane and there are no seats. You know, like a regular —

MS. SHUMARD: It is like a cargo plane?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And all the seats are along the wall, all the chickens over here making noise. [Laughs.] We land on a grass airport on a hill.

MS. SHUMARD: And this is in Gambia?

MR. BARBOZA: Gambela.

MS. SHUMARD: Gambela.

MR. BARBOZA: It is a little town outside, far away from the capital.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: But there's rocks sticking out of the grass, but I guess there is a path, enough for the plane. We land on the grass hill with all these rocks sticking up. So there is no town. There is just a little village. There is one hotel that we could stay in. This hotel — [laughs] — by the time we get there, it is getting dark. We had to check in and that was it, but you had to check in. So the hotel room was about a nine-by-12 room. It has got a bed, a light on the wall, one light where you pull it with a cord —

MS. SHUMARD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. BARBOZA: A hook for the clothes and that is it. No night table, nothing. And besides that, nine o'clock, all the lights go out in the whole village, no electricity. We couldn't even see our hands in front of our face. It is amazing.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, what prompted you to go there? What was it that you—

MR. BARBOZA: We wanted to see something other than the cities. So that is why we went there.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: I don't know how we figured out to go there, but we went there. And in Gambela, which is near the border of another country — I can't remember whether it is Tanzania or whatever, Ethiopia. In Ethiopia itself, they more resemble in their clothes and everything India, right? They are of a certain skin tone, certain look as opposed to the black Africans. So where we went in Gambela, they were just black Africans there. They didn't dress like it. It was like —

MS. SHUMARD: - a different —

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, altogether. We got a guide. We walked around photographing. We went to some of those huts where people live. And we photographed all kinds of things there, everything that we could find. It was like an African village.

MS. SHUMARD: Were you thinking about a book at this time? I was just wondering, with covering this so thoroughly, what did you think you would do with the photographs? Did you have a goal?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, no, I just —

MS. SHUMARD: You just wanted —

MR. BARBOZA: I am just like a collector.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: I just collect images. If you were going to do a book on anything, you would have to go to the places that you are going to do a book on a number of times or live there for a while. We didn't have that kind of time, although we had planned to go for a month. What I found later on, because it is the first time I am going to a foreign country, is that it is better to go to one place and do that thoroughly than to run all over the country. And we ran all over the country. We got back to Addis Ababa and we shot photographs there. And then we got a guide and we went in the other direction. We weren't interested so much in any sightseeing as we were about photographing people.

And we drove a long ways toward the Somali border. But before we got there, we went through some desert-type area where you would see the water, like ponds or lakes and trees coming out of them and branches on it, taking a break, and these people start walking towards us. And the guide said, get in the automobile quick, quick. We have got to get out of here. We saw some people when we were photographing them over there. But some other people were walking, and he says, we have got to get out of here because those are bandits. So we got out just in time.

We stopped along the way. There would be — through this desert-type area, there would be these big containers [that] have Exxon or — I can't remember — or Mobil — I can't remember what it was. I might have it in a photograph. But they distributed these big tanks for water, and there would be people that would crowd around getting water from them. Yeah. So we photographed those. We photographed from the car. We photographed everywhere.

But unless you see the photographs, it is hard to explain individual photographs. We stopped at marketplaces and we photographed in marketplaces. People were walking down the road. Some stuff was really good that we took. But we get up — it is getting late and we are getting near the Somali border. And the most fascinating thing I saw we couldn't even photograph. It was nighttime out now and we stopped at this restaurant-type, hotel, these rooms.

We wanted to eat. So in the back of that building, there is a big area with a lot of tables and chairs, restaurant, but there is nobody there. It is outdoors, had a little thing above.

MS. SHUMARD: Like an awning or a canopy?

MR. BARBOZA: Awning, yeah. There is nobody out there except for one guy. There is this fat, fat white man sitting there. And there is this African standing next to him with this big fan going like this.

MS. SHUMARD: Like something out of a movie?

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, it was out of a movie. We couldn't photograph him, but it was so fascinating to see. And he is eating —

MS. SHUMARD: While he is being fanned.

MR. BARBOZA: And that guy is just fanning away. That is the most memorable thing I remember about when we traveled up there.

MS. SHUMARD: And no picture? It just lives in your memory.

MR. BARBOZA: We couldn't go over the Somali border because — and we had to get out of that area and go back because that was gun smuggling there. The border was there and we couldn't go over there. So we went back and we stayed there for — we got over our sickness. I think we were there two weeks, three weeks maybe. Three weeks of photographing, tons of film. So we flew back to New York.

Now, I think that was '73.

MS. SHUMARD: We should probably pause for just a moment.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay.

MS. SHUMARD: I mean, we don't need to pause the tape, but just chronologically, according to a *New York Times* review that I have from 1972, you exhibited with the Kamoinge group at the Studio Museum in 1972. And there was a —

MR. BARBOZA: You know more than I do.

MS. SHUMARD: It was a group show. And A. D. Coleman was writing for the *New York Times* in October. It was October 22, 1972. He described the show as an embarrassment of riches. And he asked the question, "Why is it that the Countee Cullen branch of the New York Public Library and the Studio Museum remain the only showcases in New York for the work of black photographers?"

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, really?

MS. SHUMARD: So that was interesting to me. I wondered if you had any thoughts about what the exhibition possibilities were like in New York for black photographers.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, he is right. There wasn't much. As a group, we showed only at the Studio Museum. Later on, we did get exhibitions at Howard [University] and other places. We did get some other exhibitions through the years. But in New York City, there was no place else to exhibit. No, only Studio Museum, and I don't remember — some of the guys might have exhibited at the Countee Cullen library, but I didn't. I don't remember that anyway, not until later.

But now I remember the exhibition because I put up some of the photographs I took in Africa. Yes.

MS. SHUMARD: There were 12 photographers in the show. He singled out five to talk about, and you were one of those that he focused on more.

MR. BARBOZA: Really?

MS. SHUMARD: And he said, "Barboza's landscape is not only occupied, but seems itself packed and pregnant with the unnamable. Barboza's style is cinematic, even to the sizzling prints." So he clearly was taken with your work.

MR. BARBOZA: Really?

MS. SHUMARD: And I think that some of the African work was part of what he was talking about.

MR. BARBOZA: Really? Where did you find that?

MS. SHUMARD: In the *New York Times*.

MR. BARBOZA: That far back?

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, you can find anything nowadays with the Internet and —

MR. BARBOZA: I know. It is just how do you — wow.

MS. SHUMARD: When I get back to Washington, I can send you a copy of the interview.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay. Gee, I don't remember that. I remember the exhibit now. It is hard to remember everything, though. But, gee. Okay, was that now — I wonder if Ming was in that exhibition.

MS. SHUMARD: What I will do a little later is I will check, and we can add that back in, because I do have the article. I don't recall whether her name was —

MR. BARBOZA: But we did afterwards. Now, what year, I don't remember. But Cornell Capa, a post-Kamoinge workshop. They had acquired a building for ICP, International Center of Photography, right, up in the 90s.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, that was like 91st and —

MR. BARBOZA: Right, and he came to one of our meetings. He asked the group if they would like to put on an exhibit on the ground floor, and then on the top floor was Marc Ribout. I was pretty sure it was Marc Ribout. So we were in the inaugural exhibit there.

MS. SHUMARD: In that building?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, that is interesting.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. People don't realize that. We were the inaugural — it was Marc Ribout and us. And I put up a whole new — I think that was '73, too.

MS. SHUMARD: I can probably check our — although we can't necessarily trust our exhibition list.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, it might be close.

MS. SHUMARD: Let's see — because I remember that there is an ICP — there is a 1975 —

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, five, okay. That is it then.

MS. SHUMARD: That seems to be the earliest one.

MR. BARBOZA: That is it then, '75. Okay, that means before that, in '74, I was at the Light Gallery.

MS. SHUMARD: Mm-hmm [affirmative], and that was —

MR. BARBOZA: So we will talk about that.

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: Right?

MS. SHUMARD: Sure. What do you remember about that exhibition?

MR. BARBOZA: Okay. Let's see now. Then I will go back to ICP, because there was something about that. The Light Gallery exhibition, they asked me to exhibit some of my work. The Light Gallery was very popular.

MS. SHUMARD: This is really at the point when photography is beginning to have gallery shows.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And I used to go to Witkin Gallery, and I would buy, you know, Harry Callahans for \$175.

MS. SHUMARD: Had your collecting of other photographers' work —

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: When did that start?

MR. BARBOZA: As soon as I got some money — in the '70s.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: And remember in the '70s, like around '72, when I moved to that bigger studio, I started researching black photographers.

MS. SHUMARD: I was going to ask when your —

MR. BARBOZA: In '72. And I wasn't always making that much money, but I spent \$400 a month on the phone calling up to get photographs from different places. And anywhere I went doing jobs, I would go to the secondhand stores and try to look for photographs. That is how I developed that collection. And bought some — but most of them I bought somewhere else. I would pay money and go to Cincinnati to research J. P. Ball. I would do all that at the same time.

MS. SHUMARD: Perhaps we should figure out how you became familiar with the names of the photographers, because they weren't household names, by any means, at that point.

MR. BARBOZA: I became friends with Romare Bearden. He was a painter.

MS. SHUMARD: And how did you meet, do you remember?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I met a lot of people because I was working on a series called the Black Borders, in which I was doing portraits in the studio of what I call my inspirational artists, musicians, and writers.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, we can talk about that project a little bit more later.

MR. BARBOZA: And Black Borders is — I started that in 1975. So if I photographed him in 1975, that means that that is the time when I met him, because he is a well-known black painter. I became friends with him, and he told me, you should do research on —

MS. SHUMARD: Okay, so he was really the catalyst for your interest in the early —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, he told me about certain people. He told me about Ball only. I found out about Augustus Washington and all them myself. It was only Ball they told me about. But we have to go back to — what is that — '74?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, '74 was the Light Gallery. Yes, so —

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, the Light Gallery — now, remember, this was a strange time in my life, because later on in the years, I went to a psychic in about 1980. And they did my chart, and they saw that, someone close to you has died in this year. And it was my mother.

MS. SHUMARD: They were going back over what had happened previously?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and it was in my chart. My mother died at 49 in 1974. She called me, and they said she was sick. I was the last son to go there, because I didn't believe she was that sick. I finally went up. Everybody is there, my brothers and stuff. She looked at me and she said, you have finally come, and she hugged me. And that night, she went into a coma. We moved her from my hometown up to Boston. And we were there for days. We would sleep in the hospital.

MS. SHUMARD: In the room?

MR. BARBOZA: Where did she get — oh, what is that now — hepatitis.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, that was it.

MR. BARBOZA: She had hepatitis. When she went to the hospital, she didn't have hepatitis. We don't know where she got it from. We think she got it in the hospital.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, it is possible. It has happened before.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. But she passed away in 1974. Now, if you look later on - I would say about '76; I don't know the exact date. I cut my hair short and grew a braid, one single braid down here. My hair was this long hair, and even my son has it now. Every year I put a — I wouldn't always wear it -- but when I did the photograph of myself, I put — for the three years I grew it; it was dedicated to my mother. For each year, there is a porcupine

quill that goes through them, through again second year, third year.

And I have this group of portraits that I did. There is an exhibition still of some of my work downtown. I did a self-portrait that way of the back of my head, with this abstract-type stuff on one side - the past - this glow and the red feather on the back of my head - the present - and the future. I used to do artwork on the backgrounds. So we have to go back first to the Light Gallery because the Light Gallery, I am not going to put up — Cornell [Capa] wants us to put up an exhibition. I am not going to put up the Africa stuff anymore. I went out and worked on a series called Full-Length Portraits of People in the Street way before anybody else was doing it this way.

And that is what I had in the exhibit. And Cornell just loved it. He really loved the work that I did on that. I remember that. So I must have got some other recognition, because I was getting published in the '70s in the *Creative Camera* out of England. They gave me a cover. I think that was '74. The cover was — I would do street stuff. Even when I am doing commercial work, I am still doing this. I am working for *Essence* magazine doing fashion stuff, but I am going out on the weekends, and I used to even go out earlier in the morning; like six o'clock in the morning, I would walk out doing photographing. Sometimes Ming would go with me.

And I had started doing this series of different things and objects, things like that in the streets, in windows, and stuff like that. The Light Gallery asked me to give an exhibition. Wow, I loved this. Of course, in the front, the Japanese photographer, [Yosuke] Hosoi. And I am in the other room. There is the opening, and one of the photographs I had that they made a poster of was of a fence, about that much of a fence, photographed in a window, and a little motorcycle right down here. So it was a paper fence on a window — in a window in New York. Paper fence and just a little motorcycle tilted in the corner. They loved it. They made a —

MS. SHUMARD: A poster?

MR. BARBOZA: - a poster out of it. It says Light Gallery on it. And I had other things. That was also in this magazine, *Creative Camera*. There were also some other photographs. This is around the same time that — if I backtrack a little, because a lot of the history — when I was in the Navy, so that is about '68 - the Kamoinge workshop had a portfolio, about 14 pages, in *Camera* magazine from Switzerland. Do you remember that magazine, or you have never seen that?

MS. SHUMARD: No.

MR. BARBOZA: Lou Draper had the cover. It was beautiful. They had all these pages. I missed out on that.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, because you were —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I wasn't there. When I got out of the Navy, I started up the group again, because they weren't meeting all the time and I am eager to be. And we started meeting up again. So we were in — okay, the Light Gallery. And here comes the opening of the exhibition. And what is his name? Robert Frank, the photographer. I don't know whether he was joking or what. But he came up to me. He says, "What does this mean, this fence? Paul Strand already did that." I said, "Well, Paul Strand doesn't own the fences." And it is entirely different. It is a paper fence.

He was really insulting. I just didn't like that at all. It was not constructive criticism. It was just that Paul Strand — Paul Strand photographed a real fence. I am photographing in New York City a paper fence. So I just didn't understand that at all. I don't know whether he was teasing or he was just an arrogant person or what. I don't know to this day. And I don't care, really.

MS. SHUMARD: But it is something that stuck with you.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it did. Because I was never about copying anybody else. So that was interesting in that respect.

MS. SHUMARD: Do you remember about how many photographs would have been in a show like that? You said you were — one room. Would it be a dozen?

MR. BARBOZA: It might have been about 20 or 30.

MS. SHUMARD: In a variety of print formats? What was the print size?

MR. BARBOZA: They were always about the same size, 11x14. Now I videotape all my exhibitions.

MS. SHUMARD: So you have a record of the installation?

MR. BARBOZA: That I don't have.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, you wouldn't.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I wouldn't then.

MS. SHUMARD: And did the work sell?

MR. BARBOZA: That I don't remember.

MS. SHUMARD: Don't remember?

MR. BARBOZA: Gee, did any work sell? I don't know.

MS. SHUMARD: I mean, oftentimes work —

MR. BARBOZA: But I did buy a Hosoi off them. [Laughs.]

MS. SHUMARD: You did?

MR. BARBOZA: So that is — you said it was '70?

MS. SHUMARD: That? Let's see, the Light Gallery was '74.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, and then ICP was —

MS. SHUMARD: ICP is '75.

MR. BARBOZA: Seventy-five. But we already talked about the ICP, right?

MS. SHUMARD: We talked about that, mm-hmm [affirmative].

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, '75 is when I started doing Black Borders. I want to do another series. I am doing these ideas outside. I am trying to take these ideas inside in the studio. So I started getting — I really started this idea in '74. But the thing is that I started doing the portraits for Black Borders series, but they were all just plain backgrounds, seamless, and just lighting on them.

I worked on that for a year, and I said, well, this is not — and that time, I did some of the Kamoinge members. I did Roy DeCarava, a portrait of him, which is a nice portrait. But this is not where I want to go. So I developed this idea that I would do the portraits of the people, and I would get the feeling of each person that I was photographing - so, a painter or a writer. And I would create a background with lighting.

First, it started with lighting. Each person had a different type of lighting on their portrait. Sometimes I used a ring light. I used a ring light on Romare Bearden. I used a light on Norman Lewis, a painter, in which the background looks like one of these abstract paintings, and the light is on his eyes.

So I created each one like that. I started developing that in 1975, and I did that for five years, until 1980. I did all these portraits of them. Before I was even finished with all the portraits, before 1980, I got a call at the end of — or did I happen to take — no, I happened to take some of these portraits to *Mirrors and Windows* at the Museum of Modern Art.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, did you meet John —

MR. BARBOZA: Now, what year does it say *Mirrors and Windows* is?

MS. SHUMARD: Hold on for just a —

MR. BARBOZA: Museum of Modern Art.

MS. SHUMARD: That is '78.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, I didn't finish the portraits until 1980. So '78 — no black photographers in Kamoinge knew anything about what — they don't even contact you about anything; we don't even exist.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, you are just working in your own —

MR. BARBOZA: I just happened to bring up some of the portraits I have done in '78. Now, that means that I had been working on them from '75, '76, '77, '78. I didn't finish the series until 1980. But they said, "Oh, we want to buy one of these photographs." They want to put me in the exhibit.



MS. SHUMARD: And the title of the show, it was *Mirrors and Windows* .

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: And then —

MR. BARBOZA: John Szarkowski did it.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. And did you meet with him?

MR. BARBOZA: No, no, no, I just sent a portfolio up, and they just let me know that they want to put one in the exhibit.

MS. SHUMARD: It is always interesting to know whether there is actual face time with the curator.

MR. BARBOZA: No.

MS. SHUMARD: No, just completely —

MR. BARBOZA: Just when I dropped it off — when I picked it up, they said they wanted to purchase one. As luck has it, okay, I am in the exhibit. The only other black photographer in the exhibit is Roy DeCarava. This is all new to me. So that is the first photograph they eventually bought from me.

MS. SHUMARD: And do you remember what it was?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, it was of Pharoah Sanders, the musician. And it is in the *BlackBorders* book [1980] that I have. They bought it. But first they put it in the exhibit.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: But I was too late, because they had already published the catalogue, so I am not in the catalogue.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, that is a shame.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because it was at the last minute. But they put a nice big print up there. It was wonderful. We all went to a dinner. I became friends with — what is the photographer — Elliott Erwitt.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: Me and him were running around the tables taking pictures of the photographers. He is just funny. Elliott was funny. So we had a ball. It was wonderful. It is a wonderful exhibit too. Szarkowski was really good. I like the way Szarkowski thinks about photography. He has passed away now, but he was great.

So I was in that exhibit. And at that time, I don't think [James] Van Der Zee was discovered then yet, but he might have been. But he was in an exhibit.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, Van Der Zee, I think — the rediscovery was that *Harlem on MyMind* [ : *Cultural Capital of Black America* ] show [1969]. And I was wondering — I think you were probably still in the service, because that show was — I have got the dates. But that was, I think, January to April —

MR. BARBOZA: I think I might have gotten out, but I wasn't aware. I wasn't in that show.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, you wouldn't have necessarily been in the show, but it was very controversial because it —

MR. BARBOZA: I never saw the exhibit, so I must have been —

MS. SHUMARD: Well, lots of people boycotted it. It was seen as having gone forward really without the buy-in of the Harlem community, that it was originally supposed to be more inclusive.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, okay.

MS. SHUMARD: But Van Der Zee was the photographer that sort of was, quote, unquote, discovered, as a result of that —

MR. BARBOZA: And I became his friend. I must have met him first in '79 or '80. Yeah, and I used to photograph him. I did portraits of him. I go to his home. We became friends. I did portraits of him in the studio for *Black Borders*. And I continued *Black Borders* until 1980.

MS. SHUMARD: Were there elements in your commercial work at this point that had any parallels with your private work, because I just was wondering what —

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, well, think this way. I had to use backgrounds. I created backgrounds first by just lighting the subject. I shot James Baldwin at that time, in '75, Romare Bearden, Amiri Baraka, a lot of people at that time. And I would create lighting. After a while, I started using razor blades and cutting the paper a certain way. I didn't finish that series until I moved to 108 East 16th Street, because I moved out and got another studio. So 1980 was the last — I even went into '81, I think, when I did that.

But first, by '79 or '80, I sent in for the National Endowment [for the Arts] for a grant. Now, I won. I won. I not only won — people don't realize it, but in 1980 when I won, I was the top vote-getter in the whole country. How do I know that? Because the next year, they asked me to be a judge. And they told me, well, we want you to be a judge because you were the top vote-getter in 1980.

MS. SHUMARD: How did you learn about the grant program?

MR. BARBOZA: We heard about it somewhere, Kamoinge members. I don't know if any of the other Kamoinge members sent in anything, but I know I did. Then the year I judged, I know that they had mine left over after we picked the people who won. And I was very honest with the other judges. But then they said, okay, each one of you judges can pick a person who you think is very promising that needs the money. And they give them a certain amount of money. I don't know how much it was.

Ming Smith, I picked Ming first because she was the one who applied. She wasn't living with me anymore then. Yeah, she wasn't living with me anymore because I had moved out of the studio. That relationship was over. So I got her a grant. And it is interesting because when you — I learned a lot about portfolios by doing that. I had also judged in '73 the New York State Council of the Arts — I was a judge on that. And I didn't even know about that until the next — me and — I can't remember the photographer — Charlie Harbert [ph]. We said we didn't know about this year's — we judged in '72, I think. And we went and applied in '73 and we both won.

So I won that a couple of times.

MS. SHUMARD: That was the New York —

MR. BARBOZA: That was the New York State Council. I was asked to be a judge before I even knew anything about it. And I also did judging in Massachusetts, too, because I was from Massachusetts. But I learned a lot from being on the panel for judging.

And the series was done in 1980. I went a couple years afterward and did some boxes, and I started developing other backgrounds. But I am about change, so I am looking for a new series to do. So for the next 10 years, I photographed a lot of musicians, so I hung out in clubs every night.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, you were interested in music all along?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, jazz.

MS. SHUMARD: You had said when you were first in New York, you were going down to the Village and you were hearing music.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I heard all kinds of music in the clubs. I love music. And then everybody in Kamoinge loved jazz. I started a 10-year project. I finished Black Borders. Once I do something, okay, I am satisfied with that. I want to do something different. I wanted to do more of a reportage feeling. So I would go to clubs every night. I would work all day and go to clubs every night. Three o'clock in the morning, I am photographing in clubs. So that goes on for 10 years, starting in 1980.

But we have to go back — see, my life is very confusing because I am doing all these things at the same time.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, well, life is —

MR. BARBOZA: I started painting in 1980. I would have big paintings in the loft where I lived. I got married again. There is so much —

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we can —

MR. BARBOZA: I am still collecting the things there, the old photographs.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, is 1980 sort of a good stopping point for us this afternoon and have us sort of pick up —

MR. BARBOZA: We can stop at 1980, but let's go back, because you have got some minutes —

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, of course. We have plenty of time left.

MR. BARBOZA: Let's go back to before I moved to 108 East 16th Street. I am still at 10 West 18th Street in that studio. That is where I started Black Borders. That is where I started collecting and researching photographers. I was shooting *Essence* magazine out of the ads then. I even did Jerry Hall for an ad in which it was about tires. And this stupid idea —

MS. SHUMARD: Tires and Jerry Hall?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. They put a T-shirt on her, and they marked "44," big numbers here —

MS. SHUMARD: Up on the waist?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. Later on I saw that ad in the *New York Times* talking about what other ads — talking about this abused woman or something like that. Yeah. But I did for half of one year and half another year, I started to make money. We sent a portfolio over to Abraham & Straus. And —

MS. SHUMARD: The department store?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. And they called up and said, "We like your portfolio." My brother started being my representative then.

MS. SHUMARD: Which brother is this?

MR. BARBOZA: Ken Barboza. He is my representative —

MS. SHUMARD: And where is he in the birth order in your family?

MR. BARBOZA: He is the third.

MS. SHUMARD: He is the third, okay.

MR. BARBOZA: And the lady calls up and says, "Oh, we want you to work for us." What was her name? I think her first name was Pat. When she finally met us, she said, "Oh, I pictured you two wearing lumberjack shirts." She thought we were white. I thought it was funny. But she loved us anyway. So I would do — I would be making \$30,000 a month. I would do ads every day. I had a staff of — Sirji was gone by then. He was on his own. But he would work at night printing up in the darkroom all the photographs. I had an assistant, an intern. I always had high school and college interns, to teach them. I always was in that program, even up to the time I left my last studio.

MS. SHUMARD: I was going to ask about a teaching component and how that fit in.

MR. BARBOZA: I always helped teach. I had a lot of assistants. I had a hairstylist and a stylist there all the time. We would do ads, all these big ads, *New York Times* full-page ads. I did 15 TV commercials, my ideas with stills that I never had copies of. I would go into the bank vault. In my bank, they would let me use the vault to put the jewelry in to photograph the woman going there to steal it. I did TV commercials like that.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, is it hard —

MR. BARBOZA: I made little storyboards. I did it myself. Yeah. But I don't have —

MS. SHUMARD: And when the *New York Times* was talking about you having a cinematic sort of quality to your still photography —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but I never had a copy of any of this because there was no VCR then.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, right.

MR. BARBOZA: But the bank — I would walk in the way I always dress. Where is he getting all this money from? He just keeps putting money — and then by that time, when I am in that studio, I go get an apartment, a penthouse apartment down on Fifth Avenue near this club, the Salmagucci club, a famous artist's club in the building —

MS. SHUMARD: Salmagundi Club.

MR. BARBOZA: That is it.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes.

MR. BARBOZA: That building next to it, I get the penthouse, two bathrooms, two bedrooms, living room, staircase walking up with a skylight up there, like a [inaudible] house up there, big terrace. It was even considered for the first *Superman*.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, as a location?

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, they were going to put me up in a hotel.

So I am making money. I had never seen this kind of money. And I am the only black person in the whole building. When they see me walking in, they all get in the elevator because they don't know who I am. And I am paying more rent than anybody else there. It was funny.

So I am doing all these different things at the same time. Those years were very important in my career, doing fashion, advertising. And still I always maintain that I think that every student should understand when you do work like commercial work, you also should be doing your own work if you are interested in it, because one feeds the other; one feeds the other. And it is just visuals anyway. I think it is very important that people continue, if they really love their craft, to do that.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, it sounded like some of the lighting techniques that you had used in your commercial work then informed what you did, and then you carried it —

MR. BARBOZA: I studied lighting, yeah. And I didn't work for any photographer, so I had to teach myself everything.

MS. SHUMARD: How do you teach yourself to light? How does one do that?

MR. BARBOZA: By testing, experimenting, yeah, testing. Well, I would shoot Ming a lot. I would work up ideas that you couldn't do for commercial things; when I was working on *Black Borders*, I would work out ideas, and I would create backgrounds. I learned to work and think fast because it is the same idea as when you are in the street and you are photographing. You have got to be quick. And I learned from doing jobs that when you are given a job, you have got to do that job. It is not like *Life* magazine, where you went out and you had a month to shoot the assignment.

MS. SHUMARD: No, it is [not] like that.

MR. BARBOZA: We had to get it in one day. So I learned to pick locations. I learned to look at things. You learn much more through experience than just reading everything from a book. But I was studying other stuff, too. I was reading a lot. I discovered other painters like LeRoy Clarke in those years and Octavio Paz, the writer, and Jorge Luis Borges, poet. So I was reading. And that is influential. It comes from Lou Draper. He was like a mentor to me, influencing me about looking at other things.

And literature really — when you read a book, you create images in your mind of what is going on.

MS. SHUMARD: You do, mm-hmm, mm-hmm [affirmative].

MR. BARBOZA: Right. Reading is very visual to me. You create things from what you read. You create images. And poetry and Borges, that fascination with Latin and Catholicism, for some reason, the mind thinks differently than other religions, but I don't know the other religions and their writers as well. But like [Julio] Cortazar and Borges, their poetry is really interesting to me. So it gave me another insight on looking at things and finding other ways of doing things, which I think is very — I think their literature is very important for people who are visual, whether you are a painter or a photographer. I think that literature is very useful in your —

MS. SHUMARD: In your search.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it really is. It is important. That helped me a lot. Music, and — I also started meditating; so I have always been meditating. I have always meditated on and off for the last 35 years, or something like that, somewhere along that. But it all helped me. So by 1980, I moved — I might have moved in 1979 to the new studio. But 1980 is, I guess, where we should stop, huh?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we are probably about to that point. And it is probably good for you to be able to just take a break, and then we can continue this tomorrow.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay.

MS. SHUMARD: Shall we go ahead and we will stop at this point?

[END CD 3.]

MS. SHUMARD: This is Ann Shumard interviewing Tony Barboza at the Jolly Hotel Madison Towers in New York City on November 19, 2009, for the Archives of American Art, card number four.

When we left off yesterday, we had taken your career up to 1980, and we talked a bit about your Black Borders project. But I wanted to go back and talk just a little bit more about that. Perhaps you could tell me where the title and the concept for this series of portraits came from.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, when I decided to do these portraits and I called it Black Borders, the meaning was that they had black borders around it first, right? So each photograph had black borders on it.

But my concept, beside that, was that when you put the black borders together, there's no end and no beginning. There's no line there. That meant that each one of these people would relate in some ways to the others and also relate to me.

If I didn't use the black borders, then you'd have a hard edge, and then you'd have the next photograph going to be a hard edge. So it's about a blending together of all the art forms that meant something to me, so that each one — even though you don't put the photographs up on the wall - they touch each other with the black borders. It also meant that to me. That's why —

MS. SHUMARD: So it was almost an organic quality to the images.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, that's why I picked the title Black Borders. At first, though, it's just a black border. But then as I was working on it, it became more of something else to me.

Now, there is such a thing - like some writers, they will — like James Joyce, he would use certain words that meant something to him; or in music, if you listen to some of the people who are singing, they would pronounce words in a little different way and emphasis.

Now, they say in poetry if you have a repeated word, it gives it a stronger meaning. So it's the same kind of idea to me. It all means the same to me in that respect.

MS. SHUMARD: Other photographers during this period were also showing, like, their plate-holder margin for their photographs, so you — but those, as you said, were those sort of hard edges. Like Richard Avedon would show that border to signify that he hadn't cropped the image at all.

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: That was really the function that it performed.

MR. BARBOZA: That was my function, but do you remember when Avedon started using black borders?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, I certainly know they show up in the '70s.

MR. BARBOZA: Seventies, okay, I'm going to tell you the story.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, when I was in the Navy and I was photographing, they had a Leitz enlarger there.

MS. SHUMARD: I'm sorry, what?

MR. BARBOZA: Leitz, it's part of Leica, Leitz enlarger.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: And I used to print my photographs with black borders. Now, that's in the '60s. When I got out of the Navy, I started doing my fashion tests, and I used the black borders. Nobody else did, in '69 and so on. Nobody else did.

But a model carries around a portfolio. Other photographers started seeing my black borders. All of a sudden, everybody started copying it, and that's as far as I know. I can't prove it, but that's what happened.

That's how I came up with that, from the Leitz enlarger. But nobody was using it then, not even Avedon. It's like a dance originates and no one knows who originated that dance, to some degree.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: And it just carries on a life of its own. It's the same thing. But that was in '68 and '69, is when I started doing that.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. The photographs that were in the *Black Borders* book date from 1975 through 1980. I understand that you did some additional pictures in that format after 1980, but the ones that were published in the book —

MR. BARBOZA: Right, but there were a few that were done. I might have done a few more up until '82 once in a while.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, these were all in a square format as opposed to the rectangular format. What kind of a camera were you using?

MR. BARBOZA: That was a Hasselblad.

MS. SHUMARD: That's what I was thinking.

MR. BARBOZA: A Hasselblad.

MS. SHUMARD: And did you continue to use that format afterwards for other projects or was that particularly useful for the portraits?

MR. BARBOZA: Once I did a project, let's say *Black Borders*, I decided on one lens, right, and one camera. I never changed lenses. That whole series is done with an 80-millimeter lens. When I went to Jazz, that whole series was done on 35, but I did black and white and color, and then after a few years I decided that I just wanted to do mainly black and white.

I had done a lot of color, but I only exhibit the black and white. In that case, because I was restricted from going on stage too close, I'd have to use a zoom lens in most cases, unless I could get close, and then I'd use one lens. But I had to use different lenses because you couldn't get that close.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, you couldn't control the situation in the way that you could in the studio.

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: I was interested that the subjects that were published in the book were principally figures from the arts, from literature, from music. How did you go about selecting the people that you wanted to photograph?

And I understand that I think you photographed around 150 or so. I saw that in one reference. Now, there were 28 portraits published in the book, but you clearly photographed many more people than could be in the book.

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: How did you go about choosing the people that you were going to photograph, do you remember?

MR. BARBOZA: Don't you have the book here?

MS. SHUMARD: I do. I have that if you'd like to —

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, yes.

MS. SHUMARD: If that would help to take a look at it, because I was wondering if in some instances the project gave you an opportunity to meet people that you wanted to meet.

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: I mean, sometimes photography can be a conduit for connecting with someone that - you've been interested in in their career, and a project will provide that opening.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, the cover is a nude, but it only signifies - in this case it's not a particular person. It signifies, for me, that through my life, you learn from — more from your mother, in my case, than your father. So it represents a woman as a whole. Now, a lot of things I learned with Kamoinge when I was in the group, right?

MS. SHUMARD: Yes.

MR. BARBOZA: But the subtle things I learned, I learned from my grandmother and my mother and the different

women that I was with. In other words, everyone that you meet serves a purpose in some ways and teaches you something. So that's why I picked the woman for the cover, because I didn't want to pick a certain individual.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, it's sort of a universal.

MR. BARBOZA: Right. So in the book, it's with music first and Lester Bowie, right?

MS. SHUMARD: Let's move the book just a little away from the tape.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, about music, right? Then it's about lighting, and what it represents [is] that each one of these is a particular lighting for that particular person.

MS. SHUMARD: I know you said, in the beginning when you started this series, that you weren't fashioning the background so much as just using lighting effects to create that.

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: But that as the project evolved, then you began -

MR. BARBOZA: It changed. It's not in chronological, but you see '76 —

MS. SHUMARD: Which has a very plain —

MR. BARBOZA: Seventy-nine, changed a little, but it's still — but this is only plain for one reason.

MS. SHUMARD: This is Romare Bearden.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, and a lot of his work is cutout work, right? So I used a ring light. It almost, like, cuts him out.

MS. SHUMARD: I see.

MR. BARBOZA: Right? So it's still about music and poetry, and it's around '76, writer, painter, now —

MS. SHUMARD: What was it like photographing James Baldwin? He's such a legendary figure.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, I can go back to James Baldwin. But then you see dance, and you see one of my mentors. But it still has to relate to the kind of photographer he was. This background relates to him.

MS. SHUMARD: And what exactly is that background? I couldn't quite tell. Is it metal?

MR. BARBOZA: It's like a metal. It's a Mylar-type material, but it's got almost like eyes, to me, on it.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, and dance and wind. But the thing is that I started to sort the photographs, and I laid it out according to how I felt at that time. I might do it differently now. But the opposite thing would be, like here, maybe this should be here and this should be here.

MS. SHUMARD: But we have — and we're looking at the page that has —

MR. BARBOZA: Adger Cowans and Evelyn Thomas. The idea was that it's basically a celebration. In '76 I started using this plastic a lot. Then it got into, besides that, I had to pay tribute to the women that were in my life.

So here's one here, a writer, musician. But sprinkled in the book, besides all that, comes up at that time in my life a woman that I didn't have an affair with, but I had a relationship with, Lisette Model. We were really good friends, really good friends.

MS. SHUMARD: I was wondering how you got to know her. We talked about some of the photographers yesterday whose work was influential. Her name didn't come up. I wondered —

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, I think I'll go — we'll talk about Baldwin and her.

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: This is a woman I met. I was not involved with her, but there is an involvement with some of the women here. And Van Der Zee was important, right, a writer. But here's another woman here. So there is something about that as well.

MS. SHUMARD: So that's a theme that really carries over from the cover, that influence, and so they just were —  
[Cross talk.]

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and these women were important to me at that time. Now, if we go back — and this is almost like a dream.

MS. SHUMARD: And this is the last image in the book, which is Angelo Colon.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, Angelo Colon, and he's a designer. But I did this like he's a magician.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, I was wondering how much — clearly, you had to do some prep work to create these backgrounds before people came to the studio. Or you just did it when they came in? So this was all spontaneous. It wasn't —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Because I was wondering if there was sort of a preplanning that went into what was —

MR. BARBOZA: No, no.

MS. SHUMARD: So the sessions, then, tended to last any kind of average - or how much time would you spend with a particular subject?

MR. BARBOZA: One or two hours, three at the most.

MS. SHUMARD: But you had various materials there.

MR. BARBOZA: I'd create right there, yeah, various materials there.

MS. SHUMARD: Did the subject have any input into what you did? Were they collaborators in these pictures, or were they in your hands and just trusting your instincts?

MR. BARBOZA: They didn't collaborate. What I figured I would do — okay, I wanted to control what I felt, but that would relate to the lighting and the background. I would allow them to be themselves, and I wouldn't try — so it's like 50-50. I wouldn't try to tell them too much about where they would stand and stuff. I would just observe them on the shoot. And I always felt for this series that I would never shoot a tight head, like this here, because everybody has a body, and I wanted to show some of the body at least.

MS. SHUMARD: And they're not all frontal. Some are — there are several profiles. There are some sort of three-quarter.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, and then I dedicated it to my parents on the back. That's my parents on the back, right? Now, if you go to —

MS. SHUMARD: Is that a picture that you took of them?

MR. BARBOZA: No, no, no, no. No, this is — I just put, "Love, your sons," here, but I didn't take — I don't know if I was born.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay. Well, they looked young there, but I didn't know —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I wasn't —

MS. SHUMARD: I know you had said how beautiful your mother was.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but she must have had me now, because she's heavier.

Okay, when we go to Lisette now — now, I can't remember. It took me -- let's see, when was Lisette done?

MS. SHUMARD: [Inaudible.]

MR. BARBOZA: She was done in 1979. Okay, that means I had moved to the studio, and I had finished up shooting in '79 and '80 at 108 East 16th Street. But I started in '75 at 10 West. The reason I know this is because it took me maybe three years. She didn't like her photograph taken. But she trusted me, and she posed for me.

Now, I met her but, gee, where did I meet her? She must have seen my photographs somewhere. Maybe some from this series. And she must have come up to me. We became friends just like that. I never studied with her. I



love her work. But I met her when I was at 10 West 18th Street.

We used to go to dinner, and we wouldn't talk about photography much. She told me about her student, Diane Arbus, people like that. But we took a liking to each other, and one time I took her to Duane Michals's exhibit he had somewhere uptown. I came there with her. I don't know why.

She talked a lot about her husband [Evsa Model], though. She loved her husband's art. Where he lived in the Village, his paintings were all over the wall, and some of them were on the wall itself.

But I think that she liked to talk with — we were friends. It was not like a student and teacher relationship. It wasn't like that, and she even asked me to make some prints with her because she was dissatisfied with somebody who was making prints for her from her negatives.

MS. SHUMARD: So you did some printing for her then?

MR. BARBOZA: I did a few things one year when I was at 108 — no, at 10 West 18th Street. I remember that. I printed some prints for her. In return, she gave me a print. I didn't charge her or anything.

MS. SHUMARD: It was one friend to another.

MR. BARBOZA: We used to talk. I think we used to fight, too, sometimes about photography. I think I remember that now. We disagreed.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, what did you —

[Cross talk.]

MR. BARBOZA: We disagreed. I had said I didn't like that. She says, "Well, I like it." I can't remember the exact things we — but I remember sometimes we'd have this little argument about something.

But we loved each other. She was just wonderful. She's just a wonderful lady, and it must have taken me quite a few years to — it took me quite a few years. I said, "Listen, Lisette, I want to take your photograph for my book." "I don't want my photograph taken. I don't want my photograph taken." "Lisette, I'll get you a makeup artist."

She thought about it. She said, "Okay, Tony, I'm ready to do it." It might have been three years.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: I had taken this book to some bookstore one time to leave some off, and a guy looks through the book, and he said, "Well, how did you get Lisette to do this?" - because Lisette wouldn't pose for anybody. So it was sort of magical in a sense, and I took great care of her. And if you notice on here, you see these —

MS. SHUMARD: It's in a triangular shape.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. This is her husband's stuff here.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, all right.

MR. BARBOZA: That's her husband's work, right? And why this?

MS. SHUMARD: The background.

MR. BARBOZA: The glow — I can't explain why I did this here, but you see the tapes.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, that hold up the background.

MR. BARBOZA: You see the mood. I just loved her. It was a warm feeling that I had for her, yeah. But why I did that particular - I don't know, and sometimes I don't question my — you see, I believe, in art, whether it's painting or literature or music, sometimes the artist thinks too much. Let it come to you; let it — the image will find you, instead of you always forcing the image on.

So I believe in that way, yeah. So the image found me. In each case, these are the ones that I found at the time that I decided to pick out of what I photographed.

When it came to Baldwin, I didn't know Baldwin. But there was this male model, probably one of his lovers, I don't know, and he said, "Well, if you do some photographs for me, I'll get James Baldwin to pose for your series here." I said, "Fine."

I did some photographs for him for his modeling and he said, "All you have to do is get a bottle of Grand Marnier and everything will be fine." I didn't really believe him, but Baldwin showed up with his entourage.

MS. SHUMARD: When you say entourage —

MR. BARBOZA: It must have been about five or six other people with him.

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes, he had a charisma — unbelievable. Compared to most people, he had the strongest aura I've ever met, of any person I've ever met. Second was César Chávez, that I met. I never photographed him. Alice Walker, close, and for some reason, [David] Dinkins, who was the mayor. I had never felt that aura from anybody else. I don't know what it is. I cannot describe it.

But he was just — whatever you wanted to do to him - and he was magical. And his aura was — the aura was so strong. So that's why this light is this way here. This is like an aura of him. I selected this one because he's not really looking in the camera. He's in thought. He's thinking about something else. But he was —

MS. SHUMARD: It's introspective.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, yeah. He was wonderful to photograph, a wonderful man.

MS. SHUMARD: And then one other person I think that I'd love to know about was Ntozake Shange. Her poetry is included.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: What can you tell me about her?

MR. BARBOZA: Owen Dodson, the poet, he's not in here but he said, "You really know what you're talking about with some of these people." Ntozake was a woman who did good poetry and stuff, but she was a little bit mixed up about things. She'd be one way one time and another way another time, and just on a personal relationship.

I didn't know what to believe of her. One time she said to me, "Tony, you know you like me. You know you want to sleep with me." I said, "No, I don't, no." And she would act — she was wild at that time. She's down to earth now and better. She's very sick, and she asked for a print about two years ago of this here. But she was like — she had a dual personality. That's why —

MS. SHUMARD: And you've evoked that with that —

MR. BARBOZA: At that time, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, was this done with a long exposure where she moved? How did you create that effect?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it's a little longer exposure. But the light is playing on that plastic beside her — behind her, right, and a longer exposure. So it's like — what do you call it — it's like Tinker Bell, and this is the dust, yeah.

So these have a lot of other meanings than what you point-blank see this way. I guess maybe that's what they interpreted when they selected me for the National Endowment, because here's a double look in here, too, and he wasn't very nice.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, this is Pharaoh?

MR. BARBOZA: Pharaoh Sanders. He was a little bit hard on me. It's like, "Well, you know, relax." So I believe you can control people without controlling them.

MS. SHUMARD: Without them knowing.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and I have this way of thinking that I don't really think. I just feel, feel the person. I would feel the person and then do this. I think in that sense I didn't think so much and didn't put too much force on them. I allowed them — it's almost like manipulating them without them knowing it.

But I created from the way I thought at that time. I don't know if I could go and duplicate and do that again, because once I'm done with a series, I can't go back and do it. But each of them had a particular reason. But I didn't know it until after I did the shooting.

MS. SHUMARD: Sometimes things come out in the pictures that you don't —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because I believe in trying to utilize the subconscious.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, when you were doing these, did you — I know you've talked some about having assistants that were working with you on your editorial [and] commercial work. Did you have assistants in the studio when you were doing —

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: So this wasn't just a one-on-one. There were other people present.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, there were.

MS. SHUMARD: And how did you create a comfortable environment? Did you have music playing? Did you find —

MR. BARBOZA: Always.

MS. SHUMARD: Always? Did you choose music based on who was going to be —

MR. BARBOZA: Sometimes I'd ask them what they wanted to hear. Yeah, I would always have music on, and I remember years later, Miles had a shooting with Irving Penn, and Miles called me up because they were doing something, and he's complaining to me.

He says, "Irving Penn, he wouldn't let me play and we had a fight about playing the music. He wouldn't let me play any music, and I want to hear music, but he refused to put any music on." Miles was upset, but Irving Penn got a good photograph.

So it's amazing, yeah. I would never do that to people. I want them to feel — see, it's a little controlling here. This idea was so free to me that it showed me something else about myself. Because remember, I believe that every photograph you take is also about you as a person. It's really about you as a person.

So they're all autobiographical in a sense, not only in the sense that they are biographical, that you took them at this date and so on. They're also about your thinking and your personality, all that is you. The image is a person here, but psychologically it's about you. I have to live a whole life before I'm really — someday I might sit down and try to write it.

But little by little, year by year, I come to the realization that I was doing these for love, but they were also talking to me and how I think and how I feel. So that's what I mean by that.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, up to this point, had you made any self-portraits? We're talking about how you're in the picture, sort of the unseen presence.

MR. BARBOZA: Yes.

MS. SHUMARD: Had you made any self-portraits up to this point?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, yeah, they're not here though. Gee, they are very — it's almost like you've got to see them. I'll try to explain them. But you have to see them.

MS. SHUMARD: Have they been exhibited?

MR. BARBOZA: They're exhibited now downtown with some other stuff, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: All right, you'll need to tell me where that is.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, that's on — but it's some Black Borders in it and some Jazz. And it's called Souls of Black Genius. And there is one frame with four photographs in it that I did as self-portraits, and the invitation is a self-portrait.

What I did was that - it was around 1978 - I did a portrait of myself in a square format in color. And I had an all-blue outfit on, and I had these goggles, like swimming goggles, right? I'm like this here, coming out from the paper. On the wall behind me is where I would have been if I stood up straight. So there's an outline in spray paint of my body, right? It's shot from about here up, from the knees up.

MS. SHUMARD: From sort of the knees up.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, but it looks like I'm diving or swimming. So it's on black paper, but there's a side that's a splotch of paint, but it's done the right way, which is blue, and there's a side that's splotched on this side of that outlined figure, which is red, and sometimes when you put those two on black paper, one recedes — the blue —

and the other one, the red, seems to pop out, like three-dimensional, right?

And I did this about 1976, something like that, self-portrait of myself. It's a little motion in it. But it was psychologically and subconsciously when I felt that I became my own person and came out of my shell, because I was very shy when I grew up, very shy and quiet.

MS. SHUMARD: It's interesting because other photographers sometimes have described themselves as being shy, and that the camera is the tool that helps them engage with the world. It helps to break down those barriers.

MR. BARBOZA: It was for me, yeah. So I did that self-portrait, and there was a self-portrait show, exhibition, and they made it into a poster. They just loved it. I've always wanted to do a book of self-portraits of different photographers. I think it's very interesting.

MS. SHUMARD: I think that may have been at the Studio Museum.

MR. BARBOZA: Hmm?

MS. SHUMARD: I think that may have been at the Studio Museum.

MR. BARBOZA: No, no, it was a magazine. They had a gallery and they showed it, but they did a nice poster.

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: See, there's a lot about self-portraits that really reflect the photographer unlike anything else, and there's never — and I've always wanted to do a book of just self-portraits of different photographers. Like every one of us have done it, Cartier-Bresson, everybody. It'd be a wonderful book. Maybe the Smithsonian should do it before anybody else does it.

So in 1981 and '82, 1981, around there - I'm in the other studio now - I did another portrait, self-portrait, of me on the roof, where I had a leather cutout. On the roof — there's a little house on the roof like they have in New York, and it's black tar. I cut out a figure of me like this here.

MS. SHUMARD: With one arm up and one arm down?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I can't — yeah, something like that, something like that. But I made big, life-sized prints of my head, and I clipped it on where the head is, of an arm and part of a leg. I can't remember if it was just one leg or two legs. I can't remember, just those parts of me against there.

Now, in motion next to that is a red cowboy hat, me in a red cowboy hat and a red top here, and it's all in motion. You can't even recognize all of it as me. It's just movement, and there's two like that. I will send you — because they made a postcard invitation for the exhibition of it.

So you see one of them. That's the kind of self-portraits I did. And then the last self-portrait, after my mother had died, I had — that one you have, right?

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, and I think — that was on the cover of the *Introspect* [ : *The Photography of Anthony Barboza*, 1982] book and we'll talk about that show.

MR. BARBOZA: This is the past.

MS. SHUMARD: This is the cover of the *Introspect* .

MR. BARBOZA: Right. This is the future.

MS. SHUMARD: On the right.

MR. BARBOZA: This is me. This is the porcupines. I think we talked about this before.

MS. SHUMARD: Yes, you said that —

[Cross talk.]

MR. BARBOZA: Right, the three years that I grew the braid. This is me at the present time, and the red signifies, and the gold, the life that I'm living now. It was done with an 8x10 camera. But it's basically another self-portrait of me, and of course, you see a glow there. I'm holding just a light in my hand, but it's like I've got to be in this presence. I know the past. I don't know the future. But they are not talked about as much as they are relating to me now. Yeah.

So that's the series of self-portraits that I did. I haven't done a self-portrait for a long time. I've done some other ones, but those are the main ones. So they're all in a little gold frame, and you see them on the roll. Somebody even bought one of them from this exhibition. So that's what I did at that time.

MS. SHUMARD: You had mentioned earlier that when you were doing advertising or editorial work, you were so often on really tight deadlines. How different was it working without those constraints on a project like this?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, well, when you do advertising, when you do a job — and you have to control a lot of people in advertising — the makeup artists, hairdressers, stylists, the clients, and the models, and sometimes it can be as much as — one time I did it and it was like 50 people. It's a lot of people and it's a lot of stress, because they're paying a lot of money. That's a lot of stress.

So when I do the type of projects I worked on, like this here, Black Borders or Jazz, it's like a meditation. It's like there's no stress then. I'm not forcing myself to get something. Sometimes when I was in clubs doing the musicians, sometimes I didn't even photograph. I just sat there and just enjoyed the music. When I felt the urge to photograph, I photographed. Sometimes I didn't. I let it come to me, let it flow, and I liked that so much. That's like a meditation to me.

So it's like a balance, yin and yang. I have this way I have to do in this. So you realize that when you're under pressure to do something, most of the people that — like the clients there, they don't have the say-so, because the advertising directors, art directors, sold this to a client and they're under a lot of pressure to get it right.

So everybody's under pressure, and when that's so, it doesn't — sometimes it's like being the pitcher in a baseball game. Some days you have it and some days you don't. There's no other way to explain it. But that's what happens. I guess it's about body chemistry, a lot of things.

So I think that's why, for instance, Ingmar Berman used to use all the same crew and all the same actors when he did his films, because everybody was on the same page. They felt good together. They understood. So I think that's the same idea.

So I would try to use the same people. But we couldn't always pick the same model. It didn't always work to me, and then it became something like, okay, now, after you do it so many years, I can — hey, they give me a drawing, I can get that photograph. Fine, I'll try to give it a little bit — sometimes I gave it a little bit of a hint and feeling it, and I never knew it.

But someone one time came to me, and he says, "Gee," - they saw the photograph in my studio and they said, "Gee, I knew that you did that, because there was a certain feeling there." If they saw it outside, they knew it was my photograph. I couldn't recognize it though.

MS. SHUMARD: Really?

MR. BARBOZA: I didn't pay much attention to them. I tried to work out and do the advertising right, and I tried to give a little bit of myself in it in feeling-wise, but it was a job. But I gained experience from doing it.

MS. SHUMARD: I was wondering to what extent you had any creative input in that when you were doing the advertising work, but —

MR. BARBOZA: Sometimes I did. The art director thinks that he's the one who created this job. The photographer thinks that he's the one who created this job. The layout is from the art director, but he can't draw the lighting.

MS. SHUMARD: That's the magic that you bring to it.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I can do the lighting, right, and then when you are with someone, they feel you and you feel them, and I said before, you can control the feeling of someone without other people knowing it.

So I could control the feeling, and I knew when to click the shutter of the models that were there or the people who were there. It's like, without the art director knowing - they don't know that. And that same idea is this here. There is something I still think is very strange about photography psychologically that I don't think many people have ever talked about. But I found out when I — and somebody else saw it.

It's very strange. I had a girlfriend one time. I had one girl before Ming Smith. That was before, when I was in 18th Street, right? Here she is here.

Okay, then years later I had another girlfriend. It was a famous model, Beverly Johnson, and I'm photographing Beverly Johnson, and this makeup artist who used to work with me a lot [is there], and I'm giving her a mood, and do you know that her face began to look like Ming's face? And he saw it.

First of all, when you select a woman to be your mate or whatever, or they select you, whichever way it is — most of the time they select you — the woman that you pick doesn't have to look like your mother, but she feels like your mother. When a woman picks a husband or mate, subconsciously they feel like your father, unless you're not close to your father, of course.

Okay, there is something about being a magician, and you can create a person that you're close to to look like all the ones that you did, all the women that you're involved with. They can look very similar. I don't know how that works, but I know it's true, because if you ever see on TV someone imitating someone with their voice, that person begins to look like that person. You ever seen that before?

MS. SHUMARD: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. BARBOZA: It doesn't really begin to look like her, because you're picking up and relating in your brain the sound of that person and the image of that person, and you're really transferring it onto — your eyes are transferring onto that medium to look like her —

[Telephone rings.]

MS. SHUMARD: All right.

MR. BARBOZA: So you get the idea that that person on the stage that's imitating someone begins to look like that person. But not really; it's your brain, your brain that's making it in your eyes look like that person, because you're relating the voice and the idea of that person that you're seeing. That's why it works that way.

But now, isn't that interesting? I've understood that, but now how in the world can this makeup artist see this on this face? He said, "Did you see that?" I said, "Yeah, how'd you see it?" He said, "I could see it. She looked like your other woman." I said, "Oh, that's strange."

So now, the only answer to that is that I must have picked these women on their particular feeling and facial expressions more than I even noticed, right, and they began to look - so that's the idea of that.

MS. SHUMARD: Something in a way that the camera is catching that you weren't even aware of.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, no, I'm creating it with the person right there, and I'm shooting it, yeah. That's something that no one's ever talked about. I've never heard anything about that before. But I thought it was interesting. How did we get off on that anyway?

MS. SHUMARD: Who knows?

MR. BARBOZA: Okay.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, during the '70s when you were working on the portraits that became the Black Borders series, what kind of commercial work was coming your way? Do you recall?

MR. BARBOZA: I did fashion for *Essence*. I did A&S department store. Remember, I did all their ads.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, we mentioned that. You said that you'd done tests for the modeling agencies. You continued to do a lot of that work during the '70s.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, I always still did that.

MS. SHUMARD: That was just kind of a constant.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, trying out new ideas, keep working on the portfolio to improve it.

MS. SHUMARD: And you talked, too, about some of the advertising work that you'd done for magazines like *Harper's Bazaar*. Were there any particular challenges to being a black photographer pursuing a career in what one might think of as [the] white-dominated advertising or publishing industry? Were you ever pigeonholed, in a sense, as a black photographer?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Talk a little bit about that.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, when you do work and you do a portfolio, you might test the white girl, the fashion models and stuff like that, but that's one book, of the fashion. But after a while you start using the advertising in your book that you've done, to show that you can do it, and most of that advertising was of black people, because

that's who was giving me the work, right?

Not until the '80s, when I took some of my other work, and I started in 1980 working for *Life* magazine when it came back, I did. And they didn't hire me to do black work. They just hired me to do whatever. I did one. I did a Watts revisited [assignment] in California, when they had the Watts riots and then they had the 20 years later or something like that.

I did all that, but then I did for the *Life* magazine — oh, I can't remember her name — well, the reason why is because I started working in the '80s for *New York Times* Sunday magazine, and they wouldn't pigeonhole me. Peter Howe was the director there, and he knew photography enough that he felt if you could shoot this, you could shoot this too.

So he gave me, like, Cher to shoot, Bette Midler. I did those people, right? Then he left and he went to *Life* Magazine when it was starting up again. So he gave me things over there too. So he didn't pigeonhole me.

But the other art directors did that worked for the advertising agencies. Once in a while I did do a white ad, but very little of it. I was known, but when it was the advertising, I didn't do that much of the white. But I did for A&S department store, because I had to shoot a lot of stuff for them.

So it was each individual, and it really comes down to, okay, is it so much that they are racist, or is it so much that these are the people you know and these are the people that you hire? So it's a combination of both. I was put into certain categories, and I didn't complain about it as long as I was getting work.

So it's hard to say. Some people did, though. It's like anybody you meet: you're going to like some people and you're going to not like some people. Some people liked me and some people didn't. I never had too many people dislike me, though. So I never had that problem. So it was something like that.

But there is a lot of racism in the business. I remember hearing about this. Like in the '70s, they would have a lot of ads where they had a white model, and they might have an Asian model, and they had a black model. And in most cases, okay, there's a white photographer photographing them, and so they had to hire one hairdresser and one makeup artist. Now, that hairdresser didn't know how to deal with black hair.

So in most cases, they'd just take the hair and push it all back and put it in a bun. That was it. It was easy for them because they didn't know. So things happened like that. So is it just not knowing? Yeah, some years later - when I worked for the first 14 years with *Essence* magazine, it was fine. But then the women up there were having problems with the black male photographers. Now, for years now, here's a black woman's magazine, and they're not hiring the black photographer to shoot his own women. They hire Asian photographers, white photographers, and I thought this was really ridiculous. I don't understand that at all and I used to complain about it.

But I had worked the first 14 years with them. So you're going to find there's a lot of jealousies and judgments. Talking to the jazz musicians, I got along well with them because I'm not a musician. They have jealousies.

MS. SHUMARD: And rivalries.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and the musicians and the writers do, too, I guess. It's the same thing. The photographers, they have jealousies, something like that. So it's good that I was a friend of Miles, because there wasn't that jealousy. He didn't have anything he needed to be jealous about because I was not a musician.

MS. SHUMARD: The work that you mentioned doing for the *New York Times Magazine* in the '80s, clearly that's a period, and I guess it continues to this day, where there's a fascination with celebrity, with celebrities and celebrity culture.

How difficult was it for you to go into those environments where — this doesn't have to be a tell-all, but I'm just curious as to what it's like to do that.

MR. BARBOZA: I have a monthly column in my hometown newspaper, and every month I tell them a story, like, I shot Cher and so on; I'm working on Miles Davis now. But Sunday *Times* magazine, *New York Times* Sunday magazine called me, and they said, "Tony, we want you to shoot Cher." I said, "Oh, okay," and I go to California to shoot Cher.

So Cher's people call for the book. I brought the book by and they sent it out to California to Cher's people. Cher's people sent the book back and said, "Could you send another book with more white people in it?" The *New York Times* Sunday magazine told them, "No, that's it." "Well, we'd like to get another photographer instead."

They said, "No." They protected me. They said, "No, this is the photographer we picked and this is going to be

done, so either you want to do it or you're not." I wasn't sure. She decided — oh, she decided that they had no choice. So I went there to do it.

Okay, I go in with an assistant. She has a house that's shaped in the pyramid with the top cut off. It's an atrium, and in California, big living room, couches, beautiful furniture, paintings, beautiful place.

So someone answers the door and they run upstairs and tell Cher that I'm here, and Cher sends down the hairdresser or whatever he was, or stylist, and says, "Oh, well, Cher wants to see your Polaroids of the lighting before we do the shoot." And I had heard later that they were saying to her that there was a Rastafarian downstairs, and I just had long hair. It wasn't even the Rasta look.

So I got very nervous. So I photographed my assistant and showed the lighting, and she loved it. She came down -

MS. SHUMARD: To the lighting?

MR. BARBOZA: She loved the lighting. And we did the shoot and she loved the shooting. I was there from nine in the morning until nine at night, and she loved the shooting.

MS. SHUMARD: That must have been a marathon. I mean, is that the longest?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I went up to her closet and helped her with the clothes. We picked different things out. She really liked the shooting. At the end of the shooting, I mentioned what had happened. She said she didn't know anything about it. I don't know if she did, about the book and stuff like that.

But after that, she won the Academy Award. She would not do any more photographs for any other magazines. She told them, "See Tony; buy it off him." So it was all over the world, stuff was sold. Yeah, I mean, I got \$250 from doing the shooting from them.

That's what they paid me, and I didn't care how much they paid me. I wanted to shoot jobs for the Sunday *New York Times Magazine*. But I made like \$30,000 on the photographs.

MS. SHUMARD: So you made a point of retaining copyright and rights to your images?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Was that true from the very beginning?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, except for advertising.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, you can't obviously do that.

MR. BARBOZA: Except for advertising, so —

MS. SHUMARD: This is probably a good place to pause.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay. Was that a good story to you? Was that an interesting story?

[END CD 4.]

MS. SHUMARD: This is Ann Shumard interviewing Anthony Barboza at the Jolly Hotel Madison Towers in New York City on November 19, 2009, for the Archives of American Art, and this is card number five.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, I remember some things now. The first assistant that I had was an Asian assistant and we used to go on shootings. And the people would automatically go to him and say, "Oh, you're Tony Barboza," and it was always — he said, "No, he's Tony." They didn't expect it.

MS. SHUMARD: They didn't expect a black photographer.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, they thought automatically, he's the photographer. When I used to do the shootings, certain little things would happen to have another kind of racism go on. One day, I had to do an A&S shooting, for Abraham and Strauss, and I had all these white models with me, right, and people would rent their apartment out for me to do the shooting, and we'd pay them.



So we had picked an apartment to shoot in, in the different rooms. And we went in and the owner wasn't there. But there was a housemaid there. A black lady was there. She was very heavyset. She was really nasty to me, and I just figured it was like, well, this is her home and she didn't like the idea of this going on in her home. "What is he doing in my home?" So something happened like that, and then, for the most part through my career, besides people mistaking me for the assistant and Sirji the photographer, I got along with everybody really, really well.

But there was one person, and I won't mention his name - I can't even remember his name. I went to photograph him, and he was shocked that the *New York Times* Sunday magazine is sending a photographer - and at that time my assistant was black - and he was not very nice at all.

He was a well-known composer, too. No matter how nice I was, it seemed like he just wanted us out of the house. I did the shooting as fast as I could and I got out. So he was a nasty person.

And I hadn't run across that too much. That's the only time I remember, really. Another time the *New York Times Magazine* called me to do a shooting of Bette Midler. So I go to California, and Bette Midler had requested that they use this photographer, but they said, again, she didn't know who was coming. She didn't know a black photographer was coming, anyway.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: And she wanted this other photographer to do the shooting. But they said, "No, no, this is who we're using." So I went to the shooting, and all these people were in the house.

They had little tiles. Somebody was fixing the little wooden tiles on the wooden floor, laying those in there, and somebody else was working. It was a lot of people in there. They were remodeling or something. But once she met me and I started shooting, even though she didn't know who I was, she didn't act shocked like the other people did.

She was very cordial and she took me up to her wardrobe room. The wardrobe room — there was so much clothes there and shoes. It was like walking into another apartment. It was unbelievable. I had never seen a closet like that, not even Cher. Cher had a big one, but hers was enormous, and we spent the whole day there. She was very nice.

The photographer who she wanted to recommend — and I know him; his name was Greg Gorman. He showed up at the shooting to come see how everything is, which I thought was funny. But she liked the shooting. She had Disney pay me to get all the photographs.

What happened was that, okay, I said, "Okay, you can have the photographs." Remember I'm only getting \$250 —

MS. SHUMARD: From the *Times*.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, but there's expenses in it too.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: We told her, "Okay, you can have the whole shooting for \$10,000." She made Disney pay for it. \$10,000, I couldn't believe it. So we cash it in. They loved the shooting at *New York Times* Sunday magazine. But she had done something with another magazine at the same time and they were upset.

So they didn't run my shooting at all. The *New York Times* Sunday magazine didn't run it, even though they loved it, because Bette didn't tell them that she had another magazine do another shooting. So they didn't use it.

MS. SHUMARD: When you're doing work for a magazine and you know that it's going to be illustrating an article, are you ever told what to go for, or is it simply left up to you to take the picture and it doesn't necessarily have to relate to the text, because you don't, obviously, know what the article is going to be about.

MR. BARBOZA: Sometimes they did give me the text.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: But I never read them. I never read any of the text. Sometimes they gave it to me, but I go there on my feeling.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: It was mainly that they wanted a portrait of that person, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Right, so you never really looked at it as illustration. You weren't trying to illustrate an article. You were simply going to picture it.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, and you go on these shootings, and you've never been to the home before, and you've got to look around and say, "Where am I going to shoot? I can't shoot there." I had to spontaneously figure out what I was going to do. But I got practice all the time.

So I did do it. But it was mainly a photograph of the person to go with the story that they were writing. In some cases, like I did — oh, what's his name — the writer who just died who did that — the Irish writer?

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, McCourt.

MR. BARBOZA: Frank McCourt, they got all excited because the art director at that time at the *New York Times* Sunday magazine was — she was Irish too.

MS. SHUMARD: Is that Kathy Ryan?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: She's still there.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, she's still there.

MS. SHUMARD: And people — I don't know what your experience has been. I've heard really good things about her.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, she's wonderful, and she sent me a thing — I think she sent me the — no, she told me about the book. So I went there and he was wonderful. He was in a little apartment. The book was just coming out and I photographed - he was such a beautiful person. I photographed him in his apartment.

Then we went to his local pub that he always went to and I photographed him there. I told him, I said, "You know" - not *Good Morning America*, what is that other — where they take you around — was it *60 Minutes*, or was it that other program where they travel with you sometime? That guy used to come on Sunday morning.

MS. SHUMARD: *CBS [News] Sunday Morning* .

MR. BARBOZA: *Sunday Morning* ,

MS. SHUMARD: Mm-hmm, the *CBS Sunday Morning* .

MR. BARBOZA: I said, "Frank," — he was really such a wonderful man - I said, "Frank, you know you're going to be on *Sunday Morning* with this book." He said, "Tony, if they put me on that, I'm taking you with me." I didn't believe that, so I said, "Okay."

So I had an exhibit in my studio of some of my work one year, and that would be — we'd have to jump back - that would be about in the '90s, '97, something like that, and he came to my exhibit. It's like a print sale and he was there. He spent a couple hours there sitting on the couch and everything.

He had moved out of his apartment then, and he — I put his photograph on the wall because I liked it. And he bought it. And I said, "Well, I didn't bring you here to buy your photograph. I'll give you that." He said, "No, no, I want to buy it."

So he bought it. But I never got on *Sunday Morning* . I never went to Ireland. I knew that would be too much. Why is he coming along? But it was a nice gesture. He was a really wonderful man.

MS. SHUMARD: I was thinking maybe we would talk a little bit about — we'll shift back in time to 1982, and that is when you did the exhibition at the Studio Museum. That was the *Introspect* .

MR. BARBOZA: *Introspect* .

MS. SHUMARD: *The Photography of Anthony Barboza*, and that was — the guest curator for that exhibition was Deborah Willis. And it was accompanied —

MR. BARBOZA: Dan Dawson, wasn't it?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, she was listed as the guest curator, and then there were --

MR. BARBOZA: Dan Dawson, yeah, and Deborah Willis, right.

MS. SHUMARD: And at that point she was the photographic specialist at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

MR. BARBOZA: And she was the one, when she was in college, she heard that I was doing black history photographers, and she called me up and I gave her some of the names that I had researched. It became a life of its own and that's what she did.

But she had called me for advice when she was working, when she was still in school. Now, this is something that I wrote: "The music of our souls has and always will be our greatest gift." I still believe in that, right?

I forgot that I wrote this: "It is because of [inaudible] we will continue to be. For without, it is not. With this I proudly whisper my feelings, for only you will be able to hear the brightness we share, together as we move continuously within one another as I dedicate the show with love to you, Tery." That was my wife at the time. This is the photograph here that I had the discussion with —

MS. SHUMARD: With the paper fences?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: That you said that Robert Frank had remarked on.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, right. This photograph was the second photograph that the Museum of Modern Art bought from me.

MS. SHUMARD: This is the torso, the nude.

MR. BARBOZA: Right. The Museum of Modern Art bought that. But this is just a collection. This is a paper Ghost series. It's really a Kleenex, and it's a Ghost series.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, the description of the show was that it featured work from your African photographs. Not every theme in the show was reproduced or represented by an image in the catalogue. There was also a Halloween section that talked about photographs that took place in an annual parade in the Village.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, I did a series.

MS. SHUMARD: What was that series like?

MR. BARBOZA: That was all color, and it was done all night. I went around photographing people, not in the parade so much but after they were out of the parade. Yeah, I have hundreds and hundreds of those photographs. I've never shown them again. They were all done in color, but I think they should be — really maybe they'd come across better to me in black and white, when I think about it. But I haven't looked at those for years.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, I'm curious, because I don't know anything about this tradition in the Village. Was this —

MR. BARBOZA: All the students and anybody who wants to join — it's been going on since around the '80s. That's when it started. They just dressed up, and they walked the streets.

MS. SHUMARD: On Halloween?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, so it became the Halloween parade, and everybody goes to that. I refuse to go to that anymore. I went to that for about three years.

MS. SHUMARD: So the tissue series, as you said, those are all — that's all —

MR. BARBOZA: Kleenex, but it's in a Ghost series, like —

MS. SHUMARD: What was the motivation behind that project?

MR. BARBOZA: I don't know. It's just looking at things and seeing them another way. The way I printed it, people wouldn't know. Sometimes I left it, but afterwards I darkened it. People wouldn't know what it was, because if you — on some of the other prints, if you darken this —

MS. SHUMARD: The base, so that you simply see the —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, you don't know what this is, but they were all in different shapes. And there's quite a few

that I did. I would always do these little secondhand series that I would work on. This was done after '80. So the Black Borders, that was the Black Borders series, but of course, they didn't keep the black border in there.

MS. SHUMARD: They cleaned that out.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. Some of the Jazz here, this was done in the Navy, where this is just a water tank, and I made it something else by the way I printed it. This was shot in the daytime, but I was printing it a certain way.

MS. SHUMARD: That's completely abstract.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, yeah, the phoenix bird. So this was a little show. Oh, this was a big show. That's right.

MS. SHUMARD: This was a significant show I think.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, and this was made into a poster.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, because the show also included some of your work from Africa, I was thinking about that a little bit more after we talked, and I was wondering, in the course of traveling to Africa, did you ever go to the Cape Verde islands?

MR. BARBOZA: No, I've never been, only because in the '70s, you would have to fly to Portugal and then to Cape Verde, and none of the airlines would go there. So I only went to Senegal and so on. I never went to Cape Verde. Then my brother went to Cape Verde a few times, and he photographed there. He started picking up photography after I was in it. So he went and did all that. So I leave that alone just for him to do.

MS. SHUMARD: I was just wondering if there had been any curiosity on your part as to what that was like, as the place that your family had come from.

Maybe later in life, I don't know. I never had any curiosity about it, though. Well, because he lives and thinks and talks about Cape Verde.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, it's his — so it's become his —

MR. BARBOZA: His path, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah. So that would be sort of stepping into his territory.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: In the '80s, 1982, '84, and then '85, you were included in several group shows that were in Germany, and I wondered if there was a story behind how you came to be included.

MR. BARBOZA: Those were from Polaroid Corporation. They wanted me to do some SX-70s at the time, and I did some. And I sent them, and they included those in the exhibition.

MS. SHUMARD: So did you have a relationship with Polaroid? Did you ever use the museum camera?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: When did you do that?

MR. BARBOZA: I did that later in the '80s, '79. I did that in the '90s, and that's an entirely different thing. That's a different vision. I used that big camera and I did these portraits. See, it's hard to explain without seeing them. I did these portraits.

One is called The Emasculation of the Black Man series. They're big Polaroids, 20x24, but they're very racially motivated. What happened is that some of them they sent back. They said, "We can't use these." They did put some of them in an exhibition in Atlanta [GA], of all Polaroids that I went to. But some they sent back. It was very interesting, and then I did it.

They're in the show downtown too. I did it a different way. They didn't get these. When you shoot, you give them one; you keep one. I'll explain one of them. Okay, there's a man standing there and he's got his hands like this here.

MS. SHUMARD: Against his chest.

MR. BARBOZA: And he's shot up to here.

MS. SHUMARD: To sort of from the waist up.

MR. BARBOZA: He's got a cowrie bracelet on. He's also got some safety pins on his shirt and stuff. He's got a Rasta hairdo, but it's all pushed up, and it's got a kente cloth around the top of it, right? Now, that's the first part. He's got tape over both eyes and tape over the mouth. So he cannot see. He cannot speak. With the whole identity— this is called *Diaspora* .

With cowries, it represents Africa, and the piece, kente cloth, up there, Africa, and the hairdo. He is one of the slaves, and he doesn't know where he's going. He can't talk about it. And he's got a ring in his nose. We were gathered together and shipped to different parts of the world as slaves.

On the whole print itself — before we get to the whole print itself, behind them is a glow of gold that's in motion which represents the idea of the homeland, right? You see all that on this big Polaroid. Then I took a wood-burning kit, the iron there, and etched all these lines all over the print, all over the print, and that's all the middle passages, all in zigzag formation. They're going everywhere.

There's only one of that, and I won't even sell it. I didn't even give them one of that because that was a whole, complete idea. I wouldn't sell it for \$50,000. I still have the originals. I would make copies of it if somebody wanted it, but it's really involved. And there's four more like that. I think it doesn't go with anything else that anybody else has ever done.

So it's very hard to put it in a book. And I think it represents my mind going further beyond this to something else. And then the last series I did, which is called *Black Dreams/White Sheets*, that's an entirely different thing.

So all the series are entirely different uses of what I'm talking about. I thought in the '80s I had peaked, and I thought the '80s were very important for a lot of work I did. I started painting in the '80s as well.

MS. SHUMARD: What kind of painting were you doing?

MR. BARBOZA: I did oils. Most of them are figurative, but some of them are — one psychic came and said, "Well, these are your past lives here." I said, "Oh, really?" It's about Egypt, Africa, all kinds of things. And I don't know. I haven't looked at them for years.

I did also a whole series — a Man series, which was just I would get a man's shirt, and I would put — the whole series is all men's shirts, and I would paint them, do all kinds of things on them, metal on one for industrialism, and oh, it's a whole series that I haven't looked at for years. But I did the whole series. So I have done some painting things that I like.

But no one's ever seen them except for people I know that came to the studio at that time. So when I worked on all of those in the '80s, and after I did the Jazz series, and I did this type of work, I really thought that I was peaking at that time. I really thought that my mind, everything was right, and I didn't know what to do next. I wanted another series to do.

I always did a little series, like the Kleenex Ghosts and stuff like that and street shooting and stuff. Then 1997 came along and then I started that series *Black Dreams* which I think accumulates everything I talked about from my past, and everything I learned, and what was really meaningful to me. I broke some rules where I never wanted to do photographs that were literal. Like these, you don't know what this means unless I tell you.

But I broke the rules and decided that, but I still cheated. I decided that you would get a glimpse of what it is, but there's a lot more to it and what the things are that it represented. A lot of people don't — a lot of white people that look at it don't like it. I saw some gallery people. They hate it. It's just about black people living in America, but I don't understand — a guy I know who's white, he loves it. Some people love it. Some people hate it.

But when it was in that exhibition at Brooklyn Museum [*Committed to the Image* , 2001] - I had two pieces in there -, Barbara Millstein said at the opening there were some people crying in front of the photographs. They were crying in front of this photograph and this. So this series, I didn't even remember you had it, this series — I've done a lot of photographs for this series.

MS. SHUMARD: And the exhibition was committed to contemporary black photographs.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, I worked with Barbara Millstein, and she had me pick two other — but I got together from all across the country everybody that sent in their portfolios, that I knew, all the black photographers. I worked on it for two years.

MS. SHUMARD: So you really did have a curatorial role in this exhibition.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh yeah. Barbara came to me and said, "Tony, help me with this." And we had meetings, and it was basically me and her. Beuford Smith I brought in, and one other person, I can't remember his name. It was in — oh, what was his name? This was a wonderful, wonderful exhibition to me. And we picked this cover together. We picked the cover. I love that photograph.

MS. SHUMARD: And this exhibition was at the Brooklyn Museum, February through April in 2001.

MR. BARBOZA: See, I can't remember who was the other person. Where did she put the names?

MS. SHUMARD: The other thing I noticed in looking at the captioning information for the two photographs of yours that are in the show is that they're larger in scale than some of your earlier work.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: I just wondered if you'd like to comment on the direction of scale in photography and where that's going, because it seems to be getting bigger and bigger.

MR. BARBOZA: Right. When we started in the '70s, everybody had their little 11x14, 8x10. It was so precious, so precious. Then it came into the '90s and photographers started — these galleries started making these huge prints. And I love them, the big prints. Big prints, but I still have to judge each photograph, because there can be — like in this book here —

MS. SHUMARD: Back to the *Introspect* catalogue.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. I'm only talking about my photographs, but whenever I printed the Black Borders, they were always on 16x20 paper and always about the same size on that paper. I never made them bigger. That's what I decided on it. These were huge.

MS. SHUMARD: Those were the tissue series that were really big.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. I never liked this big.

MS. SHUMARD: This is the nude, and it's more intimate if it's smaller.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. It's always been about when you mat it, it can be this size, but it's got to have a big mat.

MS. SHUMARD: It can be about the same size as the illustration in the catalogue or smaller.

MR. BARBOZA: Or even tinier, and it'd look nice. But I'm for the big photographs now. Yeah, I'm for big photographs, because now it's a little easier anyway because of the computer.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, and that's a good question to ask, too. When did you switch from traditional printing to digital printing?

MR. BARBOZA: After I moved the last studio, I was at 13-17 Laight Street. But I had moved from a bigger one to a smaller one, and there was no room for a darkroom. So I went to — and computers were coming in then. So I went to that, and you're forced to; you're forced to because all the clients wanted the digital now.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: And they didn't have to pay for the film and processing, and the Polaroid [film], that got into a lot of money to do the jobs, Polaroid. And processing. And then [with digital, clients] could see right away if they like what you're doing. But if I'm doing my own work, I still want to use film. If I'm doing a project, I'm using film. I might shoot some digitals at the same time, but my own work, film. But when it's a job now, I just do it with digital now.

MS. SHUMARD: What do you think you'll do when the film is no longer available, or do you think that day is going to come? Do you think there's always going to be a place for film? Do you think there will be enough demand among fine art and working photographers to keep some small segment of that industry going?

MR. BARBOZA: I wonder. I don't know. There were some papers I used to use, trimming papers that I used to use, Kodalith paper. It was beautiful paper. They discontinued that. So there's nothing you can do about it.

MS. SHUMARD: It's one of the things I notice in looking at prints, the variations in the paper and why so often, if a vintage print is available, I'm drawn to it because of the quality of the paper.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, but vintage prints are more expensive because - more valuable - because they were done

—  
MS. SHUMARD: At the time.

MR. BARBOZA: At the time, right, right, and black and white is starting to catch up on the computer, but it's not quite the same yet. It's not. They can't print the black and white the way you can print in a darkroom. But that's how I learned. The younger generation, they probably don't care about that. A lot of photographers don't even know how to print in darkrooms.

Now, there's probably a lot more. Some photographers don't even know how to do lighting. I know some famous photographers — I won't mention any names — but they had to hire assistants because they didn't know how to light. Yeah. It's important to learn everything about the craft you're in. But everyone moves so fast that I think that the curators are trying to find clever ways in which to start the new genre of photographs.

To me, they seem to be getting away from what I hold very dear to me, and that's the feeling of something. They become cold and stagnant, and they don't really mean anything to me. A lot of work I see, I don't like. It becomes too gimmicky. Like I went to the Museum of Modern Art last week and they had the new photography. I couldn't believe it.

I just thought the photographs were awful. They manipulated them in the computer stuff, but I just — only one of the five photographers I thought, "Well, this is interesting."

So I have an open mind to it, but some of the stuff I just — you know, you look in the other room and you see all these wonderful photographs of the older photographers, Irving Penn in there, and Walker Evans and Richard Avedon, and a whole lot of photographers, and their collection, and they're so — they're warm; they're about people; there's feeling about them. Then they put up this crap, to me, because somebody worked it in there, and I don't think that — it takes maybe a couple of decades before — when it's a new technical thing, the computer, that it works itself into the mind and the body of a person that it comes out right.

So it takes a little while. I don't think it's there yet. But they're going to jump on, say that this is the new thing, and, hey, people still love to look at photographs of people. But what happens to me is that we are trained, even in composition, from TV, movies, advertising, everything in a magazine. This is what we see, right? So this is our subconscious thinking that way.

So when there's something in the composition that's off, they think it's a bad composition. They especially did that in the '70s and the '80s. In the '90s they came out with the — what did they call that - the cutting edge. All it was was some things that we threw away because they were off-composition, but they weren't off-composition. What I realized through the years was that you had the formal composition that was just trained for painting, and then it went to everything else, magazines, TV, and all that. But a composition can be anything that your eye is used to after so many generations, and it's anything that falls in the borders. That's composition to me.

But your eye and your mind is not used to it so you think it's bad composition. So that's what has happened. So now the '90s, they decided this is the cutting edge. Sometimes it was just that they tilted the camera and said, "Oh, this is crazy."

MS. SHUMARD: Are there younger photographers whose work interests you? I know you've been associated with the workshop all these years —

[Cross talk.]

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, there's younger photographers in the workshop that I like their work, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Are they getting exhibition opportunities?

MR. BARBOZA: Not yet, no. We are working on a book for Kamoinge now.

MS. SHUMARD: Tell me a little bit about what Kamoinge has become over the time that you have been involved with it. I mean, obviously, you were in at almost the birth of that.

MR. BARBOZA: We're a family. We're a family of photographers, and we know each other. And when you have a group of people - like in Paris during the Impressionist time, you had all the painters together and they'd talk at night. So they influenced each other, right? This is the same thing in that sense, influence each other.

But it's still about a mood and a feeling. Some of us have gone off in little tangents, but our personalities are different. So we followed Roy in the beginning, but then we went [our] own way. We became our own person. That's why I went to these extensive ideas, because I did street shooting the same way everybody else did.

But as years go by, I'm not satisfied with just that. It becomes redundant. Everybody shoots it. This is it again. This is it again, and black photographers are known just for their street shootings of black people. I didn't want to just do that.

So I went on more of an idea that it's about my mind and my thinking and my feeling about things another way. Why did I do it? I don't know. I don't know why I did. The group is still about shooting people, but it's a little different. But there are young photographers in the group that are really wonderful, and they get the sense of being, and that's what I like.

MS. SHUMARD: How do they find their way to the group? Is it sort of word of mouth, or how does it —

MR. BARBOZA: Well, like everything else - like I said, the photograph finds you; they find us, same way. It's not we allow certain people to go in. It's almost like fate. God sent you to us. Okay, you're fine. Some people didn't work out.

Some people weren't in there. But it used to be really tough before, when we were a closer group, in the beginning in the '60s. We wouldn't let anybody in. We really criticized their work. Now we let people in that are not as good yet, but we want them to be influenced and inspired to get better.

MS. SHUMARD: You see that they have potential.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. Well, I believe everybody does if you work at it enough. But you've got to be inspired. So that's what I do, yeah. That's what we as a group do.

MS. SHUMARD: I think we should talk a little bit more about the Black Dreams/White Sheets because I think that work is really powerful. How many pictures constitute that series? Do you have a rough idea? Is it really large?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, about — let's see, about maybe 100, but I wouldn't use all 100, no, and I won't look at it for a while. Now, I've done it since '97 to 2005 I think. I did it stronger from '97 or '96 to 2002 I think. Wait a minute, 2003. I started off the same way. Okay, the book has two in it, right?

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, it does.

MR. BARBOZA: Okay, I went through it. In the beginning, like anything else, in the first year or so, or not even the whole year - see, these two don't have it, but these are the not the prints I use now because they are — I found it became redundant just to show a bed like this here. It's like over and over again. So I didn't crop it.

So there are elements, even in these now, where you see more of the board that's around here at times, a light stand, everything, so it wouldn't be monotonous. Here's a close-up of a bed. Here's a close-up of a bed. Here's a close-up — it wouldn't be as monotonous. So it developed into something, because at first I would just put the bed on, and then when I made the print —

[Cross talk.]

— because I always used the same lens. It was a wide-angle lens. I would just crop out here. But the finals are not like that. They have other extraneous things in there, yeah, to represent. So in the beginning I cropped them out, but then afterwards I looked at these. I said, "These are not right," and it's Black Dreams/White Sheets. But sometimes, for some reason it's just got to be a black sheet.

MS. SHUMARD: But there's still a white element to it.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, it's just for a certain balance. And sometimes they're just black and white, and sometimes they're in like a sepia tone. They're not all printed in black and white. They're mixed in different ones. Some [are] even solarized. There's one of just all African cloth on it and a spear and African jewelry and stuff, and nobody's on it, and it's solarized.

So it's a whole series. I have to speak about it — next month I have to give a slide presentation. But this series, I don't know where to go from here. I've been thinking about this a lot. What am I going to do next? I have to continue.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, you keep reinventing, though. I think one of the things that's compelling about your career is that you haven't stood still at any point. You've kept going —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, now I'm worried. Is that all I'm going to do, a trilogy or — that's a trilogy. So what do I do next?

MS. SHUMARD: Now, do you still maintain a studio in New York or have —



MR. BARBOZA: No, no, no.

MS. SHUMARD: Everything's different.

MR. BARBOZA: Two thousand five - I just work out of my home now, yeah. I work out of my home, taking care of the children, trying to work for Kamoinge to get a book, which I think is important.

This guy today says it's hard to put my work into some of this other work unless I put the older work, the street work I did, because it's so different from everybody else in the group that it becomes like a sore thumb. And I said, "Look, I won't be hurt. It's more about the group. Just put in the things that work for the book."

MS. SHUMARD: For the group.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I think that's more important than whether I have this photograph in here or this photograph in here.

MS. SHUMARD: Was the Jazz series the longest series that you worked on, because it seemed as though you began photographing from the earliest part of your career?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I started really extensively in about 1979.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay, so it's not quite —

MR. BARBOZA: Seventy-nine, but I didn't finish until 1990. Yeah, 1990, I spent all that time working every night on that, and of course, the idea comes from - it's like a tradition. Roy DeCarava did the jazz, so I'm going to do jazz, but I'm going to give it some motion because that's the feeling I have.

A lot of my photographs have motion in them. So I always went slow shutter speeds, a little more motion. That's how I approached it, and Roy said he really liked them. So that was a compliment. He witnessed some of them in that exhibition.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, the *Introspect* exhibition.

MR. BARBOZA: He saw the exhibition. He really liked the Jazz photographs that I had in there, yeah. That was a big exhibition. I think that was my largest exhibition. I can't remember now.

MS. SHUMARD: It's hard to tell sometimes, because the catalogue doesn't really capture or document every work. It just illustrates a select number of pictures. The experience of photographing the jazz musicians and their performances, did that change over time?

When you work on something for that long, did the venues that people were performing in change? Were there things about that series that were different at the end than they were at the beginning, the kind of people that were playing?

MR. BARBOZA: That's funny. In that series, no, they're not different from the end to the beginning. The only thing that's different is that, in the beginning, I shot a lot of color as well. Camera with color film, camera with black and white, and then after a while, I just went mainly to black and white. But I did do it at the same time I would do some portraits in the studio.

See, I did musicians I knew even in *Black Borders*. I didn't go to clubs until '79. But I did shoot a lot of color there. I also shot — I did on the rooftop, like Art Kane did the musicians, I did the '80s musicians on the rooftop that they made a poster out of. Yeah, so I did that.

MS. SHUMARD: Like *A Great Day in Harlem* --

MR. BARBOZA: And I got together all — it was a lot more than Art Kane's. But of course, those are the original old musicians. So that's the one that's really important. A lot of people don't know the '80s musicians as well. But it was not about me photographing the famous musicians.

When you look at some of the photographers who did in the '50s, their photographers were, well, I don't know if this is really that good of a photograph, but it's of so and so. Mine was, forget that; the image, the image, whether they're important or not to the public.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I was more about the image.

MS. SHUMARD: Than the person.

MR. BARBOZA: And the feeling of the music, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: We can talk a little bit about some of the influences. It seems as though spirituality and, to some degree, some level of mysticism is present in your work or motivates you. You said yesterday that you've meditated regularly for —

MR. BARBOZA: On and off for the last 30 years, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: You talked about visiting a psychic, I think in the —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I think everybody used to go through that. When you're younger, you want to go find out things like that, yeah. I still meditate. I think it's good for the body and the mind. So I still do that, except I got up so early this morning I didn't do it. I did it yesterday, though.

MS. SHUMARD: Well, that's good.

MR. BARBOZA: What do I want to explain? Okay, I believe in Chinese astrology, and I mix it with the regular astrology. Now, if you know anything about astrology, sometimes you'll meet, let's say, a Pisces and another Pisces, and they don't seem at all alike, right?

Okay, but if you take the year that they're born, and you bring that into play for the animal signs, you'll find that they are similar; most people are similar in that animal sign for that year. So just explain that. I am a monkey in Chinese astrology. I'm a Taurus, but I'm a monkey, and a monkey's very playful. He's all over the place. He's doing this, he's doing this, and he can calm down a tiger or anybody else, and he is clever and he's intelligent.

Now, I don't know if I'm all that, but that's the type of person. You can base it on that. And I'm a wood monkey. Every 60 years it's different. Every 60 years an element comes into it. So that's the type of person I am. So that means that a monkey is curious, too, right? He's inquisitive.

So I'm interested in everything. It's like I'm all over the place. I'm interested in fashion, hairdos, TV shows, movies, books, what am I going to read today, music, all sorts of music - of course, some things I don't really listen to. And I don't know when I'm going to get to it, but everybody's so crazy about Shakespeare, and Shakespeare was a Taurus, so to speak, like me.

I refused to read Shakespeare, but I realized the reason many years later: because a teacher I had in high school made it sickening more than anything else. He ruined me for Shakespeare. I think he turned off a lot of students from Shakespeare, really. I mean, you meet certain people in life.

They don't — and you develop — it's almost like a phobia or something. Somebody doesn't teach you right, or doesn't inspire you right, then you — oh, I didn't like that. I didn't drink red wine because when I was 16, me and my friend got some bottles of wine, and we drank them. And they were red wine and we got sick.

So I don't drink — I don't like red wine that much because of that. So you understand what I'm saying about that?

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah. So that's the kind of thing, and you've got to — I've got to get over those things and continue on. Everybody carries something like that in them. It's interesting. I've talked to a lot of people, and you'll find out they have a certain dislike about something. If you dig back enough, and if you've got time to explain to them, they might see it.

Around this same time, now, when I shot jazz musicians, I interviewed all the jazz musicians, and some of them I did on film. And so a whole bunch of them. I always use that word "bunch," and "stuff"; I hate using those words when I'm talking. And Cornell wanted those right away.

MS. SHUMARD: This is Cornell Capa?

MR. BARBOZA: No, Cornell University.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, Cornell University, okay, sorry.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, Cornell wanted those right away because those — it was going to be a book called *Piano for Days*. Now, "piano for days" means the music in your life, and when you smile, your teeth, the rows of teeth. See, everything has a double meaning to me. And I have my daughter working on the transcripts now. They

were transcribed, but she's working on them, one of my daughters.

I still want to do that book, and it's all just -- what I did was when you come to me, you're not a musician, of course, but you don't have to be a musician. I will ask you when I interview you to tell me either one story, two stories, or three stories. Whatever you pick off the top of your head reflects on you and your personality and your life. It's automatic. There's no getting around it, and I found that to be true of all these musicians.

One musician, he got out of the service, he wouldn't speak for a whole year. He just wrote things down. Wow, amazing. One musician, his story was that when we was younger, him and his friend in California used to sit down, and they would try to guess the make and the model of the car by the sound of the motor. He was into sound. So it is very interesting. Betty Carter's was — you ever hear of Betty Carter?

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: Betty Carter's was a story about her date with Joe Louis in the Port Authority where everybody started screaming, "Betty, Betty, Betty," when Joe Louis was walking because he was calling "Betty."

So everybody in that Port Authority is screaming, "Betty, Betty, Betty," when [she and] Joe Louis had a date together. So those things really stick with me, and that idea of, I'm giving you more than that. Everything I give you on the tape reflects something about my past that influenced me in some way.

MS. SHUMARD: Have you kept a diary or a journal? Oftentimes when you have so much going on, there isn't time to do that.

MR. BARBOZA: There isn't — but on and off for 40 years, I might have a booklet where I started it and I stopped. There's so many papers around and booklets that I start and stop because I'm not — I'm always so busy. I make myself busy.

But I have writing. I have a lot of poetry that I've done that I just keep. I wrote a whole novel, three years, three drafts, around 400 or 500 pages, never been published, called *Black Face*, and it's complete. But I can't go back and edit it. I don't know. I just have to do another one.

So it's a lot of things I started and I stopped, or I'll continue later. But if you don't continue, you won't continue. I'm always looking for the next thing.

MS. SHUMARD: The next thing.

MR. BARBOZA: I always think that I'm going too fast, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Do you ever have time to go back and read some of the things that you wrote years ago, or do you see —

MR. BARBOZA: Only now that Cornell wants all these papers of everything I've got, sometimes I run across things that I wrote, yeah, and I've still got more boxes to go through. So that's going to be awhile. Yeah, I keep doing that.

MS. SHUMARD: And you find, I'm sure, things that you've completely forgotten about.

MR. BARBOZA: I found the other day a painting that I really liked. There are some paintings that I've done that I really think that — I always wanted to be an actor and a painter more than anything else, you know?

MS. SHUMARD: Well, we didn't even talk about that.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, when I was growing up, I wanted to be an actor. But I thought I was not good-looking enough, so I thought I can't do that. That's the only reason. Nobody came around to tell me you don't have to be good-looking. Nobody told me when I was young. And then I wanted to be a painter, and then I couldn't draw very well. So I gave that up. But I went back to painting, and I didn't care if I couldn't draw. And I still like the paintings I do. So that's what I learned in the '50s. But photography chose me. So I don't mind so much, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: It was the right thing.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, you want to stop?

[Break.]

[END CD 5.]

MS. SHUMARD: All right. This is Ann Shumard interviewing Anthony Barboza at the Jolly Hotel Madison Towers in New York City on November 19, 2009, for the Archives of American Art, card number six.

MR. BARBOZA: So what I want to say is that every time I give a lecture, I never just talk about photography, and then again, I also don't like to talk about myself so much. But I talk about relationships and things I've learned and what people should be aware of, and try to inspire the person, whatever they're doing, in their work.

So I try to bring in those little examples of music or an artist or a writer or something in there just to give you — you can relate to. And I really do believe that there's another way which nobody talks about, and that you can really see a lot more in a photograph than people really understand.

There's a lot of psychology involved. I remember for one semester NYU asked me to give a class at the end of the day, at night. And I walked in there, and there was all of these students, and when they saw me, the next class a lot of them dropped out. I guess they didn't know — they didn't know who I was.

I couldn't figure out why they dropped out. But I went on with the class, and in the end of the semester, I gave everybody an A. And the head of the department said, "Why did you do that?" I said, "Because when I went into class, I found that they all improved, and that's all I want, to improve on self and your work."

Now, to give you a little point about what happened, one day I had them bring in their work — and this has happened a couple times - I looked at the work and I said, "Oh, you took this all from the same contact sheet." They were amazed. And I made other kinds of statements about them as a person. I could read into the photographs. I don't even know how I do this. But this is what happens.

And even another time, I had a lecture, a workshop at Rhode Island School of Design, and the student showed me, a female, her work -- and I said, "You miss home." I can remember each individual, and she said, "Yeah, how'd you —". I said, "It's in your photographs." I even surprised myself.

But that's why I say that when we are inspiring and talking to students, we have to also talk about their life, and what they're about as a person. When you're in any art form, you're also discovering all the time about yourself. So I thought that was important that I bring that up, because to this day I can still do that when I look at photographs. I can see something about a person.

One time I had an argument with Duane Michals because I said you can sometimes see — and I know that 75 percent of the time at least I can look at a photograph and tell whether it's a male or a female that photographed it, did the photograph.

He disagreed. I said, "I'm sorry," and I can still do it. But it's very interesting. There's so much, because it's all very psychological. Now, I think it's even true that you might be able to tell it in painting, but I'm not as familiar with painting and literature. I really believe that.

MS. SHUMARD: That there is a gender difference?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, there is. I think that it's there. Okay, so I'll go off on a little tangent because that's the way I talk. I finished the Black Dreams series, right? But 15 years or maybe 10 years, maybe it was five years, before I started the Black Dreams series, I had an interview they did on tape, and I talked about this, eye-dreaming.

MS. SHUMARD: And that's eye, E-Y-E?

MR. BARBOZA: Right. Now, eye-dreaming - this is just like a dummy copy I'm working on, the layout of a book. Now, eye-dreaming, first we'll look at in some of the photos. You can see that this is almost like a penis, right? Then it's slavery, and ghetto, right? Children, right? Just to give you an idea, children playing.

MS. SHUMARD: What time period do these cover?

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, that's what I'm going to talk about.

MS. SHUMARD: Okay.

MR. BARBOZA: And children, see again?

MS. SHUMARD: That's the paper fence that was —

MR. BARBOZA: Right. Ghetto, rich, I'm giving you quick things of it, childhood here, a foreign country in here, music, but also frightening get-up, and they were — I wasn't a foreigner to them because it's a different country.

[Cross talk.]

This is in Morocco. This is a movie theater.

MS. SHUMARD: Eye. With this long exposure, so that you have a blank screen.

MR. BARBOZA: This whitens out. Love.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, that's — where is that shot?

MR. BARBOZA: Coney Island, and then love here.

MS. SHUMARD: Embracing.

MR. BARBOZA: Right.

MS. SHUMARD: It will probably be a little hard for the — for this, for our recording without the images.

MR. BARBOZA: Right, but I just want to — okay, the couple, which is me and —

MS. SHUMARD: And we see them — we just see shadows.

MR. BARBOZA: And then the bending of the cactus, a dream, a restaurant in a foreign place. Okay, music, just a few more, sex again, music here.

Now, what I want to explain about this, music again, is that I believe — and this is just a dummy copy because it's longer than this here — I believe that there is the subconscious in photography, in which through your career you photograph, and sometimes you click the shutter and you don't know why you did, but you shoot it anyway.

Okay, I always believe that that's your subconscious ahead of your consciousness. And you photograph, but you don't know why you did,. And you look back later on in your contact sheets, and you're like dream-walking. You're like in a dream state, and the subconscious could read certain things about you, as a person, but you consciously weren't aware of it.

So you would click the shutter. So in everybody's contact sheets, there are those things that happen to each photographer. I know that in photography anyway. That's why I went back, and that was me eye-dreaming. Eye-dreaming is a subconscious life in photography. So it's a subconsciousness of the person running through his art form, and that's mainly photographing.

So there is a way that anybody who goes back and looks at their work, they will look and see photographs. As you get older, your consciousness catches up to your subconscious. So your mind has grown through all your experiences, and then you'll look back and you'll realize, that's why I did that. That's why I did that.

Now, I think it's true of every photographer, but I'm not absolutely positive unless I look at your contact sheets. But for me, I know it's true, because that's what I've studied, and that's how I learn more about myself. So I thought that was important, and my next project is really working on this.

MS. SHUMARD: Now, one of the things I worry about with digital photography is that ability to instantly edit and remove that record of the process.

MR. BARBOZA: I had a talk on this here. I had a house talk, and it came up about that. And I said, "Serious photographers do not edit in the camera and take that out." And they all were, "Yeah, that's true." We have a tendency with digitals to take that out, and you really shouldn't. Even I've done it sometimes. But I've done it in another way, in which I'm working on this idea, and it doesn't work there. I think I'm far along enough that I could take it out. But I try not to take too many out. I try not to do that. I don't like that. I don't even think I should do it, because there are things in there we don't understand as people yet.

So even if it's the new stuff that's digital, it does mean something to them. Some people get too clever for their own good when they're doing stuff now, when they're doing these and they're working on the computer for the first time. But it still says something about them. You can't get away from it, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: Going back to some questions here, has the experience of moving out of the city changed what you do - is it different [from] when you lived in Manhattan?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, I was still living out there. I've been living out here for 20 years.

MS. SHUMARD: Oh, have you?

MR. BARBOZA: But I had a studio, right. Oh, is that me?

[Telephone rings.]

MS. SHUMARD: Now, you had written something about the —

MR. BARBOZA: - eye-dreaming here, yeah: "These are not dreams but rather the eye picking up subconsciously about my fears, desires, loves, childhood, music, spirituality, death, rebirth. We constantly have a play in our minds between the conscious and subconscious realms.

"Almost instinctively, all photographers will constantly click the shutter without realizing that they are periodically dwelling in a state of eye-dreaming. It explains to the photographer a lot about himself. That is the reason why visually it may be a subject in the frame, but it is also a biographical portrait of the photographer and his personality. It reveals to him what he is sensing and feeling. There is no thinking involved, just a reflex of mind and eye working simultaneously. Within this book, by paying attention to the spread, the two photos explain what I have come to realize about myself and how much music, childhood, love, sex, death, and spirituality play an important part of how I feel about myself and the life I have been living.

We constantly go through life with a veil over our eyes that does not readily reveal what we are subconsciously telling ourselves."

Okay, so maybe that will explain it better.

MS. SHUMARD: So going back to where you live as opposed to where you work, you had your studio in the city until —

MR. BARBOZA: And I always wanted to write. So I'm writing more. Change is good. At first it was a shock to me, but because of the economy and 2001 and things changed, it was like, was I forced out, or did God say, "Okay, Tony, it's time to go here and do this"?

So I had to accept that. I've had more time to think. I still want to do things. I'm still ambitious about doing things, but exactly what it is yet, I don't know.

This is going back and revealing more, but I do have, for the last two weeks, an idea in mind that I can't talk about that's so totally different from anything I've done. It has nothing to do with racism or anything. It has to do with something else that I can't explain, but I want it to be a secret because I think if I talk about it, I might also talk myself out of it. I don't want to — there is something that's on my mind now.

MS. SHUMARD: So it's part of your creative process to have some time to let an idea sort of gestate and develop rather than —

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, just being. But then there's also the love of family, and I want to — it's a lot to think about. But it's not over until it's over. So I just continue on.

MS. SHUMARD: We've talked about some of your relationships, but you are married now.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, for the last 25 years. I finally found — did I talk about that?

MS. SHUMARD: No, we haven't talked about that.

MR. BARBOZA: Oh, gee. In the '80s, about '84, I went to — I had been married and there was a divorce there. It was a second wife. Well, it was really the third wife. It was Tery Furman. That didn't work out. The very first wife was Maria Correa, and then came a common-law wife, which was Ming Smith, who's a photographer. Then it was Tery. And then I went to Brazil. And I love Brazil. I spent a month there.

MS. SHUMARD: What was the reason for going to Brazil? Was this just for pleasure travel or for work?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, after that last marriage, I decided that I wouldn't get married anymore. So I had 15 girlfriends all at the same time. Five I saw every week, five every other week, and five every once in a while. This is true. Yeah, this is the way I was.

MS. SHUMARD: I will not judge. We'll just —

MR. BARBOZA: I know.

MS. SHUMARD: It is what it is, right?

MR. BARBOZA: Right, so I went to Brazil and, gee, I loved Brazil. And I said, "Gee, maybe I should find a wife there." I wanted to go back. The women were so wonderful.

I came back, and about '84 or '85, I was sitting in the studio - I had assistants and I wouldn't look at the models anymore. Look at the models every Monday, or something like that, look at the models, and then if you see one that you think is pretty good, let me know. So I didn't look at them. I let them do that. I'd been looking at models for years. I got tired of looking at them.

So one Monday, it was time to go to lunch. They were looking at models, and I came from the back of the studio, and I came into the elevator, and just as I came into the elevator, this woman was coming from having her booking.

And in fact, she rode — went down with me, and I looked, and I said to myself, "Oh, this is the same woman that I saw about a month ago when I was in bed and I was watching TV and they had a music video called *Hello*. And this was the — she was playing the blind girl in the music video for Lionel Richie. And I said — I was alone by myself -- and I said to myself, I looked at her and I said, I'm going to marry that woman.

I was in shock. There she was. Now, a couple of years before that, I had gone to a psychic. He had come to the studio, and he was talking to me and reading my chart or something and he says, "You're going to marry," and her last name — the spelling is C-A-R-R. And right away I said, "No, I'm not. That's Irene Carr. She's a drug addict. I'm not going to marry her."

Okay, so I just threw that out. I wasn't going to do that, and I didn't even know Irene Carr anyway. So this woman that's in the elevator going down with me, her name was Laura Carrington, C-A-R-R-I-N-G-T-O-N. It was the strangest thing to me.

So I asked her if she would like to — she was busy. She couldn't go to lunch. She said, "No, I can't." But I said, "Could you give me your phone number?" She gave me her phone number and I called her to go to dinner.

She says, "Well, I have a boyfriend." I said, "Well, that doesn't matter. We're just going to dinner." So we went to dinner. She was just wonderful to me. She was mainly an actress, but she was doing some modeling. I said, this is the person. My gut feeling, this is the person.

But I called her again, and she couldn't — "Well, I have a boyfriend to go to another dinner." I'm persistent. She said, "No, I can't." I said, well, what's the next thing I should do? Oh, I have a job. We had to take some models to Antigua to do this ad.

So the art director, he liked this other girl. So he's going to pick this girl that he liked, this model he liked, that he was seeing anyway. I decided I would pick her. Then he picked some of the guys, the male models, and they also happened to pick a hairdresser from D.C. that I had a relationship with, and liked me. Oh, gee.

So we went down and we fell in love. I couldn't believe it. We fell in love, and that's — I asked her to marry me. And that was that, 25 years ago. I said to myself, well, that's interesting. If I go back, there was my [first] wife, and then there was Ming who came in, and then I did forget two other ones, an Asian girl, that's still my friend, named Eddie Chung.

We went together for a while and she was — she was going with me at the time, and I broke up with her because of this woman. Matter of fact, a lot of women, because there were a lot of women in my life at the time. Laura felt, and she still does, like my mother. I get that feeling from her.

She's a great mother, a great person, a great friend, and even though we have arguments -- everybody has arguments -- it was right. She was sent to me, and that's what I decided, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: And you have children?

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, three with her. The oldest is 21.

MS. SHUMARD: And their names?

MR. BARBOZA: That's Danica, and she goes to Cooper Union. She's an artist. I taught her how to use oils when she was three years old. That's why I put down the paints, because she's much better than me. And I have a son. He's 15, and his name is Alexio, and when he was seven, he was in *Lion King* on Broadway here as the star, little Simba.

They saw him for the audition, and they wanted him to travel to California. We refused to do that, to live out there for that. So they waited until it was time to get - and they ran after him. They wanted him. He was there for — on Broadway - for like eight months, until he got too tall. But they said he was the best little Simba they'd ever had at that time.

And that's when my wife was also an actress. My wife was on soap operas, *One Life to Live* and *General Hospital*,

because we lived in California at the same time in New York. She would live there, and *General Hospital* was out there. So I'd fly back and forth three and four times a month.

So we had the apartment out there, and I had an apartment out here. But she didn't like California. So when time was up - three years I think she was out there - we came back.

And then I have a younger daughter; youngest daughter is 13 now, and her name is Lien Oriana Barboza, which means "golden lotus." Oriana means golden and lotus — Lien means "lotus" in Chinese. And then I have two other children from the first marriage, which are Leticia and Laryssa, yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: I remember you had mentioned them earlier.

So we can't talk about what you're working on now because it isn't developed enough yet for you to want to talk about it.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, because I have to — it is very complicated.

MS. SHUMARD: Sure.

MR. BARBOZA: It involves maybe art — I think I might have to do it with my daughter, where she'll do the artwork and I'll do the photography. It's really —

MS. SHUMARD: That might be —

MR. BARBOZA: It's very difficult though. I'll tell you this, it has to do with one person.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah, a collaborative. You haven't done a collaborative project before, have you?

MR. BARBOZA: No, I've always wanted to do one with one of my brothers or my children, so.

MS. SHUMARD: What can you think is the best advice that you've received over the course of your career, and was there a particular person who provided it? Can you think about anyone that had?

MR. BARBOZA: Well, it comes from many different people and things. But the best advice is that when it feels right, do it. Do not listen to other people too much because they can convince you that you shouldn't do it. And when you're doing something, sometimes it takes —that's why I always did things — projects - for a long period of time, because as you're working on it, it comes together. It might take a few years. But I wasn't doing it every single day.

So that's why I had to do it longer. But I realized when you live with a certain project for a while, it begins to have a mind of its own. Sometimes I think that people give up too quickly about something they have in mind, or somebody can come along and say, "Oh, I don't like that," and that'll destroy it for them completely. And that's not good. I think teachers do that a lot.

Yeah, teachers are always, "I want you to do this." So it's almost like some of these teachers are almost like being in the Navy or the Army or something. They just want discipline, discipline. If this particular personality is not that way, let them be themselves, and let them develop, and guide them through their development.

There's too many rules all the time, too many rules. It's almost like, do it my way; that's the way I want it done. I don't like that at all. Let's work together. I see you have something in mind. Maybe I can help you to go further in it. Let's see. People get — a lot of teachers, they're only about their own work. They couldn't make it, so they decided they'd teach.

Well, I think that you should also keep doing your own work. I guess some teachers do. The younger ones that are artists that are teaching after graduate school and stuff, they might still be working on it, but they need supplemental income, and some older teachers, they've been there long enough that they've accepted that, and they are better teachers. But it's the individual act, and see the individual, and see what they do.

But we have to start as teachers or lecturers to nudge these students on with their dream, because they are the next generation. They might have something entirely new and something really brilliant, and it might take them much longer because they've been stifled by their teachers.

Now, you heard the — I can't remember which writer was it — oh, one of them was Norman Mailer. When he came out with his first book, they praised and everything, and then it took him — they made him too big a writer. Well, you're developing, and they're just, here's our next hero. That's no good.

MS. SHUMARD: It can be more damaging than helpful.



MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I think it can be damaging. And we don't know what we've done. But it's also this is the way things are, because it's almost like I could sit there now and say to you, World War I, Civil War, Korean War, how many artists did we lose that could have been really something? It wasn't meant to be. I know that we lost Paul [inaudible] — during World War I, but he had done some things before.

That's why I believe in fate, that there are some things that God decides. God decides who is. How come some people become famous and I don't think they're that good? God decides.

And then afterwards - and while it's at that time, all the curators, oh, this is great, and later on, future generation looks back and, oh, that stuff ain't so good. That person's out. They decide. They're like gods. Curators are like gods. That's bad news, but that's what happens.

That's part of life. So we don't know. So the first thing I put in my mind is that, hey, I don't give a shit who likes my work and who doesn't. That's like, I'm doing Black Dreams and that's what I'm doing. I like this here. I've been in photography long enough. This is what I want to talk about. This is me.

So I don't — to the most part — ask a person, what do you think? I'm going to work on this series. No, because I can't even explain what I'm doing yet. I have to get into it for a couple of years. So I'm not about listening to other people's opinions anymore about it.

Afterwards when it's done and I put it up and they say, "Well, I like this," you're going to like this, and you're not going to like this, and you're going to like that. That's nice. Well, I can't please all the people all the time. I can only please some of the people some of the time. So that's a great saying to me.

So I just do what I feel, and like I said, it chose me. I didn't make that decision. I don't think I make any decisions that I think that are important about my work. I think that's just what it is. And I love photography because you can go back and discover things about yourself. I like that about photography.

MS. SHUMARD: Was there any sort of disappointing experience in your career that altered a direction that you were taking? Sometimes it seems like we go through difficult periods, and we emerge stronger as a result. I wondered if there was any moment that you had, difficulty that you overcame, and your work reflected your coming through that.

MR. BARBOZA: Well, what I love, I love dearly. I'm very passionate. So the first big disappointment in my life was my mother passing away. Then it's like when this woman - takes me awhile to get over it - this woman is gone from my life. Because I loved them all. I'm good friends with a lot of them still.

So that's always because I think that I have developed according to those women I was with, as a person and as an artist. I have no complaints. At times, I couldn't afford certain things, something very personal like — and this is about my life -- and I have nothing to hide. But I've had 14 abortions and I wondered about those children now. But that wasn't meant to be. So that was a disappointment in my life too. There were a lot of different women; I couldn't do that. I was just unsettled and a little wild.

The only disappointment is that sometimes I have so much passion about wanting to do things, but - and that's with every artist -- it's about money. First you've got to pay this and pay this and pay this, and then you can do your work. But I have no other disappointments. I have all my brothers. I love my brothers and I love my family, and the biggest joy to me is that I've finally — I was 41 when I got married this last time, and I finally found the woman that feels like my mother, yeah, and is a wonderful woman, and that I have all my children that I love dearly, yeah. So I don't have disappointments anymore. I think I'm over that.

MS. SHUMARD: That's good.

MR. BARBOZA: But things do hit you harder.

MS. SHUMARD: Yeah.

MR. BARBOZA: But it's like, they laugh, right? They laugh, you're happy for a minute; you're laughing; that was a good time. Then, hey, back to the same old stuff again. So it's like that, valleys and stuff. But I think that makes you a person.

MS. SHUMARD: Right.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah.

MS. SHUMARD: And I gather you couldn't imagine life without photography at this point. So 10 years from now, you'll still be photographing.

MR. BARBOZA: Yeah, I can't. I can't. But if I had to, then I would go back to painting and writing, yeah. I would go to that. But I can't. It's so much a part of me that you can't. It's like — what his name — Brett Favre, the football player: he retires and he comes back; he retires and he comes back. It's so much a part of him, he can't let it go.

Or the boxer that retires that's got to come back. Same thing: it's part of them. It's hard to let go, and I know it'd be hard — if I can't let go of a woman, I can't let go of this either. But that's what Duke Ellington said, right? He said, "Music is my mistress." Yeah, that was his statement. Music is my mistress, so, yeah, very important.

MS. SHUMARD: Let's pause this here. Is there — let's see.

MR. BARBOZA: Hmm?

MS. SHUMARD: Hold on a minute.

MR. BARBOZA: When I wake up in the morning, it's a new day, and I'm excited and passionate about life, and I wish it could continue, because life is — and people that you meet and the things that you do and the things that you're interested in are really wonderful.

With all the wars that are going on, I think that people need to care about each other more, whatever their religious differences are, because we're all people and we have our baggage that we carry, but learning to love each other and care about each other is the best solution.

That may never be for many years, but that's the way I feel about life. And photography. So I'm excited to get up in the morning and work. I love to work. I love to work. But if I can't work that day, then I get a little upset.

But I get upset with myself because I didn't accomplish anything that day. I always feel that I need to accomplish something, whatever it is, and I think that's important in life. And family comes first, friends come second, and art comes third.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

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