

I will be talking tonight on some of the ideas of Arthur Danto, I have no idea if I can get through this, it seems too ambitious but we'll give it a go and the faint hearted can leave and the Texans can stay.

First two slides, I will talk fairly rapidly for me.

"Before he left London, Scully's paintings were grids or plaids that, however well received, did not convey, in his view, the spiritual qualities he came to New York to seek. For the first five or so years of his residence here, he worked with the kind of evenly spaced narrow stripes *Red on Cream* employs. Since these were perceived as Minimalist works of a very high order, they brought Scully considerable recognition. He did not see them as Minimalist at all, but rather as romantic and religious. I suppose, seeing the cream as light coming through the closely spaced bars, one could see a kind of allegory."

The one on the left is *Catherine*, 1980, and the photo on the right is *Sienna Door*, 1978

The painting on the left is in the group of paintings that the museum owns and as you will see it is made of evenly spaced horizontal and vertical stripes but the paintings that precede these paintings were made of only horizontal stripes and what happened to me is that when I left England, and I came to America on a kind of spiritual search, a quest for something deeper, I took out of my work all triviality or everything that could possibly be described as decorative or ornamental. I took out decorative, illusionistic space, decorative color and the cross, which of course creates illusion. And I made very austere paintings for about five years. These paintings had a correspondence naturally with

minimalism, however what's interesting to me is the difference between these paintings and the paintings of the truly minimalist artist, or post minimalist artists.

Post minimalism, as I am sure you all know, is correctly identified with painting and minimalism is generally identified with sculpture, to put it very simply. And the paintings I was making were really a question of "night-light" so they were still romantic and mystical in some way. I was searching for some form of deep pathos, a form of poetic expression that went somehow below the surface of appearances. And I made paintings that were pushed to the edge of appearance. This had already been done of course by Ad Reinhardt who was a severe, Calvinistic, artistic warrior on a rigorous quest for some kind of deep, pure, religious, or quasi-religious meaning. And he set up visual obstacles that had to be overcome. Mine are not as severe, they are much more visually self-evident but they are meditative interior paintings that were in fact at that time very popular with Japanese people, and many of my paintings went to Japan. The photograph on the right, *Sienna Door*, was made before the painting on the left. But it anticipates something of the paintings that were to follow, really in the 90's, I would say, when I started to make insets.

“Let me put it this way: thinking of the Scully of the archetypical ‘Sean Scully’s’, which were not really to come into existence until some time in the 1980’s-the artist was more Sean Scully in the photographs of 1978 than in the paintings of that year. So I would say he was searching for the artist he wanted to be.”

I will now show you the next paintings I made, and these point towards a new state of being. But I would say as a response to this that the door is a wonderful invention, of course we all have them, and we use them to open and close spaces, we use them to make

separate spaces, special spaces, and in my work, I've always been fascinated with the architecture, the architectural metaphor, of the door, of the passing through. Of course we all know the title of the famous rock band, The Doors. The door through, I am the door, the way, the entrance, the exit, and the adjustable barrier. So this has always had an incredible fascination for me, before I leave the last images, I just want to make that point clear, and you will see in my work, that this theme of the door and the window is very recurring. It represents a figure and an architectural device, a way of looking at two things at once, a way of actually inserting another presence into a field; by field I mean an argument, a situation. I was thinking of how I could make my art a paragon. How I could make it express the feeling of now so that it could embody the contradictory tendencies of now and be timeless, to simultaneously express being contemporary and to overcome being contemporary by in fact joining the line of high art in some sense. The painting on the right is called, *Backs and Fronts*, made in 1981, and the painting on the left is, *Enough*, painted also in the same year. So you will see that these paintings begin to leave the extreme regularity of the previous paintings and they also metaphorically leave "night-light" in fact one could call it a kind of coming-out, a coming-out into "now-light", "day-light" the light in which we meet each other and live our lives. The others, the ones you saw before and the ones that start the room upstairs are very concerned with a kind of meditative, hard won, interior light that can only be brought out with extreme concentration. These are beginning to be more expressive and the lines are starting to become more freely painted. The title, "Backs and Fronts", by the way, comes from the idea of personages, or figures in a line pushed together. I was thinking about backs and fronts people facing, people turning back, and of course it has a natural correspondence

visually with the urban skyline. The only time this painting has ever been exhibited, by the way, was at PS1 and it was an exhibition that took place in 1981 and I remember that that was the time of punk rock, a movement that favored anarchy above all else, including musicianship. And the only painting that the punk rockers liked in the whole show was mine. And that made me very proud and happy for very obvious reasons, since I am so much an art warrior for a peculiar metaphysical point of view. It says here, **"It was consistent with his spirit that he leave Britain for America to settle in New York, which he viewed as the promised land: He felt that the tradition of great painting was alive in the work of Mark Rothko and Willem de Kooning, much in the way classical learning had been kept alive in European monasteries—points of civilization and illumination within the surrounding cultural darkness."**

And here we come to a very serious point, which I believe you probably know interests me, it's what my life's work is based on. The attack on painting in the 1970's as I experienced it, was extraordinary. And I made a decision to defend painting and to make painting that could be all the things that I wanted it to be, and that of course is a lot. I had high ambition for it. It brings me to an interesting comparison between the work of let's say Mark Rothko, which is mentioned here and Willem de Kooning.

Willem de Kooning on the other hand was an artist who was in a sense a European master, even though he was an American, but he was an American with a very powerful prescient, European sense of the fugitive, the in-between position and this has become, I believe, very important in my work, and it's something that distinguishes me perhaps from the majority of the Abstract Expressionist artists. Just before I leave these

paintings, I might say for your interest that the painting on the right, *Backs and Fronts*, is painted in various styles, one might say. Some of the panels are tighter than the others, some of them bear a relationship with the paintings that preceded it in its recent past and some of them begin to be a lot looser, bigger, wider, more aggressive, more direct.

Now, what else can I find of interest by Arthur. Ah, this is nice. No, I'll leave this. I am going to talk about the idea here of the window. One of these paintings is in the collection of the museum. *Pale Fire*, I named this painting after the novel by Nabokov. And I see it as a beautiful American pictorial landscape with a dark window, a problematic window. A window is normally a vista out, this is a window that reverses the dialogue so that the wall, the façade, the frame around the ochre, brown, dark blue inset, narrowly striped section is in fact the area that is lit up as if it's a lit up wall full of hope and optimism and vertical aggression. The inset is heavy, neurotically drawn, because it's closer, tighter, it's colors are more problematic more burdened by weight, so in fact it lives off of the light of the outside of the painting. The painting on the right is called, *As Was*. It's an aggressive title, it refers to the irreconcilable quality of the painting, one side of the painting, the inset on the right is incased or incarcerated in a frame on the right side, and the other is in a film of paint on the left, so the one on the left seems to be more in a landscape and the one on the right side seems more to be framed or in prison. And it makes, of course, a very strong relationship with minimalism, my experiences having passed through minimalism. So, in that painting I'm trying to put the romance of painting in correspondence with the brutality of a metal frame. Now I come to the good part. Here's the good part. So, Arthur says,

“...that the orange and green panel stands to the red-black panels in the relationship in which the Madonna stands to her adorers-suggests that Scully has achieved in *Molloy* the kind of near-religious feeling he believed that great painting was invented to express”

The other painting that I show you now, interestingly is called, *Maesta*, and this is a straight dedication to the great painting in Sienna by Duccio. It's the Madonna surrounded by angels. In these paintings from around the middle of the 80's, I tried to put romantic painting or deeply emotional painting in correspondence or a fight with bulky architecture. With the fact, the brutality, the fact of things, the weight of things. They are very aggressive of course because they have projections that bulge out into space. And they are compressed, literally bolted together, put into a kind of competition with each other. In *Maesta*, the red and the blue vertical is somehow contextualized, held by the black and the whites on the outside, you will see of course that the black and the whites on the outside are different, I hope you do. They are worn colors, they are colors of experience, colors of emotional weather so that the black and the white on the right of *Maesta*, are not like the black and the white on the left. This gives the painting another dimension. Besides the fact that it's very emblematic and forceful as an image, it's complex, it's complicated by an experiential ambition, an emotional ambition, an ambition to overcome, in some way, the weight of its physicality, to bring it into the tradition of great painting. The paintings that were made around the time of Duccio's *Maesta*, were very concentrated on the panel, the physicality and the fact that panel makers around that time, the 13th, 14th century, were almost as famous as the painters in many cases. They were highly estimated. And if you look at the paintings from Italian

museums, by these great masters, you will see that there's a tremendous emphasis on the physical fact of the painting, so the ornamentation of the painting is in competition with the panel with its very physical being as if the paint is so rich in color and in texture that it can transform what was a physical object, a pure panel, an ornamental panel, an elaborately made and crafted panel, it can transform this into a metaphysical experience and this in a sense has a lot to do with what I was aiming for in the paintings that I made around the mid-80's. So, here Arthur says:

“Scully has discovered a style of painting in which Abstract Expressionism continues to exist, but the architecture of his paintings belongs entirely to the present moment.”

These are two flat paintings, the one on the left is called *Angel*, and the one on the right is, *Angelica*, owned by my friends here, and they're excited. So, there's only one other which is, I believe, *Angelo*. In these paintings, I strike a different note, they are less aggressive and you'll notice immediately the absence of color. And the introduction of line on *Angel*, which is a diptych, split right down the middle between spirit and body, this world and that world, to put it bluntly. *Angelica*, the painting on the right comes later, I think it's 90-something. It's a painting in which a visitation occurs. Again one has the idea of a field interrupted, or visited upon, an entrance, an annunciation, something moving into a field to displace the harmony of a closed situation. And in correspondence with the painting on the left, *Angel*, the weight, the bodily weight of the inset in *Angelica* is removed, by scraping out the paint, plus the proportion is bigger, so I do this a lot: the idea of pushing something out, moving something in. It has a certain kind of sculptural frankness to it, directness, a working architectonic directness. The paintings are made

with separate panels and they are put into a situation where they affect each other and these two are particularly gentle in their emotion.

I now turn to the Catherine paintings about which Arthur has written:

" Time, Kant has written, was when metaphysics was entitled the Queen of all sciences...Now, however, the changed fashion of the time brings her only scorn; a matron outcast and forsaken." Until the seventies, painting had been Queen of all the arts for most of Art's history. 'Not conflict is its history' Thomas McEvilly has written in, *The Exile's Return*, 'has been a severe as that of the last generation: painting's disgrace and exile, around 1965.'

So, one can respond to that in many ways but as a practicing artist, as a person of objectness or matter, only two ways really matter I think because everything in between is: everything in between. One can agree with that or one can disagree with that, if one disagrees with that remark, that quote, "painting's disgrace and exile around 1965" then one is obliged in a sense to accept the consequences of that. But if one decides to reject that, one must equally take on the consequences of that and that will be a fight against the majority opinion or against the way things seem to be going in our culture, however, it is simultaneously interesting to note that at the end of every decade when the account was made, painting seems to be very persistent. But not perhaps as vocal in it's persistence as other art forms during the argument, but when it's summed up at the end of a period, painting does seem to be more that capable of rising, rising, and rising again. I often think of painting as a kind of drunken sailor that falls constantly back into himself with a profound desire to live its life, again, again, again, and again; folding back and pushing

out from underneath, but not in a way that's very obvious. My work is not based, in particular, on formal investigation. And you probably know already that I did not invent the stripe. So if anybody's not clear on that point, I confess, to nothing, I did not invent the stripe. But that's not the way that painting advances, or evolves, it's much more subtle than that; it's a question of the way things need to be looked at and understood and how they register. Now, Arthur Danto has said that I brought an idea of Abstract Expressionism into the present. And that may be very largely true, but equally Donald Kuspit has written that my art is "an art of great nuance" and this is very powerful in painting, and this accounts for its indestructibility, its ability to re-present itself, to re-gig itself to cannibalize its elements and re-present them, that's why I use the metaphor of the falling figure that moves out from under its own shadow into the future. These are the Catherine paintings, which are all in this fabulous building.

“I am moved by the thought of keeping for the marriage itself, the finest work in each year, and see it as an act of renewal and of sacrifice. It is a sacrifice in the way in which the old Greek warriors would sacrifice the fattest meat and the strongest wine to the gods in order to secure their favor.”

Also, the strangest most and difficult, in relation to sacrifice. I love my strangest and weakest children and so they would be sacrificed along with the most beautiful.

Danto places the Catherine Paintings among two other very important series of the twentieth century: Diebenkorn's *Ocean Park* and Motherwell's *Elegies for the Spanish Republic*. Though Scully's series is very different in that it does not, like Diebenkorn's "provide a framework in which the artist can paint" and does not, reference specifically

that which they are titled after as in Motherwell's. In Scully's series the paintings are conferred or awarded with the status of being *Catherine*. The Catherine paintings are made then chosen.

“Each painting is drawn off, like a wine, and embodies that particular vintage; and though there are, as with wines, those constant factors which make for consistency and greatness, there is also that variety from year to year, that means that one who knows the wine only generically has not taken the measure of its possibilities.”

“So the Catherine Paintings incorporate three transformative beings and their relationships (Sean, Catherine, and Sean's painting- the three beings). Each painting in the series is, as I have said, a distillation of where and what Scully was as an artist in that year...”

“Scully has been a resolute abstractionist for the better part of his career, but he is in no sense a formalist, and there are all sorts of clues to how a painting is to be understood in terms of the atmosphere of meanings its forms carry and imply. Scully is extremely forthcoming in these matters, for he is anxious to be understood and in particular not to be misunderstood.”

So, it's true that I am not a formalist. Both of these are Catherine paintings, they constitute part of the series, the distance between them is about a decade, the painting on the right being the oldest, the painting on the left being the most recent. And you can see that the painting on the right has about it a certain kind of awkwardness. Now I have been identified with Modernism. Irving Sandler wrote that I am an unapologetic Modernist. That's not entirely true though. I'm not actually totally involved with the idea

of Modernism, I am certainly not convinced by it because it carries with it certain notions of utopia and since the tower of Modernism has fallen, the possibility to reconsider other forms of painting, I believe, is very healthy. And it was in a sense inevitable, as was the fall of Minimalism, or our disinterest in its lack of expressive possibilities, because it was not humanistic enough and it was always striving for a rightness, I am equally interested in wrongness and I give my paintings titles like, *How Not, Falling Wrong, Strange Day, Any Questions*, and these are uncomfortable titles, awkward situations. I think we would all agree that the painting on the right is not a perfect paradigm of harmony. It's awkward and brutal, brooding. The light on the right part of the painting is a nocturnal kind of light, I return to the dark paintings at the end of the 70's with this light. This is the light of the end of the day. And the piece attached to it, which doesn't fit of course, the non-fitting partner, is awkwardly, precariously, hanging onto the end of this block, this romantic blue block. Now if you imagine the painting without the part on the left it becomes a very different proposition and falls into an obvious idea of romantic painting, although it still would be difficult because it is sculptural and overtly physical. Most romantic painting has a space that submits, that is moving away from us so that we fall into the painting. That is true of Bierstadt, Turner, Rothko, Friedrich. You look at the paintings and you fall into the painting, into the deep space. Dark blue is used very often, not of course in Turner. And in these paintings the opposite happens, so what I've tried to do is disrupt the tradition in which I work by making the paintings physically aggressive. The paintings are at this point also, I'm talking about the painting on the right, the paintings are also a question of competing identities, so I put things in relation to each other and leave them to compete for their survival. The painting on the left, which comes

along much later, is a painting that is on it's way to becoming a prototype for the "Wall of Light" paintings, which I have been working on recently, however it still does not submit to the idea of all-over painting, pattern painting or concept painting, because it is criticized by the inset, which is dropped down in the painting in a sense that is sculptural and registers a different light. Now, one thing I haven't talked about yet in my painting is this sense of color, and you will notice in my paintings the color is always worn, always experienced, and fought over. And there's color coming up from underneath, color coming up from previous layers. The certainty of the paintings, the architectural certainty of the paintings, is constantly criticized, critiqued, by the emotion, the emotional application of the paint, which goes back to Spanish painting and has its correspondences with other 20th century painting for example like Franz Klein, and his incredible use of various blacks and various whites. In my use of various blacks and various whites I do something that is quite related to Klein. Klein, by the way, interestingly enough was one of the very few artists that I can think of in the Abstract Expressionist movement who made what I would describe as weighted, impacted, compressed surfaces. I do the same, so that paintings are a question of light, but they are weighted and they are brutal on occasion. And this kind of dialogue is what keeps the paintings, in a sense, alive.

“ Scully once said that whereas Motherwell and Diebenkorn are pre-Minimalist painters, he is post-Minimalist, and I suppose this means that the experience of Minimalism exposes his work, especially from the late 70's, to a severely formal and reduced interpretation whereas in fact its minimalism enables him to exploit a special range of quite human meanings a less austere vocabulary might be unable to

express. It is not merely a fact about the paintings that there is no evidence of hand an touch, but part of the content of these works is that they make no concessions to the tentative, the diffident, the soft, the vague, but have a kind of formal bravado, a kind of front the artist puts up.”

That's an interesting point, that the paintings have a lot of "front" as in boldness, pushing out, however they also are tremendously nuanced and this sets up a strange vibration I believe and it's a kind of contradictory impulse, two contradictory impulses working at the same time. The figure in my work consistently re-appears, re-asserts itself and you will see in the painting on the right, which again is a Catherine painting, that it becomes very figurative. It can be described as a façade with two windows. The top window being painted in the color of the sky and the bottom window being painted in a kind of bright yellow that has thin black lines running through it, put on to a sort of red and black checkerboard, of course I am describing what you can already see. The sense of the violation of the field is very strong in a painting like this. It also stands in the tradition of portrait painting, large portrait painting, up and down, a sense of verticality. The painting on the left, which is one of the very last of the Catherine paintings, is as far as I go towards making an all-over painting. It's an all-over painting in a fight with a triptych, and the middle of the painting bulges out, it's aggressive and sculptural, but the color in the painting is submissive. The application of the color is aggressive, and of course the drawing in the painting is very simple indeed. Everything is the opposite of everything else, which is true really in most of my work in any case that I work with the opposite, with everything being the opposite of everything else, everything kicking off everything

else, everything agitating everything else starting everything else off and so on. In this painting it's really almost a plus/minus painting, very atypical for me and it reaches a kind of harmony.

So, I will see what else we have, two more of the Catherine paintings, and you will see that the paintings are very different. So, what I tend to do in my work is to allow things to come into the work. I do not hammer away at something until I am done with myself.

They are not in that sense, signature paintings. Even though you can see one of my paintings and pretty much pick it out immediately. I allow for interruptions and they are permissive in their insistence; permissively insistent. The painting on the left has an over-hang, it's very uncomfortable in a certain sense. It has subtle color on the left and fairly subtle color on the right, and these two things once again are put together in a relationship, one of course can make conjectures about relationships, we are all in them, not just whether we're married, we are all in relationships. And relationships are, I believe, fundamental to energy. So I always return to the idea of how things identify each other or how things become themselves through their relationship with the other and this is a perfect example of that. It's an unlikely relationship, it's a difficult painting, not graceful, but it has a kind of directness and a subtlety that one would not find in a minimalist painting. Because a minimalist painting would be far more refined and at the same time it has a sculptural immediacy that you would never find in an Abstract Expressionist painting, which would have been entirely involved with the metaphysical. So what I do is, I make paintings around this time that are physically challenging. The painting on the right, which is a very big double checkerboard painting, is once again a straightforward attempt to make a relationship. I tend to think of black and white as a

kind of absolute and red as a color that's full of life, love, and blood. And I put these two together: one gives the other life and one purifies and empties out the humidity of the other. And of course, there's a scale change. So, once again it's not as aggressive as perhaps the painting on the left, but it is a question always of how things energize each other and once again, it's painted with a lot of conviction, a lot of physical conviction, a lot of emotional conviction.

"...once the edges get incorporated into the works, so do the surfaces as physical planes. We confront them and they confront us, like walls. And what one cannot help but be attracted to, in front of one of these surfaces, is the way the paint is laid on. It is laid on in a way which makes us conscious of the brushes made up of bristles, which leave traces of their physical interaction with the viscosity of paint."

Just to clarify that point, I am sure most of you understood it anyway. What I have done in a sense is to make two kinds of painting in one kind of painting, one I've tried to compress two painting traditions. So the paintings are very clear, they are drawn out in a way that's absolutely frontal and simple, and they are painted with weight. Yet, the uncertainty of the edges, the fragility of the edges enlivens and contradicts this simplicity of form, I hope to humanize it to give it depth, to give it layering and meaning, to give it nuances, to change what it was, to transform it somehow overcome its emblematic quality.

Now we turn to the aquarelles. Arthur has written on my works on paper:

"The smallness of the images, the delicacy of touch, yields the intimacy, almost the privacy of reading a book."

And, I think that's a very beautiful idea, especially in relation to my work because my paintings take up so much space, in relation to other paintings. They're really big and they're really thick and they occupy space tremendously. But the watercolors do not, and it's not a coincidence of course that no great painting that I know of anyway, has been made in a colonized country. Most great painting is made in a colonizing country, like this country. Watercolors are things you can put under the bed; they're private. You can put them in your suitcase and take them around and in that sense they are without place and that's part of their quality. In Ireland, for example poetry is very great. And poetry is an art form of the colonized; not painting, because painting takes space; is a place and what I make are places, physical beings, or substitutes for physical beings. The beauty of the watercolor for me lies in its extreme lack of physical effort, though it is in fact the absolute antidote to the paintings. These I believe are in the collection of this very museum, and if you break into the museum, you can see them in the very storage of this very museum. I absolutely love to make watercolors and I make them when I travel, I make them when I'm feeling delicate. And I must repeat once again my charming conversation with my friend Marla, your director. Who said to me, "your watercolors look like they were done by an angel" and I said "they were" and she said "good disguise".

The pastel on the right is of interest. Arthur has written that

"the pastel is like the act of applying make-up, powder to the face, there is something very sexual in it"

And I make the pastels with my hand flat; I have extremely flat hands, I don't know why, it just turned out that way, but it's very good for making pastels for some reason. But the other thing I love about pastel is this: that it's a defunct art form. I forgot to tell you something that is quite profound I think and important to me. Arthur refers at one point to the preservation of a culture or of a language. It's very easy to lose a culture it's very easy to lose a language, syntax. This can happen in no time. Culture has to be fought for and nurtured. During the dark ages there was an island off of Ireland called Skelligmichal, and on the top of this island, the vertical column, was a village, a monastery very famous for its dome shaped stone dwellings, and the Vikings would try to raid this simply in order to destroy for the wanton desire to destroy, and these monks would copy the classics from the seventh century to preserve them, and they died for this in great numbers and lived a very harsh life. This idea is very powerful in me; of course it originates in my own country. I am very attracted, intuitively, to the fight for something, against the majority, against the erosion of feeling in art, authenticity physical authenticity. And the pastel to me is very interesting indeed, it gives off a kind of obvious metaphysical sensibility, because it's very soft and it's made with colors from the ground, and it always looks like the ground. And you work in a sense on a pastel like a coal miner: you are working with dirt, putting dirt in to the paper, again and again and again and again, they take a very long time to complete. They are strange things because they are made on paper but they look like objects in the end. And they take longer to make than the paintings.

Here I show you a floating painting on the left. It has been rather absurdly suggested to me that the floating paintings are in some way illusionistic, that they are meant to imply

that they penetrate the wall. As in the case of Robert Gober's legs that stick out from the wall and imply continuation because it is a human limb. These do not, these are meant to be looked at, as three-dimensional paintings that push out into space, and with these paintings I take some of the aspect of the paintings of the 80's and I separate them.

"He has invented a form of three dimensional paintings, which he refers to as "Floating Paintings. The "Floating Paintings are on fabricated metal boxes which hang at right angles to the wall like the modules one associates with minimalist sculpture, but painted with his signature stripes. Stripes even determine the motif Scully selects for his beautiful photographs of barns or shacks or road signs which are disclosed so-to-speak as ready-made Scully's through their bold and energetic stripedness."

So that's why I put that next to that. The photograph on the right is called *Urban Romance*. The photograph is of a garage door; it looks like nothing to anybody else. I drove by it maybe fifty times before I photographed it because I couldn't be bothered to stop the car and take the picture and the very next week when I passed this door it was destroyed, and that's why I take these photographs. My photographs tend to be of things that are on the edge of destruction, that are at the point of expiring. And the important point about the painted box, is that it's painted with very energetic brushstrokes that follow yet somehow emotionalize this inert shape that is precariously attached to the wall. Of course I was also thinking at this time, less so now, but I was thinking at this time of the position of painting and the position of an open door and that painting had somehow lost its connection to the wall. So it's metaphorical thinking.

Now this painting on the left is called *Any Questions*. It's a painting that is a pure vertical stripe but of course painted with very impure color and it's put next to a painting that has in a sense fallen apart and been put back together again, so in that sense it has some relationship to the brokenness of Cubism, the breaking-upness of Cubism, the fracturing of Cubism. And I put these two things together, the whole and the broken and they live together, forever. Hence the title, *Any Questions*. Because in a sense, it's a question that cannot be answered, it's a relationship that is irreconcilable, and this is the pathos in the painting. And the painting on the right is one of my most harmonious paintings. I am talking about the painting on the right now,

Again I revisit the visitation idea. It's 8:17, shall we have a vote, no let's not.

The painting on the right is called *Back*, it's owned by a couple of good friends of mine who used to live in Ft. Worth, the Grinsteins. It 's one of the most harmonious of my paintings; the gentlest, where you have these enormous guitar strings in space vibrating through space. I am painting the space in between the strings. The object, and the objects in the case are the lines, this is something I do al lot. I fill in spaces. I notice that in Van Gogh's paintings everything is filled in; this really inspired me, everything is something there aren't any negatives, there are no forgotten areas, no dead areas. And this is very true of my paintings, I try to enliven every detail of the painting with energy so that there's no let up, as in the case with reggae for example, there's no retreat. And the painting is of course based on the two white colors the way one white color bleeds into another white color and gives different register, a different kind of light.

So, I'm going to talk really fast now because people are starting to walk out. Because I didn't keep my promise before to talk fast, I'm sorry. Now these are "Wall of Light"

paintings, and Michael Auping in his very evocative and lyrical essay has said correctly that the balance in these paintings between the architecture of the painting, and the romance of the paint handling has shifted tremendously in favor of the poetry of the paint handling. But as you can see I do not submit to all-over painting. The paintings are once again broken up and some of the areas in the paintings seem to be like objects. *Wall of Light Brown*, for example, has a scrapped out area on the left so there's an absence of weight and on the right side of the painting; there is a tremendous weighted block of gray and light pink. The painting on the left is a very small Wall of Light painting, the size of a book. This is very important, I show you this painting because it gives me another possibility to connect with a different feeling, I am not only making monumental paintings I am connecting myself to the whole tradition of portraiture, small paintings. This painting is the size of your head. And that's profoundly important because it gives a different register, a different cultural register.

This is a painting, photographed, broken up and re-presented, as a horizon line. So these are photographs from a painting; taken directly from one of my paintings, it's a form of breaking down. It again has, a tenuous connection, a loose connection, with *Backs and Fronts*. It goes back in time, so I'm always thinking backwards and forward and round and circles, I am not a formalist in the sense that I develop myself through formalist ideas this I utterly reject. The photograph on the right is entirely different. This is a question of wholeness. It's called, *A Lost Door in Ireland*. It is one of my favorite photographs. It looks like a temple. Some strange place that you might enter, in real life it's nothing. But the photograph brings it into the world of the romantic. And of course because it's lost, and my relationship with Ireland is a little lost, it has a special significance for me.

Here is something else, the one on the left is called *Coyote*, and the one on the right is called, *Wall of Light Tara*. They will be shown in this museum in the upcoming exhibition, "Wall of Light", in early 2006.

I am a stand alone defender of the faith, I can stand with other painters or alone, it makes very little difference to me and I am very uninterested in art fashion, I am here and I will continue to be here, and I will continue to make my paintings. Right now in London we have Charles Saatchi celebrating the splendor of painting, so I guess we must all run over and celebrate the splendor of painting. It is appropriate that my spiritual headquarters, artistically speaking are in Texas. Even though I voted for Kerry. However, I've always had a healthy disregard for the majority opinion. Resistance is fundamental to the survival of culture, and there are many famous examples that prove the folly of the majority. I am a child of democracy. Without that, the Russian Revolution and the rest of it, I'd be sitting in a mud ditch in Ireland. My only remaining problem with democracy as a practice (I don't say idea) is that not everybody votes the way I want them to. However there's always next time. And that can equally be said for the fall and rise of painting.