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Hi, so I'm not feeling so great today. And it's a cultural Irish imperative that in an emergency, refer to alcohol. And I love Mexico very much, hence the tequila. So one way or another, something is going to happen. I made a few notes before I got ill. I'll talk for about an hour and fifteen minutes and I'll cover a lot of different topics. But I think one thing I'm going to talk about today is the issue of immersion and the creation of style, and the possibility and difficulty of abstraction. And how painting in general has managed to re-invigor itself. I'm not sure if that's a word but anyway, I like it.

I started out as a figurative artist and the one on the left is *Seated Figure*, something along those lines, anyway, painted in '68. I'm one of the few artists working abstractly that has worked his way through figuration, somewhat. I can't say I really have a badge of honor in figuration but a badge of valor. But, I worked figuratively for a while, but then I arrived at abstraction through figuration. In other words I didn't simply start out as an abstract painter. So the question was, why abstraction? One on the right is *Cream Red Cream*, 1973. Why give up the figure, which is the basis of all human life? The figure and the painting of the figure can never go out of style. The body and the way the body is seen, and dressed is constantly evolving. And I mean that politically, socially, thus it makes an inexhaustible subject for the painter. As political human relations evolve so does the human figure as subject because its always beings seen in a contemporary way and in fact can not be truly experienced in any other way.

There is however another human impulse and need that is also constant and that is the need for abstraction, which I believe is bound up with a need for spiritual ecstasy. I believe that there is an abstract rhythm and structure that runs parallel to all life. And that unconsciously binds us together. There are countless examples that are in cultures old and new, which you know probably as well as I do. So, I don't illustrate those partly because we don't have time and I'm here to talk about my work. I only bring it up in the beginning of my talk to help you understand the thinking and beliefs that lie behind my decision first to paint, that's very important, and second to paint abstract. It's what the Aboriginal artists in Australia refer to as a song of life. And the song of life can only be sung visually as abstract. So, I was in a fairly formal figurative painting tradition for a while working out of German Expressionism, French painting and so on. And it was very painful in a sense to give up the relationship to the figure and you will see as time goes by, as I talk about my work how this has influenced the character of my abstraction. It's given it a certain quality that makes it somewhat distinctive.

The painting on the right is layered grids and comes from my relationship with patternmaking in exotic cultures, for us anyway, such as Morocco and Northern Africa generally. So it comes from this idea of the rhythmical and ecstatic feeling

that comes from, provoked by patternmaking, which is very big, physically enormous in parts of the world. You'll see a couple more around the same period. This was painted in 72' *Orange Slide*, *Diagonal Inset* in 73'. Now as you see the painting on the left *Orange Slide* it's made with grids but the grids in fact slide. They are out of sync, out of rhythm, so it is very complicated. It's not any longer simply a question of concrete or what they call in Europe *Konkrete Kunst*. It's not a simple grid it's a cacophonous grid, layers and layers and layers of information. These paintings are not very well known in America, they've hardly been shown. The one on the right is the first or second attempt in a sense to insert the figure again and I mean that symbolically or metaphorically. The triangle at the top stands for the insertion of another body into a field. So, I'm not simply accepting all over painting. This has in fact to be a fight that I've been in for a long time, with myself of course. All over painting or not all over painting, to embrace it or to submit to it and then question it, and to put back the figure. To insert the relationship and to fight once again for the way things are built in the world, one thing against another.

On the left is a very, very beautiful painting by Malevich, *Suprematism*, it's called 1915. On the right is a painting by myself that I made when I first came to the United States. So, when I first came to the United States I, in a sense burned bridges and that is in a sense why I believe I stayed here. Because most people they come here, they stay for a while and then when it gets really, how can I put this, brutal, uncultivated, inhuman, Darwinian perhaps is the best term, it's a Darwinian culture America when it gets emphatically Darwinian most people that come from Europe tend to go back to Europe. And I made it impossible for myself by symbolically burning out of my work everything except the horizontal line. These paintings are made of different kinds of blacks with thin horizontal lines on top. That's called *Horizontal Grey Black Diptych*, 1976. The Malevich is around about a little after the time of the Russian revolution. And it represents the idea that we can overwhelm borders and we can make an international family with an idea. And that idea of course was Marxism, human family. So therefore we want to make a contemporary language and this point in our evolution has affected me dramatically. And I am from the sixties, not that the Russian revolution took place in the sixties. But the second wave, in fact the last romantic gasp of internationalism took place in the sixties, I would assert. People were trying to speak for example Esperanto, Esperanto being a mongrel conglomeration of various languages whereby we would be able to communicate with each other as brothers and sisters. We would no longer be divided by tribalism, which leads ultimately to nationalism. And this thought, this ideal, the idea that we can in fact be a unified family has affected me, dramatically. And this I think forced me into being an abstract painter, because I believed in it. I believe that we can communicate with abstract shapes, abstract forms and this would somehow bind us together. And this is what I'm still working on.

The one on the right is not by me. Now I never really liked Andy Warhol's work much but as a figure he interests me. There's a slippage in his work and I think

that the slippage, bad registration creates a psychological space. He is in a fact, in a way a society portrait artist. I saw a show of his recently at Gagosian and to me it looks more or less like wallpaper. But what interests me about him is him as a character, as a human being, as a totality. So that work is him, he is the work and the space between the artist and the work becomes in a sense indivisible. It's a total mindset. A total attitude that creates a work of art that is the natural consequence of that, almost, Of course one could argue that all artists are very much like their work. But I would say some artists are more like their work than others. That's not to say that artists who have distance are not as good. I don't say that. But I do think that it's a 20th century phenomenon, this closing of the gap. And I will go into that more. This in a sense has been very important to me and I see myself very much as an artist like this, who works and who produces almost organically artworks. By the way I wanted to tell you the one on the left, mine is a mirror. It's called *Mirror*. And that's a mirror. This also raises the difficulty of abstraction of course it raises its possibility and its difficulty. It's difficulty is that you can't refer to anything that's already famous. It's not a coincidence of course that the paintings of Andy Warhol that are the most famous are of the ones of the famous subjects. And that is of course true of all the society portrait painters. So it seems to me that if you disassociate yourself from that connection to something that's already famous, Marilyn is already famous she doesn't need Andy Warhol to make her more famous although one could argue that she's now more famous because of Andy Warhol and Andy Warhol is certainly more famous because of her, but if you take that away from yourself you gain a certain freedom, psychological freedom, emotional freedom, which is what I'm looking for in my work. Then you give up the connection to things. So the question is how to gain an audience or how to maintain an audience, how to gather an audience around an abstract body of work. As much as I like for example Malevich, who I like a lot more than I like Andy Warhol, I would have to concede that he might have a smaller audience. His work has a remoteness to it. That doesn't prove that it's not as good of course but in the end art has to in some way mean something to people. So these are the kind of questions I'm always playing around with.

The other thing I wanted to bring up was the relationship between Campbell's soup and Andy Warhol, Heinz 57' and Andy Warhol. So, with Heinz 57' you can eat pinto beans, baked beans, French beans, chickpeas, big peas, so on and so on. It doesn't really matter. What matters is that it's Heinz 57'. And Heinz 57' homogenizes and dominates the subject so that sense Heinz and Campbell's is like art. It's like a style of art. He's doing the same thing. One can argue that I'm doing the same thing, which brings me to the point of the hand and sensibility. And I would argue that when you introduce the hand, the possibility for the evolution, the very slow evolution of a way of working is complicated by the hand. Because then you've got the mind, the heart and the hand so in a sense an exulted sense of craft and this can gradually imitate nature in the way that it slowly evolves.

While I'm doing my thing, I'll show you something else lest you get bored. Now here is something I read in *The Sun*, which I thought was kind of interesting, by David Cohen, who I like a lot.

“Something about abstract painting attracts dogmatic criticism. Figurative painting is understood to belong to millenia-long traditions in which so much is possible that a degree of pluralism is inevitable. And yet, despite abstract painting's rich 100-year history, with roots deep into visual culture beyond that brisk century, its champions still fall for the habit of issuing damning strictures as to what abstract painting is, should be, and ought not to be.

So, if you happen to support artists who make romantic, swirling, spatially ambiguous paintings, just let it be known in no uncertain terms that an opposite mode, such as diagrammatic flatness for instance, is anathema. The blame for this mode of criticism, by the way, lies with abstract painting itself. With so much emphasis on starkly specific formal means, abstract painting often feels didactic — as if its line of inquiry is a program or an agenda — in a way that is less likely to apply to painting with pictorial subject matter.”

That's a very good point. I spent five years teaching recently and I had conceptual artists in my class, photographers, sculptors, no sculptor, figurative artists, abstract artists in equal measure. So, I really don't make a distinction. And I'm really not interested in these strange restrictions that people put on what is acceptable, what's not acceptable. I think it comes from this idea of formalism, which in fact is in a sense worn out. And what I would like to show a little bit, anyway indicate is the possibility that an art form any art form and in this case abstract painting evolves and can evolve in ways that are unusual if it can be allowed to do so. If the folds between hard positions can be seen as harboring potential is the way that I would put it.

These come from a period where my work was rather disciplined in the early 80's. Still in America, still looking for a way to move abstract paintings forward. So I start to improvise on the grid. So I use broken up areas, broken up zones one against the other. The one on the left is called *Italian*. And the other on the right is called *Fort*. Where the system is broken, a little bit. This shows the beginning of some things, which become much more full blown in the 80's. These were painted around 1980, I think, yeah 1980. The one on the right, those are four little canvases so I start to paint and put things together the way that collage artists did.

The one on the left is Jasper Johns, *White Flag*, 55'. A very beautiful painting and extremely iconic. The one on the right is *Maesta* by myself, painted in 83'. And the one on the left the John's painting, is a painting that uses, as Andy Warhol uses, something that already exists and something that's already famous. You drive through the suburbs of America and depending on how much you like seeing the American flag that will determine how long you can drive through the

suburbs of America. I myself can't put up with it for very long but I never liked uniforms all that much. However the American flag is extremely famous already as an icon. And what Johns does as a figurative painter, not an abstract painter is try to have it both ways. Well in fact he does have it both ways because the painting is extremely beautiful in the way it's painted referring to Cezanne I suppose. And Suprematism in a way, it has the concreteness of Suprematism. And the pictorial complexity of old master paintings. And there you have it all. A very beautiful painting. And my painting is flag like. Three panels very heavily painted kind of bashed together, moved around. There was a lot of free wheeling improvisational experimentation going on at the time. The middle panel is sculptural of course sticking out. And the two whites are not the same. The one on the right and on the left are not the same, but they hug the blue and red panel in the center in a kind of desperate physical embrace. And it's flag like, but it's a flag for a country that doesn't exist. It's not a flag that does exist, that signifies a profound difference between the frontality of the Johns, which represents a subject that already is there. And the near emblematic or the emblematic quality of my painting that is near flag like, that is it reminds you of something that doesn't actually exist in the real world.

These paintings follow the paintings the other two paintings that I showed you before where I now tried very hard to open it up. One is called *Adoration*, 82'. One is called *Backs and Fronts*, 81'. So what I was doing at this time was trying to reestablish relationships without being forced to paint them into place. Because I wanted to break with what I knew about modulation, conciliation, painting of a relationship.

Maybe I'll refer to a couple of quotes here that I want to read to you. You know I'm very interested in philosophers and a couple of philosophers are quite interested in my paintings. Because I feel I move things around the way philosophers move words around. They move words around like stones. Theodor Adorno, one of the most important philosophers in post war Germany and was a teacher of, I'll remember in a minute, he says, "The half understood and the half experienced is not a precursor to education or formation or cultivation, but its deadly enemy". So, my position is that all things are possible or are in the hand of different people. But I believe to understand something with profundity its consequences all the way through, from the front to back, from back to front is vital. In other words, I agree with that remark. That I think that the half experience doesn't really get at anything. So, I am an artist that is in a sense, sacrificial, self-sacrificial. This is the point that I wish to make today in terms of style. So, that the separation between the person and the thing that's being painted becomes so deep, as I said before with the element of the hand, which is essential in painting, it's transformed. But it's not transformed formally necessarily. But it is never the less capable of being transformed.

Now Nietzsche who so many artists like to quote, myself included writing around 1875 says, "that there might be an order or structure in the world which we are

incapable of capturing". And this is something I believe in. So I've written a little thing here for you. "My attempt is to hold it, as one might hold a living bird and this largely accounts for the difference between my work and my contemporaries." And I'm talking about artists who are more committed to geometry. "I do not subscribe to the grip of extreme geometry. I would call what I do a breathing order. Thus, my work must be impure and deeply nuanced. I'm striving to express this possible order whilst allowing it to breathe and to be available to multiple interpretations. As I said before in the title of my paintings a kind of a mirror, a kind of breathing mirror is the way I would describe it. So, it's ultimately poetic.

The one on the left is called *Molloy*. The one on the right is *No Neo*. These two are full-blown 80's paintings. And there I was kind of in my stride, both painted in 84'. And I would paint sections. It was a very, very free, very exciting, physical. I would paint them in a way that I thought Van Gogh could paint stripes almost. Extremely passionately put together always, always of course with stripes, insistently so. But the stripes don't make any sense mathematically. Everything is made out of feeling, including the color. However they retain a relationship with Constructivism. But the relationship they contain with Constructivism is wayward. It's renegade in some way. Or the paintings don't really make sense and they're not trying to arrive at sense. Maybe a kind of order but a difficult order an argumentative order. And again, things are slammed together very passionately, insistently painted. And there's no space in the painting. I'm not painting space, I'm not depicting space. I'm painting realities but passionately so.

You know I love Mexico, been there eleven times. Hence my regular visits to the dermatologist. The painting of mine on the left is called *Falling Wrong*, 1985. The painting on the right is *Murphy* 1984. So you see the things that I'm referring to in these paintings with titles, the titles are very important to me, are a little crazy. I'm not referring to anything that's got much to do with order. So, what I'm doing in a sense is misusing the language of order. *Falling Wrong* seems like something that could be out of Beckett but it's not. But it has the same kind of attitude. So *Falling Wrong* is better than falling right so to speak. And falling wrong is interesting. So the wrongness in the painting is as interesting as the rightness. This is a very difficult position of course to maintain in terms of quality, or to make a convincing painting. But what I also wanted to say also before is that banality, the Johns painting is very banal, as if living in America you know you need to see another American flag, banality is very important in contemporary art, like Campbell's soup cans. And the reason it is important is because it's true. Whether you like it or you don't like it is not really so interesting, but it's true. Carl Andre's work is somehow very true. And one lives in a world, we all live in a world of banality. We all live in a world where everything is the same. Where everything is put together the same way. So what I'm doing which is different from let's say a lot of current younger figurative artists are doing. Which is more obviously to do with fantasy. I'm using this language, this banal language. I'm

using this and I'm misusing it. But I think we have to understand it in some way. We have to deal with it cause it's what we are what we've made.

So I write here, "The commonality of our contemporary culture we see, the same thing again and again, that includes the American flag displayed obsessively as a way of binding people together in America. But we are equally bound as Warhol understood by brand names, Exxon, Colgate, Ford, Mercedes, and Tropicana orange juice. This is our life. It's made of repetition. No matter who we are rich or poor, we use the same toothpaste and the same gasoline." Isn't that nice? So even if you're a poor man you can share something with a very rich person, brand names.

The painting on the right *Murphy* is obviously referring to Becket. And it has in it a sense of body and a sense of figure. And a sense of a figure somehow being trapped being pushed down but fighting its way out. And that's that strip at the bottom. And the relationships in these paintings are always a little off, a little awkward, everything mismatched, like a bad suit, a bad anything, or a car with the wrong size wheels. The painting on the left is called *The Fall*. It's a huge painting with a tremendous weight at the top that's coming down into the bottom of the painting and the bottom of the painting is rising up so it's very combative, as a composition. And all these paintings, I must stress are made free form in a way. They're shape paintings but they're not predetermined shape paintings. They're shape paintings arrived at organically. And the nearest parallel, cousin I can think of, in a sense, is perhaps, Rauschenberg's combines, they seem to be made organically. But most other abstract shaped paintings tend to be made from the outside in. Mine are made inside out, by adding, taking off, adding on and taking away, turning the painting around, which I did with all these paintings. I was twisting them around, adding, taking off pieces, repainting,, putting them back together. It was all very, very free.

Painting on the right is called *Come In*. And when was that painted? That was 83'. Diane Waldman who was senior curator at the Guggenheim, came to my studio with this very young, very vibrant curator called Susan Taylor. And they were looking at this painting. And of course for me, being a young painter, it was a momentous occasion, that the grand dame from the Guggenheim would visit my studio. And that didn't stop me though from messing it up. So she, Diane Waldman said "ah yes come in, this relates to architecture." In other words, she was looking as she would do, be inclined to, for order, for rationality. I told her the story of how the painting got its name, which I will tell you very quickly. It comes from a visit from a friend of mine who had just read something about Joyce and Beckett. He visited my studio and therefore he's an insert into my studio. And he told me when Joyce was dictating to Becket, Becket was writing it down, someone had knocked on the door and Joyce said, "Come in". Becket wrote down, "Come in". So you know it's like we went to the beach and we were just getting out of the 'come in' car and we all got out. So the next day they were going over it and they had an argument about this 'come in' thing. And Becket said, 'you said it so it has to be in' and Joyce said, 'okay, leave it in'. So you read

this text and it just says 'come in' and then it goes on. I thought it was a fantastic way of titling the painting so I called it *Come In*. so, by the time I explained all this I realized Diane Waldman was not going to buy one of my paintings for the Guggenheim because it didn't fit. And this is what I refer to in the beginning about this division of the rational and the irrational, the organic and the geometric. And I'm not interested in this at all. I've tried to just use both and I've been interested in both and I've practiced both particularly early on. Because my work is basically geometric looking, but the sense of the painting is that there isn't really much sense to it. Because I draw this panel left and I slam it up against something that's painted on the right. And it looks kind of interesting, but you can't really understand what it is. This relates back to what I was saying about Warhol. It's the slippage thing that creates a psychological freedom. That's what's interesting about Marilyn, it's off and because it's off it's a little bit it's fascinating because you're always trying to straighten it up. You know it's a like a picture on a wall that's crooked and then you straighten it and then you go and get coffee and then it goes like that again. That's kind of irritatingly engaging. Anyway this is what I was doing in the 80's, and some people liked it. Ned Rifkin liked it. Some people didn't.

These are not mine. The Pollack is *Number 1*. That's in the galleries if you'd like to have a look at it. Van Gogh, 1890, *Wheatfield with Crows*. These are two artists who exemplify the issues that I'm talking about when I talk of immersion. Also with Van Gogh there's no space in the painting. All the spaces are crowded out. It's all rhythm; it's all desperation, it's all utter identification. The space between the artist and the painting is closed down to the point where the artist is the painting. And I think that's part of Van Gogh's importance, he's a precursor to a very strong tendency in twentieth century art. Which is a deep psychological attachment to be in and of the work. Exemplified by people like Joseph Bueys who is again, a very, very interesting character. You can't be more in the painting than Pollack who is literally on the painting. Walking around on the painting, dancing on the painting.

This is a sculpture I'm making. When I started to make this sculpture, somebody asked me to make it, referring back to the point I made about the kind of art you make should be as you are, a consequence of what you are. When I started to make this sculpture, there was no question of how it would be for me. There was no question of style. In other words there wasn't a stylistic problem is what I want to say. I made a *Wall of Light* painting cubed. It's enormous and the only two things that I can think of when I saw it, that represents 10% of it, and that's the maquette by the way, was Jackson Pollack and Finnegan's Wake. Because it seemed to me to be utterly non-negotiating. It's bestial in a sense. It's geometric but it's bestial. And the stones that make up the drawing are running right through the sculpture. I think I'm going to speed up cause I might fall over soon. I'm weaker than I look.

Okay I'm going to the nineties now, *Why What Yellow*, 88', *Pale Fire*, 88'. So the end of the eighties my paintings started to flatten out. And instead of making paintings figurative, figural or with body, with the body of the box of the painting, I started to put windows in. And the windows, the insets were painted separate to the painting and then put into the painting, to disturb or violate or puncture the field, to make an intrusion in the field. And to make a figurative figure ground relationship. That's what I'm doing and that's what I refer to and return to here. I'm using again the concreteness of *Konkrete Kunst* in a way, and the pattern making I took from Northern Africa. And the deep romantic tradition of light filled colored surfaces. So the surfaces are at once weighted and lit to a degree. The paintings are quite physical but not as emphatically sculptural as they were earlier on in the eighties. So again this is another, I consider this to be another break in my work. And all the time the way that I paint, the way that I was painting and the way that I draw is very subtly changing. Without me even noticing it very much.

The painting on the left is called *Long Light* painted in the nineties. And the painting on the right is called *Between You and Me*. So this is again about distended relationships, broken relationships, provisional and difficult, damaging damaged relationships. As you can see, the little panel on the painting on the right is isolated with a frame. It's a rough wooden frame and it's on a field that's made up of the same stuff. It's the stuff that the right inset is made of. So everything is being cannibalized and twisted. Instead of actually making a different sort of structure I am using the same stuff but hoping to metamorphosis it. Change what it is, change what it signifies, by where it is and how it's painted, the proportions and so on. And you have this sense of distance near, far, detailed, massive. And this almost looks like a snowscape the one on the left I'm talking about.

Manet's, *Dead Toreador* and the other painting *To Be With* painted in 96' is a study in grey. So just to touch on this issue of Spanish painting, Manet who I, we all consider to be a great artist refers to Riberra, Velasquez, and Spanish painting way back. But he transforms it to his own subject. And this is what painting can do. It can reinvent itself all the time. But the influence on Manet on me is quite profound in the hand, in the speed of the brushstroke. It has in it a reserve, which I find noble. And the reserve in the painting is obviously a classicizing impulse, which I have myself, strongly in me. There's also a melancholia in this color, in this color grey. And he was of course was a master of it, as was Velasquez. And as I would like to be. So this painting this huge triptych, took a couple of years to make and it's a study in grey. And they grey between things, between hard positions is very interesting to me. In art and in life, which of course are the same. Since wverything is the same. Everything is connected to everything else. Anyway he's a great painter of grey who refers back in his own time and forward. When I started painting in 1970 lets say seriously, painting was dead and conceptual art was very dominant. I remember I first came to the United States and met another Harkness fellow, cause I came

over on a Harkness Fellowship, and he was an artist. And He asked me if I was painting. And I said, "No." And he said, "Oh good." And I said "No, I'm not painting cause I'm looking for a studio." It's not because I gave it up or anything like that. But in the seventies people would be walking backwards and forwards through tunnels making videos of it, and so on and so forth, showing time. Very similar to some of the things that go on now in video. And a lot of the video we see around now was pioneered in the sixties. I believe that one thing doesn't replace another, it has nothing to do with it in a sense, there independent. And painting, as you all know has returned with a vengeance. And most of it is European. And I believe that this has something to do with absence of the domination in their cultural syntax of formalism. That the greys, and I use this terms of position and psychology of understanding things, allowing things to develop are more prevalent there, particularly in Germany. And that's where so much good painting is coming from. And the other thing I would say, while I'm on my little soapbox is America doesn't have enough what I would call halfway museums, for young artists. There's a lot of power museums and they're fantastic art palaces that show the best and the greatest and these are wonderful. But these lower museums, second class, third class museums are not abundant enough. Maybe it's because they're not heroic, and this is essentially a heroic culture.

Painting on the left is *Union Green*, 94' again a very heavily painted diptych, one side dialoging with another side. Returning to this idea of the relationship. The painting on the right I painted in Barcelona. It's called *Sea Wall*. This is a painting that took about a year. As you can see it's a blanket of grey that holds down what was essentially a red painting, holds it captive.

The painting on the left is *Dark Wall*, that's very recent. I painted that in Germany. The painting on the right is *Wall of Light Tara*, painted in 2000. This is a very interesting painting to me because it started out as a yellow painting. And as I would go away and come back, I would look at the painting again and I love go away, and then I love to come back. And I like to be able to go away and get something and to return and give it to the painting, which is waiting. So the painting has a time to live in that state and I have time to contemplate the painting. And I have a time to reflect on it, to change in some way, in the way human being might change slightly. And as I looked at the painting, after not seeing it for about ten months on one occasion, I started working on the painting again *Tara* and then I started to remove the yellows. Until the painting had reached the point it was almost a grey painting, but not quite. And the yellow in the painting it stands for something other. It refers to another feeling, another sense, the world, of nature. And the grey is of course a much more of a melancholic sense. What I would say in relation to this issue persistence and style, I would say that things change over time if you are in a way, in a sense devoted. And I work in a way that's devoted. There's no space between me and the paintings. I'm making the paintings, thinking about the paintings, doing the paintings all the time. And yet the way that I paint has changed dramatically

throughout my life without really changing the element that's being painted. And this is really another possibility for painting.

That's a nice painting on the left. It's the *Last Supper*, 1498. The painting on the right is *Raphael* by me 04'. So, I thought it would be nice to, you know, I thought you'd like this, cause it's kind of an Italian theme. That refers to Raphael of Urbino who of course was the ultimate bridge builder, the great classicizer. And this painting, which I actually just got to see, is an extraordinarily beautiful painting. It really is one of the wonders of the world. What's also interesting about this painting, in relation to art history and people reputations at the time, is that you'll see there's a door in it. And at the other end of the banqueting hall, where Leonardo's painting is, is a painting by another artists that nobody bothers to look at anymore. And it's really quite tragic to see it. I mean its quite a nice painting, it's chaotic in its composition but it does not have a door in it. This implies, to me at least, being a fairly political person that Leonardo was willing to have a doorway in his painting. Thus the other guy must have been more important, cause he's got the whole wall. If you look at this painting the figures are animated. Well if you look at my painting, and I'll talk about Leonardo's painting. You see the figures are animated but the architecture is relentless. And it is so awesomely monumental. A little like the architecture of Peter Zumthor, who is a current architect, a wonderful architect. Hugely and massively monumental and everything leads to Jesus, to the head of Jesus. So there's a relentlessly symmetrical painting with a door right in the middle of it by the way, when you see it, cause the door goes right down to the floor. And what humanizes the painting and animates it, is that the head of Jesus is inclined. So, you've got a very subtle subversion of a relentless architectural matrix by the inclination of a head. And if you look at my painting you'll see that, that's not a perfect grid. And I push this way, this way, to break the tyranny of the grid. To make movement in the painting that is very subtle.

The painting on the left is a triptych, and that's a new painting it's called *Iona*. Because three is a perfect number, we'll never get over it. And it allows you to have something in the middle, and something on either side. What could be more perfect? And there's reason of course it runs through a lot of religious art. The panel on the left in *Iona* is blue, you can't really see it from here. And the one in the middle is very orange, a strange orange that's stained into the other colors, inhabits these creams in some strange way. And then the painting on the right is really more brown with red underneath it. So there are all these subtle connections between things. And I would say that my art as emblematic, as it is architecturally masculine as it is, is extremely feminine in the way that it is colored and in the way the architecture is subverted and humanized by detail. As they say, 'God is in the details.' So this painting gives off a different feel from panel to panel as you walk from one side to the other. It's very big. So one on the left is much more like the sea, the feeling of sea. And then there's the earth in the center, and the other end is more like clay, the color of clay. And I wanted to juxtapose that, with another very recent painting called *Vladimir*. This is an

obvious dedication to Beckett who wrote I think undoubtedly the best, most beautifully crafted play in the twentieth century, *Waiting for Godot*. Vladimir is a character in the play. And the space in this painting is considerably less frontal than the space in *Raphael* or the space in those paintings *Iona*. It's a lot more, un-filled out, one might say. It doesn't make the facade that a lot of the other paintings make, that give a little, this gives a lot. The space in this is extremely elastic. It has deep space, big holes in it. And the painting it seems to be more chaotic. And like Vladimir himself, badly dressed.

So just to finalize I would say that, to return to the issue of universality, 'we will achieve this willingly or not, we all share the same earth, we all breathe the same air, as JFK so poignantly articulated. And one way or another, willingly or not, we will come to understand that we are all one.' So this is my agenda, politically and artistically it is to, in a sense nuance abstraction so it can move forward.

You've been a lovely audience. You haven't interrupted me once and I can't tell you how much I appreciated that. Thank you.