Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Edward Warder Rannells, 1965 June 2

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Edward Warder Rannells on 1965 June 2. The interview was conducted by Harlan Phillips for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose. This is a rough transcription that may include typographical errors.

Interview

HARLAN PHILLIPS: I think we ought to put a kind of flooring of a personal nature in this.

EDWARD RANNELLS: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: These records will be at the archives of American Art and they will be available for scholars in the history of art, or some sociologists who are interested in comparative studies, even anthropologists. There may be something of value in here for them. Psychologists too, all the social sciences I think will find something of value in the collection. If you were asked to account for yourself – how does one enter or what is the effective push that projects you into a creative field? It is a difficult question.

MR. RANNELLS: You mean go back to my childhood?

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, I'm interested. Here you are. You've had a long experience, and I am thinking of the person who is going to come on the scene that neither one of us is going to see. They will hold up this document and say to themselves "Well you had a life, you lived a life, what have you got to say to me?" and to help him understand the nature of the judgment that you exercise requires more than a simple judgment about specific things. How it came to be and what the illusive, the hidden links are, in a way, towards ones own development are helpful. So, if you could give me some clues of a personal nature as to Missouri – a fantastic place.

MR. RANNELLS: Well, I can do that, although I hesitate to say too much about myself, but I was born on a farm in Missouri five miles over rock bolder roads to town. My mother and the family; at that time there was myself the older child and a sister a little younger than I, she always wanted to get back home which was Springfield, Ohio. She was a woman with a mother complex and the mother lived to be 94 or so.

My father was a man without education, but he had a rich outdoor experience and he knew horses and he knew how to farm and we had a good farm. But I was kept out of school. I didn't enter school until we went on a visit to my Grandmother's in Springfield, Ohio, and I entered school the day I was 12. So, I was retarded by 6 years and this lasted through life. After that, my father felt that he could make a better living in the mining business in Idaho. So we packed up everything including a couple of pinto ponies that had come off the Sioux battlefield in the '80s and shipped them out to Idaho. From then, what with traveling back to Ohio because of grandmother's sinking health – she lived for another 20 years – I went to school never a whole year in any one town, or in any one state in succession. I went to school in Idaho, in Ohio, in Missouri – that was during the World's Fair of 1904 and by that time I was in the 7th grade, I think. I finished up ultimately in Boise, Idaho.

MR. PHILLIPS: You had a hyphenated education.

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, I managed to get all this distance centering around the multiplication tables. But I had enough marbles. I did well enough in school. Then I went to high school in Boise, Idaho. I worked my way through there. I would go into mountain valleys during haying season carrying a bedroll and I did that until I graduated from high school. By that time my father had gone on another venture. This was a real estate town site development in southwestern Washington, and we moved to Portland. Rather that was where the business headquarters was, but before that we'd been in Albany and up the Willamette Valley from Portland. Then we moved there because my father lost his life in an accident in this town site. There were four or five other men in a launch, and it suddenly hit a piling and sank, and he never made it ashore. Two men were lost in that. He was then about 49. I was then about 20 and – 20 or 21 – and by this time there was another child, a brother 10 years younger than I, and so here I was left the head of the household with a very small job and we just struggled along.

All this time my father had urged me to go to school and both he and my mother thought I had talent. I dabbled with drawing all my life. But I reasoned that poor as I was, I couldn't do anything of this kind, and besides I had a romantic view of art that it called for sacrifices and I wasn't willing to make them. I wanted to have a dollar to rub against a dollar. I'd done all kinds of things. I'd worked on construction jobs and logging camps and so on.

Finally my mother and the three children moved back to Ohio where I had a job with the Kelly Springfield Tire Company. I had an uncle who was at that time president of it, and I was in the accounting office, cost accounting. Then came the First World War. I served in the infantry for a year and a half. I came back as Sergeant Major. I went to work as a purchasing agent for an incubator plant in Springfield. I found business very distasteful. I wasn't cut out for it.

My younger brother in the meantime had gone to Ohio State which is at Columbus, not far from Springfield, and he said, "Why don't you go to college? It's a cinch. You can work your way through this." I entered there and I was working my way. By the time I was a sophomore, I was an assistant in the department. This was the art department. I thought I was going to be an artist. I was teaching drawing and design and it was a good many years ago now – 45 or 50 years, about 45 – and I shudder to think how sure I was of all my ideas at that time. I gradually outgrew those. From there I went with a man who had been head of the department at Ohio State and then at this time was assistant director at the Art Institute of Chicago and I was an assistant and associate dean of the Art Institute of Chicago for three years. There I married the assistant curator of Oriental art. I realized that every move I hade made, I had gotten to a bigger town. I didn't like that, so I was offered this post at the University of Kentucky in Lexington and all I had was an AB Degree. I came here and again I had to learn on the job. I had no business doing that anymore than I had being an assistant dean. I've never studied psychology, for example, and there were all kinds of psychological personal problems, as you can well imagine. Those are very interesting, but we'll pass it. All this time I became more and more interested in art on an intellectual level and while I did some drawing and painting after I came here, the University of Kentucky was hard-up for money too. We used to say that they held on to a 50-cent piece so tight it bent. I had the problem of staff turnover. We never could pay anybody enough. One after another art history teacher – because I insisted that if you're going to have an art department there had to be art history to balance the studio art courses. I lost one after another. I finally got tired of that and I became a historian – teaching myself the history I know. I had an undergraduate course. I had two summers at Harvard and that was all. We started from nothing, and we still have pretty much the same program we had then. We endeavor to maintain a balance between historical and critical and studio undertakings. The balance keeps shifting but these things are always in it and our graduates have always been majors in art and this has included both areas, and their comprehensive examination covers both areas. Now it was soon after I was here that this – let's see, it was the WPAP first wasn't it? [telephone interruption] I had become acquainted with Siple, who was then director of the Cincinnati Art Museum and who was made a kind of director for this area, Walter Siple. He asked me to take it for Lexington, which I did. We set up four projects and that was pushing the number of artists in this community a great deal. The first one was Anna Louise Rice, who had been in California several years. She was a graduate here and had been a student of mine before she left for California. She married Richard O'Hanlon out there. He is a sculptor. They were home visiting her parents and she was assigned a project to paint a mural in the memorial hall here, a fresco mural. She had worked with some Mexican fresco people in the San Francisco Bay area and Dick, her husband, worked with her. She had various ideas which I showed an interest in but she finally realized that this was Kentucky and this was Lexington and what we were interested in was history. So she worked out a design that symbolized and in some sense illustrated the whole series of historical incidents in this neighborhood from the arrival of the pioneers through early trouble with the Indians, the founding of Transylvania University – some indication of science – school houses, the first newspaper in the community and so forth. And bringing it down to the civil war period or as they say in this part of the world, the War Between the States. I said, "Why did you stop here?" She said, "Nothing has happened since." This was true at the time. Well, that project was absorbing and it has proved to be interesting especially to the old timers that can recognize the situations in it. There is a certain amount of stylization that gives it a formal character, and it was an acceptable mural.

MR. PHILLIPS: Did you have to find this space?

MR. RANNELLS: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: And negotiate with the University?

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, I'd forgotten many of the ramifications of that, but at that time our President was Frank L. McVey who was interested in art and was an amateur painter. He was sympathetic and helpful, and I was able to find the space. Another space I found was in the new library in what was then called the browsing room, a room which is five times as long as it is wide with windows along one side, and on each end there are two murals. Now for this I went to Berea [KY], forty miles from here, and interested Frank W. Long in doing that mural. He is a good craftsman and I have known him when he was a student briefly at the Art Institute in Chicago. He was essentially an outdoor man, a back country man who knew the mountains of Eastern Kentucky. As an outdoor man, he was a hunter. He knew all the trails. It is an experience to go through the woods with Frank and have him identify everything and notice everything. He had been in Paris for a year, and there he had seen some murals in a café by – I can't think of the name of the Russian artist who was an émigré in Paris at the time, after the war, but there were motifs in what he saw there that were carried over as a kind of a sparkling of what he did here. There was no copying of course. He was several years away from these things. But he had the problem of painting in an area which was not horizontal as it had been in the Memorial Building

so that you could put things in strata starting at the bottom and moving up to the top. It was a vertical space about 8 feet wide and 14 feet high with an arched top which echoed the arches of the widows on the long side. He was a skillful carpenter and built a frame for this and prepared his own canvas and ground his own paints and painted these pictures in oil. One of these deals mostly with the pioneers breaking into the wilderness and the other is more recent, the culture which is, as he expresses it, dulcimer music, square dancing, going to school, reading, and to church at the top. Frank was a pretty independent man, and we had to persuade him that one of his proposals wouldn't do because it used the motif of stills and revenuers and six shooters, the general theme of violence, so he turned to this other motif that went up to the church at the top. I remember it took all afternoon to persuade him to try something else. Now both these people, Anna Louise Rice, or Mrs. O'Hanlon, and Frank Long have continued their art careers. Dick O'Hanlon is teaching sculpture at Berkley at the University. Anna has taught craft work, weaving mostly, to school teachers in the Bay area all these years. I don't think she'd done any painting. She is a fine craftsman. They live in Mill Valley. Frank Long struggles along in Berea. He painted murals for post offices on the WPA in Berea, Morehead Kentucky, in a place in Indiana and another one somewhere down further south. There were four or five of these and also in the post office in Louisville. I can't think of the name of that town in Indiana. These were all conventional WPA murals, but he wasn't really making a living at this. In the meantime he married and had a little place near Berea. What he decided to do was to make use of his hands. Frank Long was incidentally a self-taught man who never reads any trivia, only top books and has an incredible memory. I've heard him quote whole pages out of James Joyce and Thomas Wolfe without any hesitation. There are things that he read years ago. Well, Frank went out to Arizona and spent a year in a course on Lapidary art, set himself up as a silversmith and jeweler, and still wasn't making a living, and so he went to work with the Indian Service, or the Department of the Interior and went first to Alaska and was there 3 years. Then he was in the southeast for a year and since that time has been stationed in New Mexico. He is Director of Indian Arts and Crafts project in the southwest. His territory causes him to range over five states and the states are big out there – New Mexico, Arizona, the southern half of Utah, Colorado, Nevada and the southern half of California. He actually devotes most of his time to New Mexico and Arizona because that's where most of the Indians are. I saw him just two or three days ago. He was on his way to Washington to a staff meeting. He is a valuable man in this service. He publishes occasionally in magazines which I don't read. I see his articles only when he sends me clippings. It is likely to be some craft magazine. I don't subscribe to them. I mean I don't take those magazines. I have enough to read as it is. He is trying hard to do two things for the Indian Service. One is to get a census made. There should be the possibility of getting money for this and this census taking would hope to be done by people who live in the community. In other words, a man who understands Indians and can talk to the head man Indian who will make the census because anyone coming in from the outside dealing with these people, they have found themselves on the short end of the stick too often. They are likely to be suspicious also. Many of them are on government relief of some kind, and they feel that this would undercut that. Actually what they'll make from their craft work will not be enough to affect their earnings. Now, if this census can be made so that when requests for an increase in the budget comes before a Congressional Committee, the first question they ask is how many people are involved in this economy and how many of them are there. They would be able to say how many. They've been guessing all these years. Another thing he is trying to do is he hoped to have an assistant so we can expand this project – meanwhile he has a studio, carries on his trade as a silversmith and does very well as finely trained people that these things are not inexpensive, so he doesn't have to exhibit his works along with arts and crafts, Indian work, but sells direct to good people. Now, I've made a long story of these people, both who had done fine things in art since their work on the PWAP. Now, there were two others. One was a man named Clyde Fouchou [phonetic] who did frames, things of this sort. He'd been trained at the Art Institute under a man whom I admired. I thought he was competent and so he was assigned a mural for the school here in town called the Ashlin [phonetic] School, I believe. It is near here. I haven't seen the mural since the first year after it was done. It dealt with some local historical scene. It was not very good. The other man was a commercial artist and he had a project that sounded pretty good, but this man was a heavy drinker who was drinking the amount that I paid him from month to month. I took care of the payrolls. I had to cut him off. So, out of the entire project of four – there was a committee of three but they let me do the chores – was this one mural at the school house and two at the University. This may be selfish but they were the ones that panned out. Now Fouchou died a few years after that so there was no more art career to mention for him. He was older than the other two, a man then of about 40 I believe. They were then in their 30's and he would be late 40's. So, that's the PWAP in Lexington.

MR. PHILLIPS: It was rather a short lived program wasn't it?

MR. RANNELLS: Yes. Then it went to the WPA and Frank Long continued on that and Mrs. O'Hanlon may have in California too. I don't know. Now, as sort of a parallel to this, about the time that she went to California, there was some more family out there in Barou County, her sister married Clifford Amyx. Amyx went out to California, went to school at The California Arts and Crafts. He had his degree from here. He had been a brilliant student here, especially interested in philosophy, but at the California School of Arts and Crafts, he was a painter and when the WPA project came on, he was – I don't know exactly what his office was, but he was the curator or director, or something of the kind for the San Francisco area. His job was to go to tax supported institutions,

mostly schools, all through northern California. I don't know that he got down to southern California. I think the state was divided. Any number of artists who we know of now were on that project out there. As a matter of fact, Mrs. O'Hanlon was I know and probably her husband Dick at that time. I'm not sure. Benny Bufano was and there were others. There was one man whom I haven't heard from since, who did some magnificent symbolic lithographs dealing with the depression period, a man named [Boris] Gorelik. I think they were pretty good, but be that as it may, Amyx worked there for some years. Then I persuaded him to return here, and he is now a full professor in the department who has been acting head from time to time as we do here, changing heads of the department. He was acting all last year. He was one of the recognized first rate men in the College, and he was published in the *Journal of Aesthetics* and the *College Arts Journal.* He was in Amsterdam last summer, had a paper there. He also has appeared at Aesthetics meetings elsewhere, Brooklyn, Oberlin, Berkley, all the time. He is generally rated as an aesthetician. He is a very fine craftsman, a pretty good painter, and a good scholar. So these people who got their start in one small way or another, managed to do things. Neither Amyx nor I ever went any further than a master's degree, but that doesn't seem to have held us back here because we moved in early.

MR. PHILLIPS: There is something to being on the ground floor.

MR. RANNELLS: Oh yes. Well, that's perfectly true. I took a year off and went to Chicago and took a master's degree. At that time it became quite apparent that we had a new president here at the University – this was after the [Frank L.] McVey period – who was a school man who was interested essentially in public education. He had been head of a teachers college or, as we call it, state college now. He came here as president, and he brought into his office as faculty dean and assistant president, and so on, men who were trained in education. I saw the handwriting on the wall. I thought that the art department couldn't just complain about education, but we'd better inform ourselves about it. So, I took my masters in education, but in Chicago, not at Columbia, or some other place. At that time there was Prescont, Cawld – I should be able to remember the name of two or three other teachers, but they were all first rate men, some of them pretty well along in their career. At that time the head of the department was – well, he was the man who set up the eight year study. So, I was in the middle of things and I did a thesis which has since been written and published by the University and quickly went out of print. Even so, I've been trapped with art education ever since. I get invitations to speak on art education more than anything else.

MR. PHILLIPS: It is an interesting twist, isn't it?

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, what I really should be doing and the things I'm most interested in is art history and criticism, but I have never relaxed my interest in the creative arts. I pay close attention to the work that our painters and sculptors and craftsmen are doing. I frequently write for the newspapers and sometimes for the catalogues. For years in this department we tried never to get anyone who was not experienced in both the fields of creative work and history. Only in the last two or three years, and I've been retired for 15 as department head, have we tried to get painters who are painters, sculptors who are sculptors, and historians who are historians. Historians means trained at Princeton, maybe Columbia, or New York University for advanced studies, or Harvard. So we are in a sellers market now. It is very difficult to get those people. We can get painters. There are too many of them, but not historians. So, Amyx like myself interested himself in history and between us we carried the load for quite a while. Now we have to go out and do it before art historians. And when they come to a community like this – Amyx was a native born Kentuckian – and another man whom I hired about 20 years ago was just on the borders over in West Virginia. These are mountain people, and they understand this kind of state and its economy which is changing now, but all the time we've struggled together in the last 25 or 30 years they knew this state because we've grown up in this kind of country.

I've had – I suppose it would be appropriate to mention it here – in this small school which has never had a staff of more than four or five for 25 years, we've graduated some good people, not many. A number of them have gone ahead in art in one way or another. One of them is – I think she teaches now at Southern Illinois University. She's moved several places. One woman was especially interested in design, very intelligent and very able as a student. She married during the war, was in the West, taught school a while, and then came back and in Chicago she worked for Associated Research Publications because she was good at lithography and layout, things of that kind. Now she is with a design associate firm in Chicago, has a very good income. She does individual projects, styling for corporations and so on. During the international Design Conference in Tokyo several years ago, she was invited out there to present a paper. Same way – they asked her again at Mexico – they had another one of these meetings in Mexico City. So, there is a person who made a career in art, was married twice and had a youngster at the age of 40. So, she has done well on all counts. She lives handsomely in apartments on the Lakeshore, designed by Meis van der Rohe, those tall buildings. Another one was found by one of our staff members, Reinhardt, who was accustomed to going to Mexico every summer and there he found this young man whose father was English and his mother was Spanish. He was born in Spain. At this time he said he was from Guatemala. He was studying in Mexico City. He was persuaded to come here and take his degree here. He did that and went from here to teach at the University of Texas and to teach at the University of Colorado. He has a regular gallery connection in New York and exhibits regularly. So he has made a good

career.

Another one who graduated a few years before that – there were two young people, Kentuckians, both very skillful, and this young woman felt that she just had to make a living, and she would leave no doors unopened. So, she took courses in interior decorating in the home economics department in the college of Agriculture. She studied education in the College of Education. She dabbled with journalism, and I tried my best to persuade her to stop all this nonsense and get a perfectly good AB Degree with philosophy and literature – "- you're too intelligent, you'll never starve." Well, she did her practice teaching here in town and suddenly made a resolve that she couldn't put up with this kind of mentality which is public school education. She said she'd have to get a job in a college. In the meantime this boy and girl had married, and she wrote about ten letters to small colleges which she figured were one man schools. She got answers from eight. She went to Wilmington College in Ohio, a Quaker School, was there on a first name basis with the president and his wife and set up a department. At the end of that year, we were able to get for her a scholarship from the Council of Learning Societies and we sent her to Columbia. She had ideas of what she wanted to do, but they told her, "We'll make your program" and so she was to work in primitive art and her thesis, she received shipments of – I don't know what they were used for – rugs or maybe hangings – mostly printed cloth or painted bark. She worked in the attic of that vast museum and sorted through thousands of these things and came up with a theory, and from there she returned to Louisville and ran the Junior Gallery, a lending exhibition gallery, which actually was on the top floor of the New Public Library. After some years, that didn't work out too well, to her satisfaction, although in the meantime, she had been elected director of the next program of the Museum Directors Association. She resigned and went ahead with that. The next thing she did was to go as director of the Delgado Museum in New Orleans. She was there several years. I never got down there to see them, but I have a daughter who is at the Museum here and she stopped over there once on a trip. She said the Museum is small and the collection limited, but the installation was thoroughly professional. Well, when Tom Walker moved from the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston to the Guggenheim in New York, he telephoned her long distance and said, "I want you to apply for this job." She did and got that job. She has been Director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts every since. I run down these three or four people because their training was with us, and all of them know how to deal with historical and critical and hand problems, and all have done well. I didn't mean to get into that at such length, but those are a few at least of our graduates that we are proud of. There are plenty of others who are teaching, or are assistants in publishing houses, or things of that kind, they are careers which are more or less buried. They are like any other, but these people have made some kind of professional name for themselves.

I have drifted from the WPA and the program of the art department to some of our graduates. I mentioned a while ago that in our program we tried to have a balance between studio and history which I like to call making and knowing. One thing I didn't say because it was fairly new in this part of the world, was when they first began to talk about having a comprehensive examination which is pretty much a matter of form. We failed comprehensives as I suppose many places do, but not until they had been given quite a scare. I thought that we should have a seminar that would attempt to pull together their studio and history experiences, indeed all their college work and to make some kind of synthesis and to build a bridge from being a student to a career of some kind. I've always tried hard to get them to study more languages and more history – to work in the museum field, but this has been hard pushing in Kentucky. Most of them think they want to be painters, or ceramic artists, or something of this sort.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Are you planning a class in here Fred? [interruption]

MR. RANNELLS: For several years, this was quite a burden on the small staff that we had but somehow or other they were willing to do it. The seminar which we called a seminar isn't even as much as a pro-seminar. It is a senior seminar class where we sit around a table and deal with problems not touched upon in any of the formal courses and yet involved in their total college experience. By having all the staff participate in this, it was more of an education for us than it was for the students. Now the seminar is run by one man at a time, and it is rotated. But there always have been critical problems. Our contention was that we already knew what these people knew, or didn't know. The great value of the senior seminar was to give people a conviction about art and enable them to verbalize about it. This latter, superficial as it may seem, has something to do with the success of some of these graduates. They are perfectly capable of holding their own in conversations about literature, or music, or art, or anything of that kind. In other words, they are informed people to the extent that anyone can be informed with an A.B. Degree. Now –

MR. PHILLIPS: One thing intrigues me about this early part of your life. I wonder if there was a religious theme running through it? To skip from Missouri to all these various places, the rootlessness would seem to –

MR. RANNELLS: The rootlessness was only an extension of my father's own career. He, as a young man, had herded cattle all over the Indian Territory, Cherokee Strip, New Mexico, Arizona. He'd gone down into old Mexico at Wann Whata on a mining project, and incidentally had a reputation that I used to hear about when I was a growing boy from these old friends of being the best pistol shot in the Southwest. I can remember when they

got these luger pistols which didn't balance like the old six shooters. They were light in front and had a terrific trajectory. I went on a fishing trip with him once. I was just a boy and anyway we were with one of our fishing companions, and he said, "I believe I still can do it" and he stepped off twenty paces and turned around and with a Luger drove a nail into a post. So, he was a pretty good pistol shot. He wouldn't let me shoot a gun until after I was 21. There had been a fatal accident in his family, and I have a feeling that he didn't think that I would take proper care of a gun anyhow. I was a little heedless. So, I never learned to shoot a gun until I was in the Army, squeeze the trigger method. I made a good record on the target, but I was soon taken into headquarters and though I carried a pack and a gun all over parts of France and Italy, I never was in the line in battle, and I never had occasion to shoot that gun.

You asked was there a religious theme. My mother was a devoted Episcopalian and my father was a nominal one. My sister and brother both were confirmed as Episcopalian. I went to Sunday school for a while when I was young. I felt that there were some fairy tales about this business and deliberately kept away from becoming a church member. I used to go to church occasionally and for twenty years or more I've hardly been in a church at all except walked into a small chapel with stained glass and sit and think over my sins. But curiously, you know, in the art field – my wife is not a church person either – we had three girls, all of whom when they went away to college realized this was a gap in their life, and they tried to compensate for it by the courses they took. Some of these were "do-good courses" for humanity that led my younger daughter astray for a few years. She thought she was going to be good by teaching children in school. She taught one year in California – she was at Sacramento in a good school. She did very well, but she decided she was too intelligent to put up with the kind of thinking – they call it philosophy – which is sort of an applied psychology in public education. She just rebelled against all this. Then did what I hoped she would do in the first place. She went to Berkley to the University and took a degree there. But coming back to this lack of religion – I mean of formal religion – I don't think of myself as a non-religious man. I'm sort of a non-believer, not an unbeliever.

MR. PHILLIPS: "A believing unbeliever."

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, I suppose. But so much of the material that we work with in art presumes some sort of humanistic background both Judeo-Christian tradition and they did poetry and philosophy of Greek and Latin times on through the middle ages. So I have informed myself about this – not only that, but about the rituals of the different churches. A couple of times I've had occasion to moderate a Catholic, a Presbyterian, a Baptist and a Jew – to discuss art and relate it to their faith. I was able to do that with some understanding and manage it very well. Then nearly every year, in the spring of the year, there is a sort of faith week here at the University, and always I'm asked to talk, or somebody in the department, but often it has been me, about art and religion, or art and the church. After doing this several times, a number of times really, I said, "Well, this is all nonsense. I don't want to do it again because you aren't interested in art and you aren't going to be, and except for the Catholic Church there hasn't been any art done in and for the church since the Reformation. So you Presbyterians and Christians and Baptists who live in the Bible belt here, none of you have ever experienced this at all. The only art you've ever seen is a bad litho of Hofmann's kneeling Christ set up in a meditation room at your school. This is calendar art. It is vicious stuff, and it has nothing to do with art or in my judgment, religion." It is like the old head of the Music Department told me about the time the Baptists were having a revival and they wanted him to do the service. He said, "Parson, the God I worship doesn't listen to the kind of music you'll have me play at a revival." That was that. I've interested myself in this problem of faith and beliefs because there is no way of getting inside any number of Greek theories and practically all medieval art which is a very great theory – without having some idea about this. It was about six years ago that I had a very dangerous operation facing me. I thought that I had come to the end of my rope, and I got a book on medieval philosophy which started with Saint Augustine right on up to the Skeptics. I found it a very difficult thinking to follow and serious thinking too. So, I read this kind of thing, but I'm not a churchman. It is too late to do anything about me on that.

MR. PHILLIPS: The reason I raised it is because you've been in this, as you put it, "The Bible Belt" so long, dealing with people who are – I was going to say examples or products of this strain. I wonder if it made any difference in the, you know – it may not.

MR. RANNELLS: I don't know. Years ago when I was in Portland, Oregon I went to a Baptist church where the pastor – I think they call them pastors – was notorious. He was an orator and a success, but I think I actually went there because there was a man who had sung in Opera who was going to sing in a quartet that day. So, I got good seats so I could hear this man. My experience with the church, Episcopal, Lutheran and Catholic would require a vested priest, but to see a man in a four in hand and a cutaway coat – this jarred me a bit. He was a Viking. He was a man of 6'3 or 4" with the coldest white grey eyes I ever saw. He understood all about how to use the human voice. He preached a kind of fear, and I thought, "Well, if I were a member of the Baptist Church and heard this man each Sunday, he would have me scared to death." Of course I never went back, but he was an eloquent and able preacher. There is no question about it. That's my one experience with the Baptists. When I traveled, I've been abroad a couple of times, I make it a point of going into the churches which are Catholic churches because I see something aesthetic in the mass. It's too long, but it is kind of a slow

repetitious visual dance. I'm very much interested in ballet dancing. All my girls had ballet training. When I was in New York not long ago, I took one of these girls to the Lincoln Center to see the ballet. Incidentally, Stravinsky's "Firebird" was one of the two numbers, and when I sat there and watched this and listened to this music and realized that when that was first presented abut 1908 or '09 under the baton of Pierre Monteux there was a riot. They tore out chairs and tore off collars. The music goes in blocks, and it was of course very radical at the time. Time goes by, and this sinks into the total thing so pleasantly that now I just sat and wondered how they ever could have gotten stirred up about it.

Although I started my career in art quite late – I was 27 or 29 I think, by the time I entered the University. What I'd seen before that was when I was guest of Uncle Sam in Italy. I got around and saw some very important monuments and I saw them very thoroughly, like Saint Marco in Venice and also I went to the opera there just about the time of the armistice. They kept up its music. But my actual career in art, let us say, runs from about 1925 to '65, about 40 years. I started studying before that, but I began to learn something by that time. It took three or four years to learn to study. I'd been out of school so long. I'd been out so long that I had to go through the laboratory for physics class using mostly arithmetic. You fill up a lot of pages of paper this way. I couldn't remember my Algebra, and I didn't learn it again. It has been very intimidating to me that I married a good Latin and Greek scholar and an excellent mathematician. One of my daughters is a good mathematician. When she was at school, I looked at these complicated problems and I said, "Molly, it puzzles me to see how you can keep all these signs straight." She looked at me and said, "There is nothing to it, you just pay attention, that's all."

MR. PHILLIPS: That's over simplification!

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, well I never could. But I'm drifting. The thing that I wanted to say was, that I have watched art change from the social realism of the 20's to what we have now. By working with young people, who keep you under pressure to keep up with these things. I've tried to do that. So even though I live in the provinces, I get around occasionally and keep myself fairly informed with what is going on now. This has to be done with a great dash of criticism. It is not safe to believe what you read in the *Arts International*, *Art New,* or *Arts* because you have to be able to see over and under and around this to see how much of this is special pleading for a cause, propaganda of some kind, and also how much of it goes through a shift of thinking from something which is based on Marxism to something based on Freud, to something based on sociology or anthropology. You've gone through all these fashions. I've lived through them all, and there was a time when I studied Freudian ideas. This was during the surrealist days. I never even opened a book of psychology until I was in my 40's. Luckily the first one I did was the Denmark Symposium with the *Essays of the Psychology of Art* by Franz Kafka. So my psychology began with gestalt and this is the only way for a person who is an artist, or is interested in art to think, the idea that structure is something that you build up piece by piece additively. This is alright for educationists and psychologists, but it has nothing to do with art. You start with the whole and then articulate back to these things.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. RANNELLS: And my first reading in psychology was good. Also about that same time I'd been reading Brennan and that's a bit anti-Freud. Of course since that time all these – [Sigmund] Freud, [Carl] Jung – the whole business has been absorbed in psychology.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think in many instances one has to deal with polarities and reconcile them anyway. That's a constant steady impulse. There are three things that interest me. We'll take them one a time. What is the source of the interest in dance?

MR. RANNELLS: Oh, this was when the children were very small and there was a man here in town who was working with dance. He was a ballet person, and of course they'd already begun to study music, piano. So, they knew the chord structure. They knew how music worked. This was at the time when they were between six and ten that they started. They were put into toe shoes much too soon, but we were blind. We didn't know how awkward they looked, once having gotten into this, I realized that here in the day of progressive, permissive education ideas, here was something that was a discipline that you couldn't argue with. You had to put your foot down in a certain position on the note in a certain place, and they worked hard to do this because the art itself is so demanding. Out of this I have evolved, in part, although I got a good deal of it originally from [Franz] Kafka and [Wolfgang] Kohler too, the *Place of Value in a World of Fact.* They are rather parallel. The idea that the creative process works exactly this way, that there are formal and material demands upon the artist which he can't bully his way through. He has to conform to the necessity of art rather than express, or project, or formulate an idea which he thought up all by himself. I found that when I was trying to write – which still comes to me – I had a very bad education, never learned grammar or anything properly, so I write sometimes very well, but by bleeding because writing makes demands on me and I sweat blood to make it come out right rhythmically, tonally it would be alright. I have this idea of the creative process. This is all implicit in Kafka's two psychologies, the psychology of the experience of the artist and psychology of the experience of the

observer – but in between this quite simply is the psychology of a work of art itself. It works both ways. The artist has got to adjust his thinking or feeling in order to achieve art and the viewer has to make adjustments of thinking and feeling within himself in order to see it. I've been working on this in my teaching and in some writing for some time.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, instinctively you use the proper words. The reason I asked about the dance and you anticipated it too, that is, what I was going to lead to, was also the source of the interest in music. Then you used the words the rhythm in writing and the tonal quality in writing which is the relationship between these various disciplines and the creative process.

MR. RANNELLS: Some years ago the daughter of one of our staff members was a member of the local sorority called Tau Sigma. This is the dance group. They were having their annual meeting and I was to speak at the dinner meeting to these girls. I wrote out a paper on ballet – if you are curious I'd be glad to find you a copy of it or I can find one now.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'd love to see it.

MR. RANNELLS: I drew upon my experience which was back behind theirs, the girls, although I had known people involved in this dance – this was all modern dance. I thought it was wrong because it had – I've learned to make accommodations for it since – but simply because it was based on the – I won't call it a theory. I will call it emotion of self-expression in art. I despise this word self-expression. If there isn't something more important than the self to express in art, why work at it so hard? What I was trying to do was to show these people continuity. There was a continuity through the ballet which seems very formal and also obviously it was identified with the court and with the upper class. Meanwhile there was the folk dance going on all around us. Well of course, all of this was absorbed into ballet. You have dance suites in Bach and Ravel and so on which had these folk dances in them, and they have them even in the classic symphony. There's very much the same sort of thing going on that you can find in Northern Ireland today. I really wrote that paper for my girls. I sent it to my daughter who had been the number one ballet dancer in town as a young girl. She went to Vassar, and there she worked with the theater and studied modern dance, but I insisted that up to that time that none of these modern dances, and I saw one of the first fascinating, interesting, modern dance presentations on stage and this became quite familiar, Brigadoon you know; the Chase and that's a corker, but every one of these modern dancers put his foot down as though he'd been trained in ballet. I mean a certain position. So, he's generally pretty secure, even with just one foot on the floor.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. RANNELLS: But my daughter who had made her peace with modern dance as well as with ballet said that I was a little hard on the modern dance. That's the only criticism I got.

MR. PHILLIPS: It is interesting how, you know, from a hyphenated education, a kind of rootlessness, that where you roam, when you finally get a chance to put down roots, you are projected into those areas which are related to the creative process. Happily for you, you've got a gestalt point of view which –

MR. RANNELLS: That was the first thing.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. RANNELLS: One thing I perhaps should say to you as long as I'm talking about myself, I mentioned one time the old head of the Music Department, Carl Lampert, a German violinist. He and I were very close friends. Then a chap who went to the School of Music in Philadelphia. He went there on a scholarship really for composing. He was a cellist, but not a very good one. He followed Lampert as head of that department. He and I worked together hand in glove. I saw him two or three months ago. He went from here to Syracuse. He went from there to San Francisco. He is now president of one of the State Colleges in California. He and I worked together on a symposium where we tried to show the interconnectedness of style. This was all on the baroque period. Each one of us did four lectures, and then we had people come in from Romance Languages and elsewhere to talk on literature. From that experience – during that time I read Lange's book from cover to cover, and then came the time at this University when they wanted a humanities program. This man and I were both on the committee that set up the program, or tried to set it up. I worked hard to have it cluster around cultural periods to get away from chronology, but finally it was decided that nobody with an academic training which I didn't have, but all the rest of the men on the committee did, could manage anything unless it was chronology. So the humanities started from the Renaissance down to now. Then realizing that literature had an advantage in the humanities and that art was kind of elbowing its way into this picture, I started working at once on a syllabus which ran about 200 pages, so that I wouldn't have to say it all in class. They could read most of it. In other words I was determined to get as much content as I could in the art course, the art humanities as in the literature course. Courses – there were three of those. So actually for ten or fifteen years, most of my attention was given to humanities. Now the educationists are thinking of having humanities in public schools. Just a

month and a half ago I presented a paper at the National Education Conference in Philadelphia on humanities. That was the hardest paper I ever tried to write because every sentence I would get on paper – these public school teachers with their teacher college educations – would rise up before me like ghosts. These were the people who were going to have to teach this, and this would seem futile. So I thought that these educationists, now that they were so sure that the National Humanities Foundation would pass and they would be in line to get money for their projects, if they were going to get into Humanities, they'd better find out what they were getting into. So, I wrote a tough paper, and I went there armed with true answers to questions which I could anticipate. Questions were never asked. The paper was very well received. I had an audience. They were ready to listen to humanities.

MR. PHILLIPS: They had that readiness.

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, readiness is the word.

MR. PHILLIPS: Readiness, yes. They could see the handwriting on the wall. In the PWAP, did you see much of Edward Bruce?

MR. RANNELLS: I never saw him. I never went to Washington. I read everything that he was writing at the time in the *American Magazine of Art* and of course his circulars, but I never saw him. I never knew much about what went on in New York until sometime afterwards. I'd go to the movies in New York, and I talked to people who'd been on those projects and found out about those where they did easel paintings as well as murals and sculpture and so on. Every once in a while I would see these things on exhibit. For example, - I can't think of his name. He just died fairly recently. He was one of leading American painters who had a couple of shows at the Museum of Modern Art, but he was on the WPA and one of his fine murals was on loan at Cincinnati. I found out too late that he was looking for a home and a school, and Indiana got him. I came that close to getting a Stuart Davis. I got some other things. I was in Chicago studying at the University when they had gathered a lot of things together in a warehouse there, and I made selections, got things I could use in teaching. There was one pretty interesting thing by Giuliani [phonetic] and another very good piece by Ben Shahn. The Ben Shahn thing is painted in gesso on a surface that wasn't too well prepared when he – he is essentially a draftsman and not a painter. Every once in a while there was an incline and the paint had come off there, but it was a good design, and we have used these for all it's worth in our teaching.

MR. PHILLIPS: That was Mildred Holzauer in Chicago, the warehouse, in charge of allocations on the project.

MR. RANNELLS: That's who it was.

MR. PHILLIPS: Almost a kind of final wrap up.

MR. RANNELLS: Well, I was able to get a number of things. There was one thing that I wanted, but that painter was from Milwaukee and Milwaukee had grabbed them. What I got that was useful mostly were prints. There were about half a dozen paintings, and I chose those, except for the Shahn and Giuliani which I knew about, for different processes and techniques; fresco, gouache, tempera painting, oil and so on, because at that time, here in our teaching we were paying a great deal of attention to materials, that the materials would tell you what you could and could not do. This was the way we taught drawing and design and painting. So it paid off for a few years. We haven't used those things for a long while.

MR. PHILLIPS: That's interesting. When the WPA took hold, I understand that this University was in part a sponsor with other Universities.

MR. RANNELLS: It may well be, but I – there were no painting projects here at this University, and when I closed out my books on those four projects here, that was the end for me. I didn't do anymore.

MR. PHILLIPS: Did you observe the operation of the WPA in Kentucky? I think Mrs. Adele Brandeis was the –

MR. RANNELLS: Yes, and I knew her very well at the time and used to talk with her about it. She is an unusual woman. I saw her a few months ago, and she is as gay as ever. I can't see much difference between her now and then, and that's a long time ago, thirty years ago. But I never really knew much about the insides of it. I used to read how every time we got a community that was going to give them a mural, then there would be a local community, and they wanted something that would tell something about their community that they could take pride in. The artist was an outsider, and he had to adjust to this in some way. I kept in touch with Frank Long who remained at Berea for some years, and I would see these drawings and preparations and scale models that he would build; determination of where the light sources would be, where the light fixtures and where the windows are and so on – all these preliminary things tried to answer all questions in advance, and they would still be quibbling about whether the gun was a flint lock, or something else, you see.

His interests were primitive and frontier enough, so he could adjust to this pretty easily. He had a kind of an

expression, a muscular style which distorted a little, not much. You can see this painting in the library which I still think holds up. It's a good painting, but his things go by convexes through space and in order to keep this motion going the human figure is going to have to give a little here and there in order to fit. This was very hard for the local committees to understand. Of course, we've gone past all that now, but this was back in the '30's and '40's. He seemed terribly modern to them. Actually, I always contended that his art would be infinitely better if he went to Paris, or New York and saw some contemporary painting. So that when he made distortions he would know what he was doing. But I never was able to finance such a trip for him and consequently I never broached the subject.

MR. PHILLIPS: Tell me this, in the youngsters that you've had over the years, has there been a lessening of local interest, or preoccupation with a regional expression that can be identified as Kentucky? Has there been a reaching out beyond Kentucky?

MR. RANNELLS: Oh, very decidedly in the last half dozen years.

MR. PHILLIPS: There has?

MR. RANNELLS: Oh yes. We had kind of a boost for that here in Louisville, as you know. There was during the '40's an interesting painter, Opert Wiltbe's [phonetic] work, who went rapidly through a whole series of changes in his art and the exhibitions in Louisville would have these modern things along with these more conventional ones. Our students here kept in touch with that, and then we exchanged exhibitions. We had some of those Louisville exhibitions here. So, we kind of grew along with that, and then during the last seven or eight years, the man who spoke to me a while ago arrived here just after a Guggenheim in Paris, maybe it was a Fulbright, a person who was born a Frenchman and was educated at Queens and Columbia, then went abroad, and he is a committed abstract painter who has been considerably saddened by the construction, assemblage, pop art and op art development since. But he is not a person who is about to change. He just came back from a year in Paris, and he observed all these things, and his art is still a committed abstraction. Consequently his students too because he is kind of aggressively minded towards his pupils. I think he browbeats them a bit. So they are always trying to be right up to the minute which it seems to me is getting the cart before the horse. These people are provincials. They should learn to paint well in a good provincial way before they add on the top modernisms as this man. Of course, he grew up with this. This is in his blood, and he is the second generation of abstract painters. This means he started just about as abstract expressionism was coming to an end. This is always sad for an artist to start on the tail end of a movement. He is intelligent enough. He knows history well enough and history should tell any artist that no movement lasts more than fifteen years. It hasn't since the 19th century began and hardly did during the 18th century. A person who knows 18th century cabinet work can date a piece within ten or fifteen years.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. There isn't much comfort in that mind of – you know, the "continuity" is eternal change.

MR. RANNELLS: Then there are always these bothersome things like the very first artist of the 18th century of Yvette Gallant was Watteau, and there never was another one who was as good as he was. Fragonard is a little more vérité, but he is no Watteau. Then you come to David who is not a great artist, but a tremendously important figure leading up in art history. Then there wasn't an academic realist after him throughout the whole 19th century that could come anywhere near him. One who had some promise was Couture, and he got shunted off on a socialist project when the monarchy came back. Again, the impressionists – let us say the first one would be Pissarro who was more or less obscured by the bright boys in his time, but as time goes by, he looms as big as any of them.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. RANNELLS: Of course if a painter establishes himself as Monet did, or like [Willem] de Kooning has done now, he can go right on painting the way he has painted after all the tag end followers are left in the lurch. They can't get anywhere.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes. But, do you really think that the impulse that might be referred to as Kentucky in nature has ceased to have meaning in terms of the kids who come?

MR. RANNELLS: Not in those that come, but by the time they come out of here it does. No, I think that for a long time, for example, the department on this campus which had a good deal of attention paid to it was the history department. You see all Kentuckians are amateur historians. When I first came here years ago, I did a number of foolish things. I had a kind of something which I fancied was wit, but was really sarcasm and I used this once in a public address, and it wasn't at all well received. I said that I was having some difficulties adjusting to a community where all history is genealogy and only portraiture is art. And of course to this day people who talk about painting at the University, talk about portraits. When they opened this building, we had a loan exhibition of portraits. One of the best of those pictures is one that I have which I inherited. It was done by de Fanche [phonetic] about 1835, but we had every local painter. de Fanche could be too because he worked in

this community and painted for some people here and then went out to Saint Louis. This was in the '40's. Be that as it may, the thing is that I myself went around to houses and got these pictures. Most of them had been arranged for me. Before I could get out of the house, I had to listen to a great deal of family history, who grandfather was and what he did and what his local reputation was and so on and who he married and who their children married and so on. Well, I have ancestors too, but I've never been interested in that. I think that ancestor preoccupation is just like a preoccupation with antiques. Then I would get the pictures in here and of course they were filthy. They had hung up over fire places, or over what is worse, a gas grate, and I concluded that they knew who the pictures were of, but nobody had looked at them for at least twenty years. So, what I did was to get bread, stale bread if I could, and clean them just like wallpaper cleaner – every one of those canvases so they could be seen. Then we hung them in the gallery and everyone was delighted because this was Kentucky's own.

MR. PHILLIPS: But by that time –

MR. RANNELLS: That was –

MR. PHILLIPS: This is an indication that the historical interest –

MR. RANNELLS: Not really history.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well not only – but it is a preoccupation which acts as a barrier to communication beyond the state line.

MR. RANNELLS: Exactly.

MR. PHILLIPS: And so that the kids who come here get whatever ferment is present here as an admixture with the Kentucky roots.

MR. RANNELLS: Of course I would just as soon – I would prefer it really – to have students come to the University intelligent, but really green, ignorant because if they come from a small community, they know how to use their hands. They know how to make things. You start art by making – not with this self-expression nonsense, where a student can say "Well, that's the way I see it. I don't like that." That sort of thing you can't argue with. These kids who don't know anything, you can talk sense, and some of our best designers have been this way, although I must admit of the three people I spoke of, only one of them came off the farm. The others were – one came from a small community, one came from a farm. The painter had traveled. He studied some art in England at an arts and crafts school. But we've had any number of very good students who have come along out of nowhere. Often times if they come from communities like Louisville where there are more advantages – not necessarily the school system, but in the whole cultural life of the community – it is a diluted kind of thing with them. Well they come up here to join a sorority, or get married.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, I'm glad they are making boys and girls the way they have always made them. That's one thing you can say. But by the same token, when it comes to creativeness, they are few and far between where they go deep and are compelled for some reason to make some kind of statement whether it is in stone or –

MR. RANNELLS: Well there is something about the discaulaire [phonetic] kind of teaching we get in public schools and at a University. Of course Art History which I am interested in - but believe me in design and in painting it's intensive.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. RANNELLS: And in sculpture it is even more intensive because you have to work a long time – this metal doesn't bend easily you know. You have to labor over it. So we have this intensive, extensive making and knowing maybe superficially and critical faculty works in both areas and we – Amyx and I – in seminars and other ways, one of the things we've been able to do is to make quite clear to students the difference between opinion and judgment. An opinion is a private matter, and everyone has it and everyone is entitled to it, but it isn't very important. Judgment is a public matter responsible to what you are judging. There you have to be objective. You have to analyze. You have to look. You have to know what you are talking about. These are two different things. In this state we use this term "Bible Belt", but this is a lawyer's belt too and of course at law we are accustomed to the use of opinion as kind of judgment that stands until another opinion is handed down that refutes it. But opinion doesn't mean the same thing in law as it does in aesthetic judgment. And now doctors – you see, a man of the cloth, a man of the law, a man of medicine, these are the accepted professions and everybody dabbles with writing, but there are no real authors around here now. There have been.

MR. PHILLIPS: But these are the pied pipers, in a sense the intellectual taste makers or the limitations taste makers.

MR. RANNELLS: Well, of course, all of this has changed enormously in the last ten or fifteen years with the coming in of industry and a payroll that brings technically trained people in from outside. They come from New York State and other places. The idea is to transform this community. These people support the theater or music and take their place in the cultural life of the community. The medical school has been staffed with a number of people who have a perfectly genuine interest in the arts. They insist that their incoming students have what they call a liberal arts training. They aren't too worried whether they've had undergraduate physiology or bacteriology or what have you because "That's our job! We'll train you the way you need to be taught." That has shifted the interest of the community. I gave a talk here several years ago to the medical auxiliary. These were the doctors' wives because since their husbands drew a very much better income than most people in the income drawing community, including professors on the regular campus, they imagined that that made them more sophisticated, more cultured. This, of course, I doubted very much and I had some fun with it.

MR. PHILLIPS: There is some indication that you served on what was at first the National Advisory Committee to the WPA.

MR. RANNELLS: Well, I may have been on it, but all I was doing was right here. I never was aware I was on the National Advisory Committee. Walter Siple may have been the one who absorbed all that to himself, and Ms. Brandeis in Louisville may have been on it, but I never was.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, you know, I just throw it out –

MR. RANNELLS: At least I didn't know I was on it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Unaware.

MR. RANNELLS: Yes. Well, I had enough to do. I was trying to make a small department do something at that time and I was teaching a heavy load and I was busy as a bird dog. So, what I tried to do was to get people who knew what they were doing and tend to the payroll, although I did keep in touch with them every couple of weeks.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. RANNELLS: To see how their work was coming along, but all of that was time consuming.

MR. PHILLIPS: As breathing is.

MR. RANNELLS: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, I'm grateful to you for speaking about your experience.

MR. RANNELLS: We are going to have to edit this.

MR. PHILLIPS: This will come back to you in a transcript so that you will see what you did say. I hope you won't be too censorious about it because –

MR. RANNELLS: Well, I went off with so much about myself.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, this provides the clues really.

MR. RANNELLS: Well, I suppose it does. You ask a man to talk about himself – I know a wonderful story on "Tell me about yourself" but we'll not go into that – this will trap even the wary, and of course you broke down all suspicions immediately. So I was unaware and talked too much. That's professorial. It is an occupational tendency.

MR. PHILLIPS: I'm perhaps judging on the basis of hearing alone, but I'd be very surprised if all of the disciplines in the social sciences won't find some food in it. You know, it is interesting – the reason I asked about religion in part was the fact that you demonstrated that there was a free mind operating here, and ultimately when you come late to an area, as you did, one tries in a sense to fence it in. And aren't you lucky to have done it with the aid of a new discipline, psychology, which gave you an –

MR. RANNELLS: Well, that was one that I learned by myself. I realize that I should have had training in psychology but I reasoned with some justice, I think, that all psychologists who were in the field went into that field because they were trying to find out what was wrong with themselves. I had a lot of things wrong with me, and I didn't want to know. But you can't just run away from yourself all of your life, although I've done a pretty good job of it, but if you read a few good books and mull over them and because I'd started so late, I'd been a slow reader always, and reading is hard work for me, and I don't do it unless I think it's important – I mean the

demand is important. On this religious business, two or three years ago I thought I would end this once and for all, and I put together a paper which for a while I thought was very good, but now I don't think so. But, I discuss the pioneer work in the field of art in a syllabus of religion practically all of which was sponsored by Dominicans. So I started out with Maritain and Father Corbusiere and the church at Asie and Peau d'un Coeur and Matisse de Banck and all of it was 15 years back. But I had read Maritain's *Art and Scholasticism* as soon as it came out. I thought, "Now this is the line, really." The Protestants are nibbling around the corner. Then when I moved this thing from France to this country, I had [Adolph] Gottlieb windows for the Jewish center in New York [Kingsway Jewish Center, Brooklyn, New York, NY], and then there was the international church councils and - about religious art. Of course this depends on the architect and to some extent the people who do the stained glass windows, and then Chicago assembled an exhibition of religious art borrowed from collections. Theodore Green and Paul Tillich wrote the introduction and Paul Tillich's *Ultimate Reality* – I wonder if he knows exactly what it is himself, but it is a good one. Then he spoke at the Museum of Modern Art a few years after that, partly due to the fact that in the meantime [Rico] Lebrun had done the crucifixion series, and it was exhibited in New York and Gottlieb had such a successful project. So along in the '40's on to 1950, there was some activity in this area. My point was that the artist – artist with a capital A – had painted their religious pictures without any support from their church. Rembrandt was certainly the greatest of all protestant artists. He never had a finger lifted to help him. [Georges] Rouault was 81 before he got his request from Father Corbusiere to make designs for Asie. Le Jea [phonetic] was a communist, and he worked with both Asie and Avant Coeru and did a fine job. Lebrun was brought up an Italian Catholic but stayed outside of the church in this country, as near as I can tell. Imagine those images. Where have they got them? They are all in schools. There are no church exhibits. And of course Paul Tillich just fell for him hard. He being a Protestant theologian was looking for an art of protest, and there it was.

MR. PHILLIPS: Right.

MR. RANNELLS: And so what I did was to juxtapose the theology of Maritain and Tillich, as I understood it, and perhaps did great violence to it, and the abstractions of some of the French men and expressionism of Rouault and Lebrun. I tell these thoughts to people in this paper, "Here is the art you are going to have to deal with. It's either going to be expressionists, or abstract for a long while." I raised a question which I still would like answered. The church, of course, wants an image to be a symbol so that it carries certain meanings, not just an image of a thing, but a symbol that makes one think of something else, working like an icon. The Catholics can understand this, although the art that you find in Catholic churches and hospitals, and I've seen the inside of a lot of them, is quite discouraging. All these painted plaster saints – nevertheless they use art, and they use it symbolically. One of their most effective series, and gives the artist a great chance, is Stations of the Cross. What's the matter with this for the protestant church? It has never been used in the Protestant Church.

MR. PHILLIPS: No.

MR. RANNELLS: In other words, you don't have to say Saint this and Saint that, but you can just tell their story and Lopez told it at the Aachen Coeur. He has hands. He has goblets, he has sparks which are wounds. He goes through it all the way, and never has a figural motif except the hand held up that takes the goblet. You can say an awful lot without figural images. If you get it in sequence so that everybody knows what this next one's about, you see.

MR. PHILLIPS: We're just about at the end.

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