Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with D. J. Hall, 2000 June 29

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Debra Jane "D.J." Hall on June 29, 2000. The interview took place in the artist's home in Venice, California, and was conducted by Paul Karlstrom for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Oral History Program for the Archives of American Art.

D.J. Hall and Paul Karlstrom have reviewed the transcript and made corrections and emendations. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

[BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE A.]

PAUL KARLSTROM: Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, an interview with painter D.J. Hall in her home in Venice, California. The date is June 29, year 2000. This is Session #1. The interviewer for this and subsequent sessions is Paul Karlstrom, and I think that that's it. Now we've done our test. I have to say this, referring back to the leader, Dear Transcriber, this is the first time for this new Myrantz recorder with lavalier mikes and I hope that the quality of recording reflects that, so that's what we were doing earlier, but now we have everything solved; all the problems are solved and we're ready to go. Well, first of all, thank you for agreeing to do this, actually on pretty short notice 'cause it was last week that you came out to the Archives with the first installment of your papers, and I think that's important to have down here as part of the record, is that you've decided to give all of your papers, I guess over time, to the Archives of American Art. And so this interview is the beginning of a series that will make a total oral history record that is intended to complement your papers.

D.J. HALL: Wonderful, because I love to talk about these things because I don't really write that much.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well here's an opportunity. Somebody else does—you get to do the talking—

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—somebody else does the writing.

D.J. HALL: Because I have to save my arm.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And I get to do the listening. And so we can proceed with that in mind, but I should also say that this particular session has a focus, has a theme, and we talked about that over lunch and we had fun with that discussion, I think, artists and models. And I am, at the moment, doing a series of interviews, usually brief, about an hour, dealing with that subject, and this will be then a special, sort of thematic series in the Archives, and with you, it'll be the main theme of your first session, but then we'll, of course, move on from that. First question, did I give you or send you a copy of the Eros in the Studio essay?

D.J. HALL: No, no.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I meant to bring it to you.

D.J. HALL: But that's fine.

PAUL KARLSTROM: That's okay; that's fine, which is sort of—can be sort of a point of reference for this, but it doesn't have to be.

D.J. HALL: Exactly, because it's almost like I would rather come to this with a clean and fresh mind.

PAUL KARLSTROM: That's probably a good choice of words. At any rate, that represents an activity which I'm involved which has led to these interviews and I think productively so. At any rate, let's—but let's start by learning a little bit about you and then we can move into this idea of models, basically artists and models. We'll be talking about your experience with models, but I think maybe even more important will be a description of your actual models and which has to do with your methods, with your practice, I guess as they call it. But I actually want to learn about D.J. Hall. What's the D.J.?

D.J. HALL: Debra Jane.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Debra Jane, and when did you choose to go by D.J. and why?

D.J. HALL: Well, when I got out of school, which was in the early '70s and even though it was a time when I could have identified with the feminist movement, I was a little too young for that and I also really didn't make that distinction for myself. I didn't like to make that separation that my art was female or male; however, interestingly enough, my husband Toby suggested that I be non-gendered in the art world. And it's kind of amazing because Toby's not a person who's really into strategy, but he must have picked up the fact that being a female wasn't necessarily the best thing at that time and he was the one who said, "Let's consider you going with your initials." And I actually, in the late '80s, wanted to change to my given name, Debra Jane, and I talked to my New York dealer, Ivan Karp, and he was dead set against it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well why? Because you had already then established—

D.J. HALL: I had established myself that way and how could I make that change?

PAUL KARLSTROM: When did Toby make this suggestion? Obviously very early in your career.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, like in 1974.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay, so you've known one another a very long time?

D.J. HALL: Yes, since 1971.

PAUL KARLSTROM: When you were children.

D.J. HALL: When I look back now, we were children. Of course then we were "very mature adults."

PAUL KARLSTROM: So well, my Lord, I mean you were—

D.J. HALL: I was like 22.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Twenty, if you were born in 1951.

D.J. HALL: Well I mean I met him then, then I started my career when I was 22, 23.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And so he was giving you that good, professional counsel.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, yeah, amazingly.

PAUL KARLSTROM: When did you get married?

D.J. HALL: We got married in 1973. And speaking of professional counseling, somehow—again, because he's such a naive person in so many ways, he was the one who said to me, "You know, I think you need to settle on a focus in your work," and he might have—he even used the words "body of work" which I have no idea how he could have picked up those words unless it was some voice coming through him. So at that point, it was kind of my determination in 1974 when he said that, that's how I came to say, "Okay, my real subject matter is light and I am drawn to bright color, and the figure, because the figure is something I'd been doing in my work all along even when I had to sneak it in in college and we only did minimal paintings, and by putting those things that I loved together and Toby said, "Make a body of work," I said, "Okay, this is what I want to do," and I went to Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and shot people around pools with the intention that I would do my first professional painting through those photograph sessions.

PAUL KARLSTROM: All from the very beginning based on photographs?

D.J. HALL: Yeah. Well, you know, when I was in school in painting and drawing, because I just said I had to sneak the figure in, and in the last years of painting, I only did color-field paintings and they were really very beautiful, but they were boring for me, and it was in my photography class where I found an outlet to express things that were really important to me, and that kind of, to sum it up, was—it involved a figure in certain aspects, and involved kind of a general heading, social commentary about people and their cars and their materialistic leisure styles, and that was all just intuitive. The fact that I was drawing that stuff didn't mean anything to me at the time and now when I look back, I can see why I was doing all of that.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Where were you going to school? Where did you go to school?

D.J. HALL: I went to U.S.C.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And—yeah.

D.J. HALL: Not by choice.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, what do you mean? Why not by choice?

D.J. HALL: Well, I mean I didn't really have any direction. I mean I was a very good student actually.

PAUL KARLSTROM: So you grew up in Southern California?

D.J. HALL: I grew up in Southern California. My parents had gone to S.C. and they had divorced when I was three. Around the time that college was coming up, my father obviously took an interest in me, where I would be going to school and said, "Well now, you don't—it's all up to you, but, you know, S.C. is where I went to school." And my mother laid the same stuff on me, and I did have like early, whatever they called it early admission—I could have been at U.C.L.A.; I could have been at Irvine which then would have been a very interesting thing to see what would have happened to me if I had gone there at that time, but because of a series of things plus my parents, "non-pressure," and I just landed at S.C. and I did get a couple of scholarships. That kind of cinched that in the end, but that wasn't my choice.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Did you know early on that you wanted to be an artist or is it something you discovered –?

D.J. HALL: I wanted to be an architect.

PAUL KARLSTROM: You wanted to be an architect?

D.J. HALL: Yeah, but when my mother and I went for counseling at S.C., it was the school of fine arts and architecture. We went there for me to be counseled to enter that school. I wanted to go into architecture and was very gently told that that was not what I wanted to do, and my mother and I are just trusting people and, "Oh, well then what do I want to do?" "You want to go in fine arts."

PAUL KARLSTROM: Oh.

D.J. HALL: Right, oh. Not that that wasn't something I'd always done, so I went into that. I had absolutely no conception of what I was going to do. I always figured I'd go into commercial art, and at S.C., I didn't even get exposure to the concept of what it meant to be an artist, but—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Really?

D.J. HALL: Well, in those days, they didn't take you to artist studios or have you go to museum shows or anything like that, so you didn't get a working concept of an artist, but I do have to say that by my junior year in college, I clearly knew the imagery and the ideas I wanted to work with and I kind of had to work on those in secret, and then through my classes, produce what they wanted to see.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay. Describe the situation then. This is the

early—

D.J. HALL: Early '70s.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Early '70s, and I'm trying to think who might have—I mean this I should really know, who were the faculty.

D.J. HALL: I had Ruth Weisberg.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, Ruth, okay. That's right, you said she was a teacher here.

D.J. HALL: Ron Rizk. My photography teacher was Phil Melnick, and the teacher who had a lot of influence on me was there only for a while. He was dismissed, an English fellow named C.D. Taylor, and—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Why did he have this influence?

D.J. HALL: I think he just understood my perception of things. I don't know what else to say. And actually, Jay Willis who was a sculptor, just made a few remarks to me offhandedly and this made me become aware that there was this movement going on called Photo Realism, and I had not been told about that by my painting teacher.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Who was this that—

D.J. HALL: My painting teacher?

PAUL KARLSTROM: No.

D.J. HALL: Who made the little off comments?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah.

D.J. HALL: Jay Willis and, God, I forget his—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Sculptor, huh?

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, I'm interested in this because—for the obvious reason. Most people, benighted as they [maybe], of course, will look at your work and probably place you with the photo realist.

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And yet—

D.J. HALL: But what they don't understand—number one, I didn't know that was going on. I am thankful it was going on because it allowed me, then, to do what I was doing at that time and to get shown. But my work is purely the way I've been all my life. I mean I've been drawing since I was three, and the way I run my own life is basically obsessive-compulsive, anal, attention-to-detail behavior, and a perfectionist, and my work, even—I know as a kid, [inaudible] for me was the more perfect I could make my little drawings, the more chance my whole fantasy was going to come true for me.

So I had always done extremely realistic, figurative work and it's only in photography that I then kind of put the contemporary social subject in the work, and the photography wasn't enough [for] me. I loved doing black-and-white photography, but I'm definitely a colorist, if anything, and I needed to take that imagery and do stuff to it and add color to it. And so then I—the pictures I was taking in my photography class, I started translating into my paintings, and that's how I began "photo realistic painting." And also, I had to teach myself how to paint realistically, and so it was really through the use of the photograph that I taught myself how to paint. Just as a kid, I taught myself how to draw by using beautiful photographs from *Vogue Magazine*.

PAUL KARLSTROM: This is, I'm taking notes here, very interesting to me for a number of reasons, and I'm trying to decide which way to go first.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. I mean philosophically, I'm not at all connected to photo realism.

PAUL KARLSTROM: No, no, I understand that, and I want to save that. I'm actually, at this point, much more interested in what you said about [how], from some early time, you felt that the more perfect your drawings were, the more chance that your fantasies would become reality. And I am extremely interested in that because—and I'll tell you why.

I've been working with the school children up in Pasadena at the Washington Middle School in a special project which I don't need to describe here on the tape, but I'll tell you about it later, and I was brought in—it's a California Council for the Humanities funded project, Special Learning Center, and the idea—well, number one, it's to introduce more art into a curriculum pretty devoid any more of art, but also these are children at risk, meaning minority, ethnic minority group students, and through my involvement or what interested me about that project was the use of image-making to maintain or gain some kind of control over an environment that was disturbing.

D.J. HALL: Well, Paul, I mean—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Can you tell—does this resonate for you?

D.J. HALL: Does it resonate for me? Yes! I think I mentioned to you, my mother, if it weren't for certain changes in the law and system, would be in an institution now and would have been institutionalized for years, and it became obvious to me by the age of seven that something was way off. I mean when I say my mother is mentally ill, it's not a glib comment. She's very sick. She's been diagnosed with many things. I would say she has a form of schizophrenia. She's definitely borderline psychotic. She's definitely a sociopath. She had put me through things in my life that most people just can't believe. I mean it makes Howard Hughes and his thing about germs kind of simplistic.

So, yeah, I think I was escaping very early on from my mother with my work. My whole life was drawing since I was little and the fact that I was drawing since I was three, certain kind of images, probably relates to the fact that also my parents, besides my mother being real sick, my parents split up when I was three and it was a

pretty horrendous thing. I mean the things that my mother has put on to me since I was a kid are just things you don't even say to an adult child, so I had all of that, plus her craziness, plus all the sicko behaviors that I had to participate in with my mother until I got out when I was 20. So, yeah, my art was my salvation and I can relate to those kids. I mean you said "at risk." Well I definitely was at risk.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, yeah, there are different ways to do that, yeah.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, and I've been told by various therapists that I've seen through the years, and they're not just bull-shitting me, they call me "The Miracle" because people—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Because you're so well adjusted.

D.J. HALL: Well, I wouldn't say "well adjusted," but the fact that I have survived and that I have lived a fairly okay life and have had—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Productive.

D.J. HALL:—and have been productive, although production is part of how I—you know, being overly productive really is part of how I survive, sometimes with the exclusion of acknowledging my own health. So it is a compulsive productivity, but yeah, I've survived and I've had success and I haven't turned into an alcoholic or a drug abuser or, you know, ended up in an institution, basically. It's my art, you know, it's my drug. It's the thing that keeps me off the streets.

PAUL KARLSTROM: So Brian Ferry says "Love is the drug," but for you, art is the drug? What do you think of that?

D.J. HALL: I want to make a T-shirt that says—but it may be misconstrued. They think it means making a living, "Live to paint; paint to live." If I can't paint, I can't live. So right now, I'm battling this tendinitis thing and it's a real challenge for me.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well that will go away, I trust, yeah.

D.J. HALL: It'll go away, but—

PAUL KARLSTROM: You're losing time, yeah.

D.J. HALL: I'm losing time, and then I start projecting, "Oh, my God, this is the beginning of the end," and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Anyway, okay, so—

PAUL KARLSTROM: We actually—God, what was it, a year or so ago when I first came and met you. That was terrific. That was a wonderful evening, by the way. We had dinner with Toby. It was great.

D.J. HALL: Prompted me—

PAUL KARLSTROM: It was great. But we already then, we were talking about some of these issues and I was able to relate because as I said in this essay I wrote which is going to be published in the *Michigan Quarterly Review*; that's the literary review of the University of Michigan, for reasons I won't go into, they picked up on this interesting experiment up at Washington School in Pasadena, and I then wrote about my experience of this as the advisor to the project and talked about being reminded by the experience of working just a little bit with the kids. It wasn't a lot. I went up there a couple of times, but we did self-portraits. This is what I would like you to then respond to.

D.J. HALL: Wow!

PAUL KARLSTROM: This is very interesting and coincidental. We did these self-portraits that was part of the process, I guess, or the exercises of using art that the students were put through; neighborhood portraits, portraits of the oldest person you know, self-portraits, so I did my own which turned out to be, I don't know really what it means, but rather strange. It looked sort of like a punk girl, really, and then the kids would come over and watch this thing and say, "You know, when I had earrings and so forth and lipstick," and—in fact, it's hanging in my office. I don't remember if you noticed it in there, pretty strange.

D.J. HALL: It's your "repressed homo-sexuality."

PAUL KARLSTROM: Or longing or something. I don't know what it is, but it was there and it has to do with self-conception and so forth and so on. Well, this isn't about me, but it's about images that can be so revealing, and I guess as I wrote in this essay was—I was reminded of how important drawing and art had been to me to create some kind of order out of what I felt was a pretty, somewhat chaotic childhood, you know, my own experience, and that I figured that if you could fix it as an image, then it was true, in a way that this is the way you can look

around and control it. And just to wrap this up, I don't want this to be about me, but I remembered—I mentioned that we had this conversation, not this part of it, but the part about the nature of what amounted to a very insecure and troubling and disturbing childhood. And I think probably if we had a contest, I think you would probably win from what—but on the other hand, we, all of us, need to find ways to deal with this world that we're in. And anyway, I'm very interested to hear that you, early on apparently, and quite naturally, turned to the image-making.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, thank God.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And what about self-portraiture?

D.J. HALL: Well, you know, I didn't do the self-portraits as a child, per se, and I don't really know what I was doing [inaudible]. I would do these imaginary families—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL:—sisters and brothers that would, I guess, be my sisters and brothers, and when I started doing what I can remember as self-portraits was in my teenage years and I would draw from fashion magazines, photographs of rock stars or bands, and I'd put myself in with them. So what does that fantasy tell you?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well—

D.J. HALL: Those are my self—I mean I did that and then, of course, I did traditional self-portraits, but when I did those, it was more because I had probably been instructed to do it and I think I just went and did the assignment and it wasn't necessarily coming out of some need at the time. In my career, when I put myself in the work, it's really been a matter of two things; it's either I'm documenting my aging process and/or quite often, I've set up my models way in advance and I should only in certain months and certain weather conditions, and when the day hits, we've got the right sun and I'm running out of time because it's getting to September, and one of the models is out of town and I have to fill myself in, or on a few occasions when we've traveled like to Jamaica, I was able to get someone to pay her way to go and then I put myself in as the secondary model. I have not sat down consciously and done a self-portrait, except for that one with the cats that I'm going to be doing. I'm really excited about that. And I'm just finishing reading this Joan Brown book this week. I realize—

PAUL KARLSTROM: There's a lot of self-portraiture there.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. I need to just do a straight self-portrait sometime. But, you know, in a sense, my work is really self-portraiture.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yes.

D.J. HALL: So maybe I don't need to do a self-portrait.

PAUL KARLSTROM: No. I mean I would—from what I know of your work, it's entirely self-portraiture.

D.J. HALL: No, no.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I mean it's self-portraiture in terms of your world, your environment—

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—and also your fantasies and your desires.

D.J. HALL: Right, and I'm also—

PAUL KARLSTROM: It tells more than about how you look.

D.J. HALL: Right. They're filling in for me.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, yeah.

D.J. HALL: They're filling in for the thing I'm trying to project "currently".

PAUL KARLSTROM: How bad was—this is your interview; this is your life, and eventually, we'll get to the models part, but we're here now and it seems to me that your childhood experience was formative in some very, very important ways and ultimately turned you, you know, ultimately pointed you in a direction that became a career. And what was so bad about it? Was it so bad or was part of it the way you viewed it and interpreted it?

D.J. HALL: No, it was so bad. And I think that I—I mean, yeah, people can say "It's so bad" because they don't

see what else is going on, but I mean I can tell you, from the age of 10 until I was about 20, I could never touch anything in our house except my own room and my own bathroom. Numerous times, I was accused of having touched the television set and this would end up in like hours of screaming and punishment and—my mother, even though she was very small, she would definitely beat me up. I could never have friends to my house because they were all "contaminated" and vice versa. I could never go to friends' houses because they were "contaminated". I was living in this very isolated world, and because, at least in those days, you didn't talk about that stuff, I couldn't even talk to people about what was going on, so I had to spend most of my life covering up what was going on. If I dropped anything on the floor no matter what it was, we threw it away, or I should say my mother threw it away.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Was she afraid of germs or what?

D.J. HALL: Germs, fungus. Some of the horrendous experiences were going—well, getting shoes. I mean I had to get new shoes now and then, but the shoe store for her was like the ultimate fungal experience. It was—I can't even begin to describe what it was like to go to a shoe store and kind of not try the shoes on because they were contaminated and everything to do with it was contaminated. And this is how I lived for at least 10 years. I mean prior to that, her insanity came out in a different way, but it wasn't so direct in my daily life. For 10 years, this germ thing and this fungus thing ruled our lives, not to mention I can—this came out in therapy and I never really talk about it because I think about it with my therapist, various therapists would say, "You don't know how bizarre it is." My mother spent most of her time in the nude going around decontaminating, so that's kind of a kooky thing to grow up with. I mean I just took it for granted.

PAUL KARLSTROM: You mean even her clothes were—

D.J. HALL: Well—

PAUL KARLSTROM:—dangerous? Contaminated?

D.J. HALL: Well, it was dangerous, and also to have it on her skin caused problems, apparently. I don't know. I just took it for granted. It's like when I try to describe things about my mother, I just say it because I don't question it because it was just part of my experience, but to try to describe it would take either a whole history to get you to that point of understanding it or you'd have to be someone who was involved in some psychotherapy—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Or had the experiences that—

D.J. HALL: Or grew up with the same shit.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Or some of it anyway.

D.J. HALL: Right, right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah.

D.J. HALL: It was kind of a nightmare, let's put it that way. And I had to be this one thing to the outside world, and then I had to be—the minute I was with her, I had to be this whole other different existence.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, when we turn this tape over, I want to talk about—

[END TAPE 1, SIDE A.]

[BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE B.]

PAUL KARLSTROM: Continuing the interview with D.J. Hall, Tape 1, now Side B. We were talking about childhood and, well, the difficulties of family situations, in your case, somewhat extreme in terms of your mother. And there was something I think you wanted to add.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, I do want to add. I was uncomfortable to add it, but my husband just came in the room and he added just the same thing that you had picked up on, that probably my mother did all that stuff in the nude because as you said, the more you had on, the more it was subject to contamination. You were less, I guess, to be at risk of being contaminated if you were nude, but that doesn't quite make sense, but—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Who's asking for sense?

D.J. HALL: Yeah, we're talking about craziness. And I omitted something because I'm still struggling with this. I think that was my mother. I don't think; I'm afraid I know it. There was a lot of weird sexual energy going on with this whole ritualistic, decontaminating behaviors and doing it in the nude, and it's pretty creepy.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay, but I don't—I'm not a therapist. We're not doing a therapy session, but I don't think it's all that creepy, and I think it's probably more a kind of, what shall we say, subculture norm than we realize. And I'll tell you why later.

D.J. HALL: You think a lot of people do that?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well I mean I've seen it driving—

D.J. HALL: Really? Doing something in the nude?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Driving home in Beverly Hills, my little alley, looking up and seeing my neighbor cleaning her kitchen.

D.J. HALL: In the nude?

PAUL KARLSTROM: In the nude. And then, of course, I went upstairs—why am I saying this? I went upstairs and I did have to go to the corner window and see if she was still doing this and she was.

D.J. HALL: Well what kind of weather was it?

PAUL KARLSTROM: It wasn't all that hot.

D.J. HALL: Okay. I mean—okay, so maybe it's very typical.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Why don't you look at it metaphorically in terms of symbol that, you know, cleanliness—

D.J. HALL: Because I've lived it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, I'm just saying that this is certainly not unique, but this is obviously your story.

D.J. HALL: Well, she was in a very worked-up state in terms of she would be mumbling all these crazy things to herself and profanity, and she would be broken out in a sweat. I mean it was very intense. It wasn't when she was just calmly taking care of business in the house—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL:—or because she hasn't put her clothes on yet. It was more than that.

PAUL KARLSTROM: So do you know anything—you said, though, this is something that you're still coming to terms with.

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: What do you think were the implications beyond just this activity? What did it tell you about Mom?

D.J. HALL: I mean, nothing I don't already know, that she's just stark-raving mad, and pathetic, and scary, and vulnerable.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But is she—is this the way she—did she resort to this as a way to work out her own sexual needs?

D.J. HALL: Yes.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Did this become a sex life?

D.J. HALL: I have to say that there was something going on like that. I don't know what.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And you knew enough, even at an early age, to figure it doesn't have to be this way?

D.J. HALL: Well, I knew something didn't seem right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, because I mean that's the big question.

D.J. HALL: Right, and she tried to kill herself a few times and she also was, you know, threatening on a regular basis that she was going to kill herself. When Toby first knew me and my mother would make these threats and then tear off in her car, I and my grandparents would just sit there proceeding to eat dinner. He thought that was incredible. It was just because we were very use to the threats and the running off in the car, you know. She

was going to kill herself in the car.

PAUL KARLSTROM: At what point—well, okay. This is like a life.

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: This is very complicated, but I think—

D.J. HALL: This is a whole other self.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But I think, it seems to me anyway, Mister Amateur Psychologist/Art Historian, that there's a very deep connection here, maybe even stylistically in your work, but we'll save this for later. How old were you when you started to notice that maybe there was something a little peculiar?

D.J. HALL: Around seven, and then—

PAUL KARLSTROM: This was not a normal home situation, yeah.

D.J. HALL: It's not normal. And then definitely by the age of 10, that's when it was clear, and that's when she entered into shock treatment and things like that. And then by the age of 11, it really was the full-blown, crazy behavior that went on for another 10 years, and—

PAUL KARLSTROM: And you were alone with her? I mean it was you and Mom.

D.J. HALL: Just me and Mom.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, wow!

D.J. HALL: Wow!

PAUL KARLSTROM: She, obviously, didn't have gentlemen callers; she didn't have boyfriends or anything like that?

D.J. HALL: Well she did, actually, up until I was about eight, and there were so many men who wanted to marry her.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Really? Why?

D.J. HALL: Well because she was beautiful; she was vivacious; she was bright, and probably—and it was always—the excuse was no one could ever meet the standards of my father in her mind, but it was probably that she really never could have been with men, ever. And even in her crazy years, there were men who were interested in her and put up with some of that shit, but she—that was just impossible for her.

PAUL KARLSTROM: It's a shame that you should have some, too.

D.J. HALL: Yes.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well this is something—

D.J. HALL: Yeah, but yeah, my mother couldn't have men in her life. That's a big part of it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Because then she would lose presumably some control of the decontamination and so forth.

D.J. HALL: Oh, my, I think that's [earlier!] I think that goes way back. You know, we can hypothesize, but—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Control and power would be a possibility, but anyway, let's set that aside because we are amateurs, even though—and actually in a way, we're not, because I think both of us have—we're grown up within this kind of where you seek answers and you really pay attention. You think about it. Let's see. Well, again, there are about 10 directions to go with this, but you were saying earlier, we were—okay, we were up in the studio talking about Eric Fischel and you had this Eric Fischel book and I was reckless and I said, "Well, you know, you're like the bright, sunny side of Eric Fischel representing the dark side of suburbia and swimming pools and beaches and everything else." And, you know, there are some, to the casual observer at least, there would be some real connections, and yet the world view seems, in some way, so opposite. And why don't you tell me again what your response was.

D.J. HALL: Well, number one, I'm definitely a better painter.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I know you said that.

D.J. HALL: I had to say that; I have to say that for the record. But, number two, what's interesting is that my work looks so bright and sunny on the surface, and people, particulary women, maybe women who share some of what I experienced, see underneath it, and there really is a dark side. And to make it very simple, the dark side is that women in our culture, I don't know about other cultures, are taught to cover up our bad feelings, and the way we do it is with big smiles. And studies have shown that when women are very angry and talking in an angry state, they're actually smiling, gritting their teeth and, you know, my models are kind of—until I started toning it down with them, like making a conscious effort, they were basically gritting their teeth with their smiles.

Now I also—my art, without thinking about it, going back to that childhood fantasy thing, my professional paintings are still creating fantasies and that happy, everything-is-okay fantasy, it's a way of covering up probably some of the really scared feelings I have inside of me; fears about aging, fears about death and dying in my own past, being a woman, and what I said to you was that Eric Fischel is painting a dark side, but like in a quote I just read in a book last night, people like to look at, examine, or play out the dark side, but are really people who have fairly okay lives going on and they need to experience this other stuff, and I am doing the opposite. So if I'm making any sense at this point.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah.

D.J. HALL: And I think Eric Fischl—I know his parents divorced I think later on when he was a teenager, but from what I read, he had a fairly okay life. And so painting the dark side I don't think is so much a reflection of some internal turmoil. It's just he's painting the dark side for whatever reason.

PAUL KARLSTROM: To complete his experience because what you're doing is trying to complete your life experience—

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—or at least in the past by—

D.J. HALL: Right. The other thing, the other remark I wanted to make about that was—this blew me away. I heard this about three or four years ago, but people always say, "Your paintings are so happy. You must be really—deep down a really happy person," and I think that my core person is an okay, optimistic person, but, you know, if it weren't for the miracles of modern chemistry, I probably wouldn't be sitting here in this room right now, and I mean that very seriously.

PAUL KARLSTROM: You mean the meds.

D.J. HALL: What?

PAUL KARLSTROM: The meds?

D.J. HALL: The medication I take?

PAUL KARLSTROM: The meds, yeah.

D.J. HALL: Yes, yeah, thank God for meds.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I mean this is it; this is like the third person of most rooms—

D.J. HALL: Changed my life; it changed my life. But people would say, "Oh, it's so bright and sunny and the colors and all that." Well I heard this amazing thing. There was a study done of people in institutions and people who did art therapy. The more depressed they were or their diagnosis was, the brighter the colors in their work. And boy, that rang a few bells for me. So maybe as I get older and more healed, I may be doing more subdued colors. That may happen.

PAUL KARLSTROM: You mean is this sort of a Van Gogh story, a little bit?

D.J. HALL: Oh, God, no.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well—

D.J. HALL: Does it relate—I just—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, you know, colors.

D.J. HALL: I always said all my life, "I will only paint daylight." That's it. Well, I'm already doing some night stuff

lately and I'm anticipating doing a lot more, so some weird change is going on. And I never question these changes and I don't necessarily understand them at the time. It's only looking back that I understand it, but this is really becoming a focus in how I perceive where I'm going in the next five or 10 years.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Do you feel that—we'll have a chance to talk more about this part, but it is so interesting and, in a way, I think this is one of the ways we understand people, and the interesting thing is that most of us have been touched by mental illness, emotional instability, whatever terms they want to use. Thank God for chemistry, you're right.

D.J. HALL: Thank God.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But the life experience that comes—that we're given, that many of us have been given, especially before chemistry came in to existence . . . it's also, by the way, being tinkered with and screwing up a lot of people, but that's another story.

D.J. HALL: I mean I would fear that, but no, it's only been positive.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I mean it's a matter of experimentation. But at any rate, it's true. Certain things are—a certain stability and evenness can be brought to bear that can make it then possible to work, for instance, you know, to do that. And so your story, what you're talking about, is, in a way, not unique. By that, I'm saying it opens up a window onto that world which many people have experienced in one way or another and it's a big mistake to say that art comes directly out of disturbance.

D.J. HALL: But it definitely—there's a connection.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But there is—yeah, and this is, I guess, what I really think is interesting and worth pursuing. Maybe not now, but—how did you come to terms, though, with the sexuality? I mean this issue. You're a young woman, worldly young woman, living in a weirdo situation, if I may call it that.

D.J. HALL: It was weirdo. That was a word I used actually.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay, right, weirdo. Earlier, I said we should talk about friendships and all that because—how did you—how were you able to establish any kind of an other-directed life where this is, what we're told, socializing is about, being socialized?

D.J. HALL: It was really hard, but, you know, see—and this relates to my work actions. I think about it. I was so good at faking it and facade that the outgoing cheerleader, perfect student, all that stuff, but it was a big—

PAUL KARLSTROM: You were a cheerleader?

D.J. HALL: Hard to believe, yeah, but it was a big thing because I'd be sitting at the back of the bus when all the other cheerleaders are up front, I guess feeling whatever the young, "normal" adolescent girls feel, and I would sit there, I couldn't feel what they were feeling, and I couldn't get it, and I felt totally disconnected. But the minute I got into where I had to do the role of being cheerleader, I could do it. So I did a lot of—I was very good, I guess, at pretense, and—well yeah, it's survival. I had to pretend everything was okay. As far as real friendship, I did have a couple of friends and even one I was able to finally tell her that this stuff was going on in my life because it was so embarrassing. I do look back and I realize that I would scare boys off and I—my mother always said, "Oh, you scare boys off because you're," you know, "you're pretty and you're bright" and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I think that people picked up on—in fact, this one girlfriend of mine from my school with whom I shared stuff said that I was extremely intense and nervous all the time. And so I'm sure that that's what the boys picked up on. It was like, "Whoa, we don't need to hear this stuff." And that intensity was this ever watchfulness.

I had to be so careful the few moments that people met my mother to not let them know what was going on and then to make sure my mother couldn't look at their fingernails and think they had fungus and oh, my God, I was going to come home to a night of "decontaminating". It was just a incredible need to be looking over the situation and controlling everybody in the situation. So yes, how do you have a friendship when you're in those kinds of circumstances? It's pretty hard. So I really didn't until I got out of the house and in college.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Let's take a big leap—

D.J. HALL: Okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—right now. Maybe not such a big leap because you've been, just now as a matter of fact, talking in terms of control, you know, the need to control the world, a controlled situation, and it's going to be, I think, an interesting way to talk about art.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But right now, what I want to do then is bring this to the artist model theme.

D.J. HALL: Okay, great.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Because one of the things that interests me, and the time we have on this particular tape, I'd like to touch on it. This can be an aspect or an element in the artist-model exchange and it doesn't have to be nude models at all, but it has to do with the sources for images. And I know when we were talking before, you said that you don't do nudes in your paintings. You don't like Eric Fischl.

D.J. HALL: No.

PAUL KARLSTROM: That's a lot of what he does, so what he's grappling with or chosen to deal with takes that particular form, and I would say it's a hell of a lot about control, who's in charge, who rules this world, who's in charge of this world. And I get the sense very much that this is one way to describe your art.

D.J. HALL: You got it. I mean it makes perfect sense.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And so it doesn't have to involve sexuality, although that tends to enter into many things, but how would you describe—well, first of all, you do figure drawing. We were talking about this, but it sounds—

D.J. HALL: Right. I like drawing nudes.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—like you do very much as an art school or let's say—

D.J. HALL: Academic approach.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—an academic exercise.

D.J. HALL: Right, and I keep it completely separate from my painting.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And so that really is just—it's like practice, refining the skill.

D.J. HALL: It's a love of drawing; it's a love of the eye/hand coordination, and I do see that it does influence my painting in the sense that when you have your chops going with life drawing, you're just at your peak, and that does translate over into painting. I don't know how to put it into words, but when I'm doing a lot of life drawing, painting the figure is much easier for me. I can't explain it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: It seems to make sense.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. I mean I'm sure it makes sense.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, okay. I want you to tell a story that you already told me once, but I want to have it on tape.

D.J. HALL: Okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And that has to do with—this is not your own experience.

D.J. HALL: Get out of here.

PAUL KARLSTROM: This was a colleague of yours teaching life drawing, and I remember this quite well, I think, from when we were over here, but where some of the problems that you can run into with models. This is a male model. Do you remember the story that—

D.J. HALL: Yes.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And I don't know if you want to mention the colleague. I don't know why not, but that was an interesting story because I believe it was within the classroom—

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—school situation where you're supposed to be so entirely neutral.

D.J. HALL: Right. Well, I was a student, and I have to say that, number one, I was and probably still am a very naive person in certain ways. Also, I'm the kind of person, in my own naiveté or whatever, that from the get-go, even as a kid, I was like if someone told me a secret, it was a secret. I never revealed it, even if I ended up hating that person, and I have some amazing secrets that I'm still holding onto in life, that I would never use. Maybe it's because I was just so hurt by my mother and stuff that I just knew that you didn't hurt people in

certain ways. Okay, so the model got an erection in class and I have to say that it meant nothing to me because the way I dealt with things, and maybe it was because of my mother, you just push things down—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Figuratively.

D.J. HALL: Right, figuratively, right. It's like, "Okay, he's got an erection, just keep drawing; no big deal," you know. "This is not happening." And even when I'm teaching college life drawing, it was this semester or last semester, because when it was happening, it was like, "Okay," you know, "it's happening," you know. "I'm sure this happens. Why wouldn't it?" It's like, "It'll get under control," you know. "The model—it'll get together, so I'm not even going to sit here and worry about it." So, you know, it happens and it's their problem, but—no, that's awful. I'm just saying I'm not—as a student, I didn't get too upset about it because I'm there to draw, and as a teacher, it was more like, "Let's not make a big deal out of this, okay."

PAUL KARLSTROM: No, because it's embarrassing all the way around.

D.J. HALL: Well, it's embarrassing all the way around, and the less—but it's also a human condition, so why get in a lather about it anyway.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay. Let me ask you this. We'll just go a little bit into this territory because this is, of course, what I'm writing about, not that this whole interview is about that, but why do you think—well from what you've said, I don't think you think about it much at all which is probably the best way to deal with it, but this is supposed to be a sexually neutral zone. This is a professional thing in where—

D.J. HALL: But then you have to ask—but you ask yourself, "Why do some of the models go into modeling?" Some of the poses that some of the—this one particular female takes that kind of blow me away, it's like I think she must be getting something out of it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL: So, yeah, proceed, so—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, no. Basically, that's where I'm going with this.

D.J. HALL: All right, okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Do you wonder about the motivation? And if you [the model] get aroused, chances are—I mean most of us think that we probably couldn't possibly, you know. We'd be so self-conscious, but who knows unless you're there.

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But I guess what—if you're talking about Eros in the Studio at all, that some participant there may be bringing into that situation, well, you know, leading him by the hand, holding hands with Eros and bringing him or her in, and this is supposedly not unprofessional behavior, but it seems to be the case. There's something going on in the mind, which is an exhibitionism and getting off on that—

D.J. HALL: Perhaps. I mean, okay, I look—most models I've worked with, nude models, they're extremely professional. They're completely committed to what they do, and they love art and they see themselves as being a part of a very important process and perhaps part of history or potentially history. One in particular I'm thinking of right now who had a semi-state of arousal once, I think it was just a human thing when it happened to him because he's one guy—I mean he comes—"I've got this prop; I've got that prop. I'll do this. I'll do any—." I mean he would do anything, and I say he's just totally committed to the process of helping students. And so for him, that was purely something that happened to him for whatever reason that day, but not because he's coming from some—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL:—personal getting off on it, whereas like I just said a moment ago, there's this one female model I've drawn several times and I've used her for my students several times, and clearly, she takes very aggressive poses.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Open poses.

D.J. HALL: Very open.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL: The first time the young male students have seen large breasts on a woman and I think she's playing with them [the students] or toying with them.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, it's a job benefit, I guess.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. But I have to say most of them are not like that, and certainly, there are other female models who are just, again, they're there to do their job—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL:—period, and the minute the break comes, the robe is on, and they're sitting down and back to reading their book or studying for whatever final they're taking at U.C.L.A. and eating their lunch or their breakfast.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, I mean it is a way to make money.

D.J. HALL: It's a way to make money.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, that's true.

D.J. HALL: But in addition to that, these people are committed to doing the best job they can do.

PAUL KARLSTROM: No. Obviously, I don't mean in any way to suggest that they're unprofessional people.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. I'm sure there are some—I'm sure there have been weirdos, and I know that at least at Otis where it's the only place I've taught life drawing—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Are you teaching there now?

D.J. HALL: Not this moment. I taught this spring.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right, not right now.

D.J. HALL: I'm here.

PAUL KARLSTROM: You're sitting here interviewing with me.

D.J. HALL: I'm sitting here. But I think they quickly segregate out people they presume to be potential problems that way.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, it's a whole other interesting subject.

D.J. HALL: Maybe in an academic setting or a school institution setting, but also like in life-drawing groups where artists go to draw, I think that those people get screened out, too, because you just don't want that, but maybe that's a totally different thing where individuals—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Actually, that's not entirely true, but we can save that for another session.

D.J. HALL: Okay. The groups I've been in; the groups I've been in.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay, and I think the important thing here is that really, as you said, this is not something that really interests you very much.

D.J. HALL: No.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And that what interests you are these models, invariably women, in fact, almost all your subjects—

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—are women, and so there's a self-reference quite clearly. It's your tribe, your gang, and so everything that's being worked out of whatever kind, it may be sexuality, is within this woman's world. I'm going a little bit beyond what an interviewer usually does, but these are the things that come to my mind as we're talking. And so your models really are photographs.

D.J. HALL: Very scripted, story-boarded almost, the way I put it all together and before I go and shoot, the way I select them. I obviously pick a very certain type of woman in my work. And as I said to you last week, unlike the restrained self that I am in many situations, when it comes to getting the model I want, nothing will stand in my way.

PAUL KARLSTROM: That's right. You told me that. Oh, good, there's a little tape left. Tell me, tell me again.

D.J. HALL: Well, you know, I mean like seeing someone on the street and—

PAUL KARLSTROM: What about the one you chased down?

D.J. HALL: Well, yeah. She was out in the alley behind my studio and I tried to get her attention and she started walking away, and the more I tried to get her attention, the more she thought I was a nut case, and so I was outside her locked gate saying, "Please come and talk to me," and I don't know what made her finally come and talk to me, but I told her what I did. And the minute I said who I was, thank God she knew of my work so then it was okay. But I've stopped other people on the street before and taken their names and addresses who have not a clue as to what I am. I would never do that for anything else in my life.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Good thing.

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right, Toby?

D.J. HALL: But if I see someone who fits into the image of what I want, I have to have them. That is interesting talking about this Eros thing in a way. I have to have them.

PAUL KARLSTROM: It's very interesting.

D.J. HALL: It is, isn't it? Like I get upset if I can't "have" them.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well it's about desire, needing desire, and we tend to simplify society, I think. It gets right down to just this—

[END TAPE 1, SIDE B.]

[BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE A.]

[BEGINNING OF TAPE HAS TECHNICAL PROBLEMS.]

D.J. HALL: ... I need to manifest it with models and props and background and bits and pieces of information, so I then I have to go out and find models or call up people I've used in the past. And the problem with dealing with models is that they're humans.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Oh, dear.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, oh, dear, so I'm dealing with schedules, with egos; that's the worst part of it, and just all the stuff I have to deal with rather than if I could just somehow make the image just happen on the paper for me without them. But I've certainly dealt with some stuff with my models that left me with splitting headaches.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Like one of your main models—

D.J. HALL: One of my main models.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—[inaudible] more difficult. Talk about [inaudible].

D.J. HALL: I should say her name because, you know, she is a part of our history. In fact, apparently, she's been drawn by many L.A. artists. I mean she—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Really?

D.J. HALL: Well, she makes a point of always going through that with me, but I think Peter Alexander, Don Bacardy, even William Wilson as an art student who was in love with her and wanted to marry her drew her. She's got these drawings.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Who is she?

D.J. HALL: Her name is Jan Holland, Jan, and Jan is this—

PAUL KARLSTROM: I think I know who she is.

D.J. HALL: You might know her. Everybody knows Jan. She's five foot eight or nine, and she would now be in her early 60s, but until a few years ago, you would never know it. She has one of those kind of personalities that just

takes over a situation and she's fabulous-looking. She was born with incredible bone structure. And I guess she's always either been or felt like she was the center of attention. So that as a young, naive artist when I was first put together with her through an interesting experience, coincidence, I really gravitated towards her—her because she could do whatever I said because she really is into showing-off—God, that—opposite of modest. She's into being a model. She's into doing her job. And through the years in situations where I couldn't be behind the camera shooting her and I had to interject myself as one of the models and rely on Toby to photograph us, I never was too worried because I knew that Jan would always project the thing that was required of her at that time.

And whether my models appeared the same or not throughout the years, there are subtle shifts in what I'm telling them to do and to think and feel and project to the camera. And Jan could always pick up on that for me perfectly. And Jan's a trooper. When we were in Jamaica, I mean she'd be out drinking until, well, we'd all gone to bed. She's still drinking and smoking all night long, and at 8:30, she's at my "door" all her makeup and dressed, going, "Are we ready to shoot, darling?" So, you know, she was great.

But along with that, this incredible ego that would either offend and upset completely the other model she might be working with that day. One time in particular, I'm looking at the painting of that day in that other room, Jan and Michelle, two women who know the arts and the art world; they know that they may have a place in history by being in the painting, and two women who also in their personal lives are used to having a lot of attention, and I put them together for the first time that day, and as the shooting session went on, it got extremely tense. The egos were battling it out to a point where Jan was getting completely out of control and Michelle was just tightening up, and I almost called off the thing. But, again, like I said before, I wanted it so badly, I didn't care what was going to happen, and when I was done, I had used so much of my own self to get them over whatever hurdles that were going on mentally and emotionally that I really had a migraine and I went to bed like at, you know, it was like 6:30 at night.

And so, yeah, Jan has, through the years, gotten more and more out of control—and this is interesting. We're talking about sexual stuff. What I have said about Jan, and this is kind of personal at this time, we talk about dirty, old men, but I think there are dirty, old women, too, as they start experiencing the loss of their youth and their feminine wiles. They need to call more and more attention to it. And Jan has just become increasingly outrageous and outspoken in modeling situations and in—like I was telling you about that birthday party I had for myself a few years ago and Jan just took over the party.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Oh, yeah, it was supposedly her party.

D.J. HALL: Right, and I just had to remind her that she'd have her chance, but that it was my party. And Jan, at that point, was telling me that she wanted to model for me.

[PHONE RINGS - PAUSE TAPE.]

D.J. HALL: So what was I saying? Oh, yes, so the dirty, old woman thing—was that where I was?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, yeah.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. Oh, and then Jan also started telling me how much she wanted to be—but she felt and was telling people at all of my exhibition openings that she was a muse for my work. Well, you know, she's not. She certainly is this significant part of my work, but she's not necessarily the muse, and she'll take over my openings, too, as though she's the center attraction which, I mean she—my work wouldn't exist in a sense without her.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well how long has she been modeling for you?

D.J. HALL: Modeling for me? She modeled for me—the first time I shot her was in 1980 or '81 and I used her until 1997. It's a long time. We have a long history together and I—that I feel bad about, but—and you and I talked about the muse thing, and unlike someone who's working one-on-one in a studio with a model, and certainly, there are artists for whom a model is a muse. For me, my muse is some—

[TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH MICROPHONES.]

D.J. HALL: ... female, California kind of American girl next door, healthy, but she didn't—no, boobs are not a part of it, but maybe I kind of suspected that she didn't have a lot of personality, but I had never really talked with her much, but she didn't. And, obviously, the people in my paintings are exuding a certain quality, whether they possess that in real life or not.

[TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH TAPE.]

PAUL KARLSTROM: ... much for this sort of contract, I guess, or this arrangement between an artist and a subject/object that is necessary. And I guess what interests me is when they're human beings, it's much more complicated because they do have power; they're human, and we're not—none of us are, well, indifferent completely to that, so there's something that's set up—and I gather from what you say, that there is a kind of energy that makes a difference. Some of these models have, others don't.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, it does—I mean I've thought about it before, but never thought about it that much until now. Yeah, I do need that energy from them, so I don't know when I'm picking them, if somehow I picked up on their body language at the moment that besides their facial features there is that energy or potential for it. And it's funny, you know, you talk about life model object/subject. I always give this little talk at the beginning to a new model that, "Don't be insulted by me if I'm directing you, although I'm really nice and polite, but if I just start shouting directions or if I come over and I'm moving you this way and I'm moving this part of your clothing or whatever, that you have to understand that while I'm shooting you, I'm only seeing you as this object." But the weird thing is, I say that to them, like this tough thing, but the minute I start taking the photographs, I just fall away from that and it's totally like, "Oh, yeah, this is great. You're wonderful," and all this stuff. And they obviously pick up on that energy, too.

PAUL KARLSTROM: How fascinating.

D.J. HALL: And they work hard for me, God. They don't get anything out of it, really. It's pretty amazing.

PAUL KARLSTROM: They get a fee.

D.J. HALL: No, they don't get a fee. Are you talk—what?

PAUL KARLSTROM: You don't pay any amount?

D.J. HALL: No.

PAUL KARLSTROM: No?

D.J. HALL: No.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And this one has been doing it for all these years?

D.J. HALL: All these years, and I mean all these models—not only did—you know, I'd go and I'd go through their entire wardrobes. I'd say, "Please don't be embarrassed, but I have to see your clothing because I might find something that you wouldn't even think of," and they let me come in their houses, go through their wardrobes, their dishes for props.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Why do you suppose they [inaudible]?

D.J. HALL: You know, isn't it? I guess we all want to be a star.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, this is what I'm thinking.

D.J. HALL: Or they react to me. I don't know what it is because like I said, some of them know who I am and so they have an idea they may be a part of art history, some more than others. I mean Jan thinks that this is definitely—her mortality lies in my work. The others are like, "Yeah, we know D.J.'s work, great. This will be fun." And there's others who are entirely—they have not a clue. They're the easiest because, obviously, they're not worrying about it. Yeah.

TOBY WATSON: Jan said you are her biographer.

D.J. HALL: Wow!

PAUL KARLSTROM: Wow!

D.J. HALL: Okay, Jan says I'm her biographer. Well, whatever.

PAUL KARLSTROM: So it's all about her.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, oh yeah. But, you know, yeah, they do this; they do this. And like I mean I have this one woman, she was working out the scheduling with the other woman. "D.J., I'll be there; I'll pick her up. I'll do whatever you want. You call me on a moment's notice." Okay, it's like if someone came to us and said, "Paul, D.J., you want to be in this movie?" We go, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, we'll do whatever to get into the movie." I guess that's what it is. We all want to be a center of attention.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Here's a related question, I think.

[TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH MICROPHONES.]

D.J. HALL: Well, I mean you talked about that earlier. Like "Isn't that interesting, there's all these women you do," and yeah, and I think that in my case, it probably does have a lot to do with me personally. But, you know, male artists, for a good percentage of their work, do women also. Well I said to you earlier that women are more interesting in that they, okay, well, they project more. I don't know how because I'm thinking of a nude model.

[TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH MICROPHONES.]

D.J. HALL: ... but through artifice, women, with their clothing and their costuming, and et cetera, their makeup, project—

[TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH MICROPHONES.]

D.J. HALL: Men were pretty much, you know, you saw—men were seen one way, whereas women were allowed to be seen in multiple ways. So that's just more intriguing to me. I don't know about other artists. Maybe a female model, they're more mysterious. I mean there's so many things about it. I don't know what it is. There's more going on in their minds than the men.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well I mean it's easy for some of us to answer that question, but that isn't the big answer.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And I'm very, very fascinated by the fact that most women that I talk about say they would prefer to

draw—

D.J. HALL: What?

PAUL KARLSTROM:—women.

D.J. HALL: See, when it comes to life drawing, I'd much rather draw the women models than the male models. It has nothing to do with body parts or anything.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right.

D.J. HALL: The women are just more interesting. The guys are kind of like boring.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, is there something about the basic difference in configuration that—

D.J. HALL: No. I just said it's not the body parts.

PAUL KARLSTROM: [Inaudible]—

D.J. HALL: No, no. It has nothing to do with the body parts, because I have drawn male and female models who have exactly the same bodies, but I still prefer the woman over the guy because she's just—there's something more interesting about her.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, now could this simply be the fact that you're a woman and can identify or imagine that you have more in common, so then finally, it is all about you?

D.J. HALL: Yeah, that I can't answer.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I'll answer it for you.

D.J. HALL: Okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: See, that's what I think.

D.J. HALL: But you may be wrong.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Oh, well, we all may be wrong, but we—at least it raises the question then. I'm getting enough feedback doing these interviews to see this pattern. I have a young friend who is very beautiful. I sort of—she grew up with—or Ann and I watched her grow up with our daughter as well—and she recently got married, but she has a very handsome, great husband, attractive as can be, and plays golf and works out and so forth, I

guess. Anyway, we're driving along in San Francisco. He was in the car when Lynn, that's her name, made the remark, "That guy was in a car with a bunch of women." That's my fantasy, but anyway, she says, "Well, you know, I have to say, you know, women are really so much nicer looking, don't you think, than men?" And I go, "Oh." But I said, "Is that so?" And she said, "Yeah. I just think that they're more interesting and they're prettier."

D.J. HALL: They are.

PAUL KARLSTROM: They're more beautiful.

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And I didn't argue with this.

D.J. HALL: Except when they get older.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I said, "But look, if you don't—what about Mike?" They just got married. And she says, "Yeah."

D.J. HALL: But see, this could be—

[TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH RECORDING.]

[END TAPE 2, SIDE A.]

[BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE B.]

PAUL KARLSTROM: Continuing a first-session interview with D.J. Hall, struggling with technical recording problems on Side A of this Tape 2. This is Side B. We have switched equipment and everything is going to be wonderful.

D.J. HALL: We hope.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Everything will be fine. This is much better. Now let's see what we can retrieve—

D.J. HALL: Reconstruct.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—reconstruct, although we lost part of the last side, but that's okay. But I want to hear—we were talking about—we've finally come now to artists and models, or something, and you retrieved one thing that was an epiphany.

D.J. HALL: At least it seemed like that at the time.

PAUL KARLSTROM: What was your epiphany?

D.J. HALL: Well, we were talking about why both male and female artists were "drawn" to drawing a female figure predominantly. And one thing that kind of flashed through my mind, this is for non-artists also, but that I think psychologically, we are all craving mortality [sic]. And quite often, as we get older, we're craving it more and more, and one aspect of that is that you see in men as they get older, they go after the young cookie.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Cookie?

D.J. HALL: The young cookie. They divorce the wife and they get the new cookie and they start the new family.

TOBY WATSON: Immortality.

D.J. HALL: Oh, God, yeah, immortality; oh, yes, immortality. Okay, so men, not art men, choose a young female to—his body is aging. By picking this younger female, he is identifying with his youth and, therefore, recapturing his immortality. And I think that women, too, number one, in our society, we are told to stay young, so we're doing all these things all the time, and being assaulted by advertising media to do things to stay young, and we're doing that, the way we stay young and achieve our immortality, is by keeping ourselves beautiful. Now it would make sense, taking just these typical human aspects, male and female, that the artist, male and female, would then possibly be projecting this onto the model. So that maybe that's ultimately why artists then would say, "I'll choose the female over the male because she is, for whatever reasons, the embodiment of immortality."

PAUL KARLSTROM: It's a good epiphany.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, I think so. I mean I could make it better if I hadn't been drinking so much. Really, I could.

PAUL KARLSTROM: You're not supposed to drink that—

D.J. HALL: I know. Drinking so much iced tea, you know. I just get crazy when I drink this much iced tea.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, we've been working hard.

D.J. HALL: I know.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I mean, it's now after 8:00 and we started about, oh, 5:00, I think.

D.J. HALL: Wow! No, but I—you know what? I hate to use this word, but all that baggage has been cast on to the male in the same way. Even in history.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Don't you think it's also has a biological imperative? As Toby was suggesting earlier.

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: What about that? Is it—that's interesting.

D.J. HALL: We have to be attractive.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Actually, we just imitate life and [inaudible].

D.J. HALL: Okay, all right. I will go along with what Toby said, that women have to be attractive because we only have so many chances to reproduce compared to men, so biologically, we have to be attractive. Now I'm going to take it a step further, and this kind of goes along with what I was just saying. Women also, through advertising and society, we've been taught we have to be more attractive, to maintain our youth and immortality, and also, yes, we have to be more attractive in order to gain a mate because basically, in society, women have been financially dependent on the male mate. So again, maybe that female model is unconsciously projecting more attractiveness by virtue of being a woman, by virtue of growing up in our society.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But isn't it even more basically—but I think Toby was saying—

D.J. HALL: That biologically, she has to be very attractive.

PAUL KARLSTROM: It's reproduction.

D.J. HALL: Right. She has to be more attractive to attract—

PAUL KARLSTROM: I mean, basically—of course, we move—

D.J. HALL: We're way out there now.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—we've gone so far beyond that, but there are those who believe it all comes from something extremely basic and primitive, and that is survival of the species.

D.J. HALL: Right, so I—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Modern world seems to have forgotten about that.

D.J. HALL: Well, we haven't, because—right.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But our drives—

D.J. HALL: Right. It's just like we think that—oh, like I always laugh when politicians or whatever, corporate heads, say, "We have now mastered nature." I just heard these quotes the other day, some president in the '40s, "We have now mastered nature" or someone when Hoover Dam was opened, "We have now tamed Mother Nature," and we're always saying that, and yet we still have horrific floods and fires, et cetera. We will never tame nature. So, yes, we are ridiculously egotistical in thinking that we have overcome a basic and intrinsic, biological force acting upon us. So I agree with you and Toby that there's a biological thing here that could make the woman need to project attractiveness, therefore, she's more attractive as a model. But I'm also saying add that to society, especially of the 20th Century. Now the 21st Century when mass advertising entered the picture and media and the manipulation and woman also was told, not only biologically, but told by the world all the time that she has to be attractive. So we are filled with these notions, we women, that we have to be attractive. So, yeah, maybe when the woman is sitting on the model stand, that's going through her head, or it's not, but it's just, at that point, embedded into her.

PAUL KARLSTROM: What do you think about this which, for some men is a frustration, especially in the age post-feminism, where we're supposed to be equal, and a lot of feminist artists that I want to talk a little about that in terms of your connection; we touched on it earlier, but in the '70s especially, like Sylvia Sleigh and Joan Semmel

whom I just e-mailed today in New York in the '70s were trying to appropriate or reverse the male gaze, in fact, trying to do something about what we've just been talking about, to say, "Okay, what about us? What about us? We don't feel necessarily we want sexual vocabulary as determined by men," which is a little bit of what we've been describing, you know. The woman is the object. We have a slightly different interpretation going here on this tape, but—and I've talked with Joan Semmel about this and she felt her job was to say, "Hey, our turn." There was an attempt to reverse the gaze, but the fact of the matter is that it didn't seem to catch on.

D.J. HALL: Yeah. I'm not aware of it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, it didn't seem to catch on and it seemed like a dead end because they—well, again, there's several parts for this, but I guess what I was really interested in was the then awareness of men, a consciousness that it's okay to be desired. We desire the women. It has determined a lot of imagery. A lot of images in the history of art—"Well, what about us?" Because we listen to this. We hear women, as we've been discussing, saying that, "Gee, we're really more interested in ourselves" and we say, "Well, what about us? Aren't we pretty? Aren't we attractive?" If things are equal as feminism taught us, and those of us who embrace that, we were led down some kind of strange, little path into a dead end because now we're hearing, "Well, you know, you guys are okay, but we're much sexier." Everybody wants to be desired. I would suggest that this is not unconnected to things that happened in art. And so where does that leave us?

D.J. HALL: Men?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah.

D.J. HALL: First of all, when you talked about reversing the gaze, well, I understand the concept, but I never saw that happen, so either it wasn't successful or I'm thoroughly out of touch.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, feminism actually tried to do this on a one-to-one basis. They wanted equivalency that said, "Well wait a minute. It's all about—

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—the culture and the society that has forced us to be these passive objects to be looked at and sexualized."

D.J. HALL: But you said that's passive. This isn't necessarily passive.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Joan Semmel and some of the feminist artists of the '70s.

D.J. HALL: And from some of the conversation you and I had today, I don't necessarily see these women, even though they're being objects at the moment, that they're passive. They're in an agreement to be the object, but they may be putting forth a quality that's totally un-passive. And I'm fearing what we might have lost with the technological problems, was that my own experience, and I'm trying to be objective right now, 'cause I've certainly painted men and photographed them, they are just—they're kind of blank, and I don't know why, but all things we've talked about, I'm trying to clarify it by saying those things; they're just not interesting. It has nothing to do with the anatomical parts. They're just not interesting because somehow what comes through a face, it doesn't come through the same way in men as it does through women.

PAUL KARLSTROM: God, where's Toby?

D.J. HALL: Guys are goofy. Okay, let's put it down to basics. Now you've got the goofy-guy stare. Guys are goofy.

PAUL KARLSTROM: She's gone right back there again.

TOBY WATSON: A long time ago, Debby and I—

D.J. HALL: Guys are dogs.

TOBY WATSON:—discussed, and this is part of the D.J. Hall versus Debra Hall thing, which is does she want to be an artist or does she want to be a feminist artist or a political artist or whatever? And it was like if you're an artist, you're an artist. It has nothing to do with, you know, staking a claim and becoming Judy Baca or Gork—what's his name, Gork?

D.J. HALL: Gronk.

TOBY WATSON: Gronk, you know.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Or Judy Chicago.

D.J. HALL: Judy Chicago.

TOBY WATSON: Judy Chicago, you know, the vagina plates, which I think was incredibly insulting to Susan B. Anthony. But as liberated as Susan B. Anthony was, I don't think she'd want to have her vagina portrayed in some sort of purple and pink—

D.J. HALL: I think Toby's point is interesting.

TOBY WATSON: But Debby decided, as we had discussed, to take sort of the moral high road as an artist, which is to not align herself with a cause or become labeled as such-and-such, other than she got tagged as a photo realist, but that's a type of art, not an art movement. And she's slotted as that, too, naturally.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well let's talk about—

D.J. HALL: So Toby said some very valid things there, and what I was going to say before that is that—and I really believe this—

TOBY WATSON: Well, that's why she's D.J. Hall as opposed to Debra Hall.

D.J. HALL: Right. I totally—we got—Paul asked that and we got into that—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Did we get that on the tape or—

D.J. HALL: Yeah, that was on the first tape. But men—

PAUL KARLSTROM: She gave you the credit, by the way, for the advice.

D.J. HALL: Oh, absolutely.

TOBY WATSON: I don't know that it's good advice or not, but at the time, it seemed like it was.

D.J. HALL: And it stuck. Okay, so guys are dogs—men are dogs and women are cats, but it's true, it's true.

TOBY WATSON: Men are from Mars and women are from Venus.

D.J. HALL: No, but I'm just saying, I think even if you get into different religions and you get into history and stuff, you know, the feminine aspect and feline stuff, but cats are more mysterious; they're more seductive; they're more interesting; there's more going on. And I love dogs, but dogs are kind of like, "Hi, here I am, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha." And it really comes down to that. Neither one is better, but that might be an easy way of summarizing this, the difference.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But what about this? Cats can be sometimes more distant and may be mean than some dogs anyway, and one of the—

D.J. HALL: Oh, that's people who don't know cats.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well I don't know. I've got some mean cats.

D.J. HALL: They're not just mean, no.

TOBY WATSON: He couched that. He said some dogs.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, some dogs, some cats.

D.J. HALL: I certainly don't know many—if they're distant, it means they're hurt. It means they're insecure.

TOBY WATSON: Look how distant this cat is. If this cat were a dog, he'd be [inaudible].

PAUL KARLSTROM: Right, that's my point.

D.J. HALL: No. He's 18 years old. He's had his dinner.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Maybe we don't want to go here.

D.J. HALL: Okay, all right. I'm just trying to make it simple. Guys are just more simple and it's just—maybe there's just not as much to get involved with when you're drawing them. It's like, "Okay, I drew him, big deal."

PAUL KARLSTROM: But how do you get so involved—how do you read so much into these models? Because this

really is about you, for sure. What you're doing is going into them, then bringing back from, and you're making choices that I think have to do with expectations. Some people would say that Toby and I are extremely deep and interesting, and as you look in our eyes, there's at least this much as most of the women you know.

D.J. HALL: Could be. And you could even say that some of my women are very shallow.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Maybe you don't want to go there.

D.J. HALL: And maybe some of my women are very shallow, yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: So how did you come about—we've got to bring it back to you, really. How did you come about with this dichotomy between men and women where the richness, the worthwhile engagement comes with you "guys" [women].

D.J. HALL: Well, now that's—it's not that it's worthwhile men are nothing, no. For me, as I've said earlier, the women, just by virtue of the clothing and the makeup and the hairstyles which are constantly changing, there's more going on there and women are able to project more. They're allowed more individuality than men.

PAUL KARLSTROM: In some ways, and certainly in dressing.

D.J. HALL: Right. Up until—

PAUL KARLSTROM: We're supposed to wear tuxedos [inaudible].

D.J. HALL: Right, right, so women are allowed more expression.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Fred Astaire.

TOBY WATSON: Obviously, men are much deeper and thoughtful, and women are more superficial.

D.J. HALL: Superficial, okay, whatever. Then maybe I like the superficial qualities, but I'm saying women are allowed, on just a visual level, to be more expressive, so I'm interested in that and I'm interested in the changes that go on. Women, also since little girls, were allowed to be more expressive. We can cry; we can scream, and you're supposed to always maintain a certain behavior.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Of course I don't do that, but you're right, you're supposed to—

D.J. HALL: But you know what I'm talking about, okay.

TOBY WATSON: I will say, and I'll agree with Debby, that—

D.J. HALL: Thank you.

TOBY WATSON:—on the level she's talking about, women express more about themselves than men do, and women are expected to.

D.J. HALL: Exactly.

TOBY WATSON: I think a really interesting example is that male newscasters are allowed to stay the same—were allowed to wear the same suit with the white shirt and red tie every day, and a woman newscaster is expected to have a new outfit every day. The woman is supposed to express herself in a different and fascinating and more interesting way every time. The man is not expected to do that.

D.J. HALL: That's true.

TOBY WATSON: In fact, continuity is expected.

D.J. HALL: Right, exactly.

TOBY WATSON: But that continuity comes across as boring in a painting.

D.J. HALL: He's got it. You know, women are never supposed to be seen like at certain events in the same dress twice kind of thing. And a guy—a tuxedo is always going to be the same.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay, but let's—I think these observations are—they're good and—

D.J. HALL: Right.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—on the mark.

D.J. HALL: And this will work for nudity also.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But you said something earlier that's much more serious, and that is that there's less—I can't quote you exactly, although it may be in my notes, that there's less going on [in men's minds] and that may have been a slip, but I mean you did say something awfully close to that.

D.J. HALL: Well, it appears that there's less going on.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And that's getting into the psychology of human beings, and then that doesn't say much because we know that's not true.

D.J. HALL: Right, so it's me and it's my own perception; it's my own flaw, okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: But it's not a flaw.

D.J. HALL: But it's my own perception.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Because there's a reason why you have all these women—

D.J. HALL: I hate men.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I don't think so.

D.J. HALL: No, I don't.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I don't think so.

D.J. HALL: But yeah, you're right. Well I grew up basically with women, and men, especially my father and especially in view of what was going on in my life, played not even a secondary role, they played no role because they chose to completely bow out and not to speak up when they saw some of the things that were going on. So I guess that's where I can get off saying that there's not much going on with men, and that's unfair of me, I'll admit. And I am unfair because I do take that view into even my contemporary relationships to some point.

TOBY WATSON: Debby's the only male role model, was her grandfather, because her father was absentee, and Debby's grandfather was dominated by the women around him. He may have been manly and expressed himself, but if he stepped out of line, he was put in place by these very strong women, Debby's grandmother and mother, so—

D.J. HALL: All right. Well now we're getting away from the model thing.

PAUL KARLSTROM: This is much more interesting.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: To me, this is much more—because finally, the point of this interview is to understand you better, your life in connection with the arts, and I think we've actually done a pretty good job of this tonight.

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: The model is always complicated and the model story is lots of stories and not just one. And you have, seems to me, a very particular relationship to models

where—

D.J. HALL: And I become friends with them, too. All of them have become my friends.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And it's just—I mean they're important. What I gather from the discussion is that finally, there is a dynamic, there's a dialogue that goes on—

D.J. HALL: Absolutely.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—as much as you want to think as the artist you determine control, which is what you tried to achieve with your image-making in the very beginning. It's so much more complicated.

D.J. HALL: It is because I realize I can confront—I never expected—I didn't plan to become friends. With all of

them, I've become friends and I basically adore them and admire them. And it's weird because sometimes it ends up that they are not what you think they are on the surface, and I've come to see some qualities in all these women I've chosen that are really wonderful qualities.

TOBY WATSON: If Debby wasn't heterosexual, she'd make a great lesbian.

PAUL KARLSTROM: We're winding this down.

D.J. HALL: But, you know, one thing—you know what's interesting if you want to get into the Eros thing, so maybe the need to control—I didn't have a need to control my models, but I only have to control them so far or conquer them is the word, or take them into me, whereas perhaps a male artist, he has less need and/or ability at some point to make that distinction. He gets caught up—like I just said, I admire them and they become my friends. Maybe the male artist, for him to go further, they don't just become objects, they become as friends and, therefore, they have to become as lovers, you know, or maybe—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, that's a good point.

D.J. HALL:—becoming involved with them or "conquering," for lack of a better word, the man says he has to become involved with them that way. But, yeah, it would be weird. If I were a male artist or with just female nudes all the time—I mean I know that men can get more stimulated or more easily or readily—

PAUL KARLSTROM: It's a famous thing, but it's a visual thing.

D.J. HALL: Yes.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And we're talking about visual imagery.

D.J. HALL: Just like watching pornography. It stimulates both men and women, so visual—

PAUL KARLSTROM: To varying degrees.

D.J. HALL: So visual stuff is stimulating.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, more so for men is the story that I hear. It's what I hear—

D.J. HALL: From whom? From authorities?

PAUL KARLSTROM: From just people.

D.J. HALL: Or from women? Okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: From women, yeah.

D.J. HALL: Okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: What about you?

D.J. HALL: I think it's stimulating, so—

PAUL KARLSTROM: So you and Toby are . . . of the same. You can sit and watch the same video and—

D.J. HALL: Or maybe as I as a female artist am more in tuned to visual stuff.

PAUL KARLSTROM: That's a really interesting point.

TOBY WATSON: Debby is not visually stimulated in that respect.

D.J. HALL: Oh, I'm not?

TOBY WATSON: No, you're not.

D.J. HALL: That's not true, honey.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Toby says that you are not—

D.J. HALL: What are you talking about?

PAUL KARLSTROM: Yeah, come down to the microphone here.

D.J. HALL: No, no. Now this is getting—no. I want to turn the mike off. I'm not going into this right now, but—no, I'm not getting into this right now, okay.

TOBY WATSON: Okay.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well we can save it for dinner conversation.

D.J. HALL: No. We can do that—

PAUL KARLSTROM: But it is interesting—

D.J. HALL: No, we'll just save it.

PAUL KARLSTROM: It is interesting, though, that you would think of yourself as visually stimulated—

D.J. HALL: I can be visually stimulated, yes.

PAUL KARLSTROM:—in this area.

D.J. HALL: Yes.

PAUL KARLSTROM: And your husband—

D.J. HALL: The stuff going on between you [Toby] and me is a totally different story and I'm not going to get into that right now.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Okay, okay, okay.

TOBY WATSON: You said "visually stimulated."

PAUL KARLSTROM: Visually stimulated.

D.J. HALL: Right.

TOBY WATSON: Okay. When I see you naked, I'm—

D.J. HALL: I know. I'm not talking about you naked; I'm talking about pornography.

TOBY WATSON: I'm ready to salute.

D.J. HALL: I know.

TOBY WATSON: When you see me naked, it's like "Oh, God."

D.J. HALL: This is a whole other thing.

PAUL KARLSTROM: No, no. This is what we were talking about—

D.J. HALL: This is about a whole other bull shit going on. We talked about it in therapy and I don't want to get into this.

PAUL KARLSTROM: No, no, no. This is not, I think, so uncommon, and I think that this—I was saying as much earlier. We didn't really—I was saying what about us, you know, and this is not actually an art history issue, but as you know by now, I see all of these things as just absolutely—

D.J. HALL: It's all related. How can you disassociate?

PAUL KARLSTROM: What Toby says is a kind of, well, I don't know if it's a frustration, something that we just have to accept. We would love to reverse the gaze, but you can't do it.

D.J. HALL: Oh, but why then—oh. I would say—pornography, why is it interesting then to me visually? Because it's women and men.

PAUL KARLSTROM: So it's about you.

D.J. HALL: Yeah, because it's not—

PAUL KARLSTROM: Because you can identify with—

D.J. HALL: Exactly, exactly. I'm not going to go into that, but you can—those words totally sum it up, Paul, and I do—then it's getting too revealing to talk about that further. But, yes, it is about me when I'm saying that.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Well, well, well.

D.J. HALL: Whoa.

PAUL KARLSTROM: This is a really good interview.

D.J. HALL: Yeah.

PAUL KARLSTROM: This is a very good—thank you very much.

D.J. HALL: I want to get out of this one, though.

PAUL KARLSTROM: It's time to stop, but—

TOBY WATSON: [Inaudible] tape?

D.J. HALL: I don't want to talk about this part any more.

PAUL KARLSTROM: I look forward to the next session.

D.J. HALL: I want to just talk about something else now.

PAUL KARLSTROM: Thanks, guys.

[END OF SESSION.]