



Artists Documentation Program (ADP) Interview Video Index

Artist: Danny Lyon
Date: March 27, 2012
Location: The Menil Collection
Interviewers: Jan Burandt
Video/Edit: Laurie McDonald
Total Run Time: 01:03:22

Abstract:

Artist and photographer Danny Lyon discusses his work with Menil Conservator of Works of Art on Paper, Jan Burandt, on the occasion of his exhibition, "This World is Not My Home: Danny Lyon Photographs," The Menil Collection, March 30-July 29, 2012. The discussion focuses primarily on the materials and methods that Lyon used to create his photographic prints, held by the Menil Collection. Throughout the interview, Lyon reflects on his wishes for the works' future conservation and exhibition.

Controlled Access Headings (Library of Congress):

Corporate Name(s)

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Artists Documentation Program
Harvard University. Art Museums
Menil Collection (Houston, Tex.)
Whitney Museum of American Art

Genre(s)

Interviews
Oral histories

Personal Name(s)

Burandt, Jan (local)
Lyon, Danny
McDonald, Laurie

Subject(s)

Art--Conservation and restoration
Artists' materials
Art--Technique
Civil rights.
Photography

Exhibitions/Works:

Names of exhibitions and works referenced during this interview appear below in gray cells.

Controlled Vocabulary:

Except where indicated, all keywords employ Getty vocabularies (AAT/ULAN/TGN). Those marked with (*) employ Library of Congress Authorities. Those marked with (**) employ local terms.

Time	Contents	Subject Keywords
00:00:01	Opening Credits	
00:00:50	Introduction Jan Burandt, Danny Lyon	
00:01:30	Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues Lyon discusses some of the materials and techniques that he commonly used to make his photographic prints. He also discusses his philosophy with regard to proper handling of prints.	Agfa (Firm)* photographic paper photographic processes preventive conservation
00:02:02	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Jackson Mississippi Greyhound bus to the Delta, 1962</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:02:59	Exhibition and Technical Specifications Lyon expresses his preferences with regard to exhibition of his prints, particularly the black edges, which often are overmatted. Lyon also explains the origin of the black edges and how they relate to photographers' practices regarding cropping of one's images.	cropping Eastman Kodak Company* edges (object portions) Edison, Thomas A. (Thomas Alva), 1847- 1931* enlargers mats (framing and mounting equipment) negatives (photographic) photographers photographic film (photographic materials)
00:03:00	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Jackson Mississippi Greyhound bus to the Delta, 1962</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:04:04	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Jackson Mississippi Greyhound bus to the Delta, 1962 (overview and detail with black edge)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:04:39	(Image)	

	<p>Danny Lyon <i>Eduardo Rivera Marquez, Bernalillo, New Mexico, 1972</i> (overview and detail with black edge) The Menil Collection, Houston</p>	
00:05:29	<p>(Bibliographic Reference) Lyon, Danny, <i>Conversations with the Dead</i>. New York: Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1971.</p>	
00:06:02	<p>Process of Creation and Technical Specifications Lyon continues black edges and how they relate to photographers' practice of showing the black border to demonstrate that they had not cropped their images.</p>	<p>Beckman, Fred composition (artistic arrangement) cropping edges (object portions) Evans, Walker negatives (photo-graphic) photographers University of Chicago</p>
00:06:08	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Line, Ferguson Unit, Texas 1967-69, 1967-1968</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Kenneth G. Futter</p>	
00:07:18	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Line, Ferguson Unit, Texas 1967-69, 1967-1968</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Kenneth G. Futter</p>	
00:08:03	<p>Exhibition and Process of Creation Lyon reflects on the art world's attitudes toward prints that contain flaws, including spots from dirty or damaged negatives or borders caused by imprecisely filed negative carriers.</p>	<p>art market damage dust enlargers filing Forscher, Marty** Kelton, Chuck** mats (framing and mounting equipment) negatives (photo-graphic) photographs scale (relative size)</p>
00:08:08	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Line, Ferguson Unit, Texas 1967-69, 1967-1968</i> (detail of flaw created by dirt on negative) The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Kenneth G. Futter</p>	
00:08:29	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Eduardo Rivera Marquez, Bernalillo, New Mexico, 1972</i> (detail of flaw created by ding in negative)</p>	

	The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:09:03	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Eduardo Rivera Marquez, Bernalillo, New Mexico, 1972 (detail of spot created by flaw in negative)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:10:21	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Eduardo Rivera Marquez, Bernalillo, New Mexico, 1972 (detail of black, double border caused by imprecisely filed negative carrier)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:10:28	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Eduardo Rivera Marquez, Bernalillo, New Mexico, 1972 (overview with black double border caused by imprecisely filed negative carrier)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:10:43	Exhibition and Conservation Issues Lyon expresses his opinions regarding retouching or spot touching of prints.	darkrooms documentary dust Edwards, Hugh L.* Lyon, Nancy** paintbrushes photographs Photography— Retouching* Spotone**
00:13:47	Historical Anecdote Lyon relates how his work came to be held in the Menil Collection. He also discusses his printing practices as a photographer in the sixties and seventies.	edges (object portions) Menil Collection Menil, Dominique de negatives (photographic)
00:14:43	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Joselyn, Santa Marta, Columbia, 1972</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:15:23	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Llanito, New Mexico, 1970</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:15:35	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Wiggins Brothers, Wedding, Placitas, New Mexico, 1971</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	

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00:15:43	(Image) Eddie, Llanito, New Mexico, 1972 The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:16:28	Historical Anecdote and Conservation Issues Lyon discusses his friendship with Adelaide de Menil Carpenter. He and Burandt discuss proper handling of photographic prints.	De Menil, Adelaide* damage preventive conservation Whitney Museum of American Art*
00:16:33	(Image) Danny Lyon Teenage Girls in a stockade outside of Leesburg, Georgia, 1963 The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:17:19	(Artwork Reference) Danny Lyon Men's Lives: The Surfmen and Baymen of the South Fork (series)	
00:18:43	(Image) Danny Lyon Clamming: Harry and Jens Lester, 1982 (overview and in raking light to illustrate handling creases) The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Adelaide de Menil Carpenter	
00:19:07	Process of Creation and Technical Specifications Lyon discusses printers' marks, signatures, stamps, and other annotations on his prints.	art market burning in (photography) Di Suvero, Mark dodging marginalia (annotations) printing (process) proofs (prints by function) processes versos
00:19:37	(Image) Danny Lyon Teenage Girls in a stockade outside of Leesburg, Georgia, 1963 (detail of printers' marks and signature on verso) The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:20:41	(Image) Danny Lyon Teenage Girls in a stockade outside of Leesburg, Georgia, 1963 (detail of printers' marks showing on recto) The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	

00:21:30	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Teenage Girls in a stockade outside of Leesburg, Georgia, 1963</i> (detail of word “good” circled on verso) The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:21:37	(Image) Detail of word “perfect” circled on verso of a print	
00:21:41	(Image) <i>Arrest of Taylor Washington, Lebs Restaurant, Atlanta, 1963-64</i> (Winter) The Menil Collection, Houston <i>Arrest of Taylor Washington, Lebs Restaurant, Atlanta, 1963-64</i> (Winter) The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:22:15	Historical Anecdote and Concept/Nature of Work Lyon reflects on the relationship between a photographer and the master printers who produce his or her work.	Art Institute of Chicago* Bakht, Igor** Di Suvero, Mark editions Edwards, Hugh L. Eherton, Terry** Katz, Benjamin Kelton, Chuck** Kertész, André multiples printing (process) proofs (prints by function) Smith, W. Eugene Stieglitz, Alfred versos Weston, Edward
00:23:13	(Image) Detail of printer’s marks and signature on verso of a print	
00:25:21	Concept/Nature of Work and Historical Anecdote Lyon expresses his preferences with regard to presentation and handling of his prints, particularly those that exhibit flaws. He also reflects on the practice of restricting the number of print multiples for a photograph. Lyon also describes his cousin, Leon Henkin, with whom he was close and who appears in a photograph.	art market Dalí, Salvador Henkin, Leon multiples photographs Picasso, Pablo printing (process)
00:25:40	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Teenage Girls in a stockade outside of Leesburg, Georgia, 1963</i> (detail of printers’ marks showing on recto)	

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	The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:26:55	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Leon Henkin, New Orleans, 1965 (Jan.)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family	
00:28:40	Conservation Issues Lyon and Frecon discuss the preservation issues inherent in mounting photographs onto mat board. Lyon expresses his opinions regarding future treatment of his mounted photographs.	Aperture Foundation discoloration mat board mats (framing and mounting equipment) mounting signatures (names) slipcasses
00:28:58	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Leon Henkin, New Orleans, 1965 (Jan.) (detail of signature on verso)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family	
00:29:21	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Neshoba County Fair, Mississippi, 1964</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family	
00:29:38	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Neshoba County Fair, Mississippi, 1964 (detail of discolored mat board)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family	
00:29:54	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Woods, Ellis, 1967-1968</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family	
00:30:02	(Bibliographic Reference) Lyon, Danny, <i>Pictures from the New World</i> . New York: Aperture, 1981.	
00:30:19	Concept/Nature of Work and Conservation Issues Lyon distinguishes his practice of photography from that of darkroom printing or studio practice. He also offers his opinions regarding treatment of damages to his works.	cockling damage edges (object portions) Kaplan, Sid**

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		photographic prints signatures (names) visual inspection
00:30:22	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Woods, Ellis, 1967-1968 (overview with signature displayed)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family	
00:30:45	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Ruleville, Mississippi, 1964, printed 1965 (with signature displayed)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:31:25	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Ruleville, Mississippi, 1964, printed 1965 (in raking light to show crease)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:34:41	Historical Anecdote Lyon describes some of his early practices as a photographer, including his darkroom practices and his habit of tacking his photographic prints onto a bulletin board. He also explains the concept of a "work print."	Bakht, Igor** corners (object components) darkrooms photographic prints work prints
00:34:47	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Untitled: Orphans, 1972 (overview and detail of pinholes)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:39:24	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Road to Madrid, New Mexico, 1970 (with visible border)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:39:47	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Clamming. Tonging for Hard Clams. Three Mile Harbor, East Hampton, 1982</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Adelaide de Menil Carpenter	
00:40:48	Historical Anecdote and Concept/Nature of Work Lyon explains the context in which he created his <i>Civil Rights</i> series, using sample images from that series to illustrate points about documentary photography.	contact sheets Davidson, Bruce, 1933-* documentary photographs negatives (photographic) versos

00:41:08	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Joy Reagon, Jessie Harris, Peggy Dammond, Sam Black, Dorie Ladner, Nashville, Tennessee, 1962</i> Nashville, 1962 (Nov.), The Annual SNCC Conference The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:41:42	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Demonstration on the courthouse steps. My last pictures of the Movement, 1965 (Mar. 7) Montgomery, Alabama</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:42:07	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Demonstration on the courthouse steps. My last pictures of the Movement, 1965 (Mar. 7) Montgomery, Alabama</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:42:36	(Image) <i>Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. & Rev. Ralph Abernathy escorted to jail, 1962 (August) Albany, Georgia (overview and crop signs)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:43:01	(Image) <i>Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. & Rev. Ralph Abernathy escorted to jail, 1962 (August) Albany, Georgia (verso)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil	
00:44:42	Conservation Issues Lyon expresses his opinions regarding the current condition and future conservation of a group of chromogenic color (type C) prints, held by the Menil Collection. In doing so, he draws a distinction between images and artifacts, in terms of their preservation.	chromogenic color prints Cibachrome™ color shift exposure fading Fujifilm** negatives (photographic) replicas
00:44:43	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Christ in Juárez, Mexico, 1972</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:45:08	(Image)	

	<p>Danny Lyon <i>Goats, Llanito, New Mexico, 1971 (overview and detail of blue in mountains)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston</p>	
00:46:48	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Joselyn in Santa Marta, 1974 (May)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston</p>	
00:46:58	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Photographer's Horse, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, 1971, 1971</i> The Menil Collection, Houston</p>	
00:48:48	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Laying Adobes, Llanito, New Mexico, 1971</i> The Menil Collection, Houston</p>	
00:49:06	<p>(Image) Danny Lyon <i>Pantheon, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico., 1972</i> The Menil Collection, Houston</p>	
00:49:29	<p>(Bibliographic Reference) Lyon, Danny, <i>The Paper Negative</i>. Bernalillo, NM: Bleak Beauty, 1980.</p>	
00:50:44	<p>Historical Anecdote and Technical Specifications Lyon compares three prints of the same image, each printed by one of three different individuals, he himself included.</p>	<p>Alvarez, Lupe** Kelton, Chuck** University of Arizona. Center for Creative Photography*</p>
00:51:50	<p>(Images) <i>Funeral of the Murdered Girls, Birmingham, 1963 (Oct.)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin family</p> <p><i>Funeral of the Murdered Girls, Birmingham, 1963 (Sept.)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston (Printed by Lupe Alvarez)</p> <p><i>Funeral of the Murdered Girls, Birmingham, 1963 (Sept. 12)</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Edmund Carpenter and Adelaide de Menil (Printed by Chuck Kelton)</p>	
00:56:00	<p>Historical Anecdote Lyon traces the provenance and printing history of two prints of</p>	<p>Edwards, Hugh L.* Henkin, Ginette** Henkin, Leon**</p>

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	<i>The Scrambles Track at McHenry, Illinois, 1965,</i>	
00:56:50	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Scrambles Track at McHenry, Illinois, 1965</i> The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:57:08	(Image) Danny Lyon <i>The Scrambles Track at McHenry, Illinois, 1965</i> The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of Leon and Ginette Henkin Family	
00:58:27	(Image) Danny Lyon signature from verso of <i>The Scrambles Track at McHenry, Illinois.</i>	
00:59:30	Concept/Nature of Work Lyon shares his opinions with regard to printing of his works, particularly printing on a larger scale.	Chamberlain, John Kelton, Chuck** scale (relative size)
01:02:31	Closing Credits	