



**Artists Documentation Program
Video Interview Transcript**

**JOSH KLINE
FEBRUARY 7, 2017**

Interviewed by:

**Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Founding Director, Artists Documentation Program
Associate Director for Conservation and Research, Whitney Museum of American Art and
Margo Delidow, Assistant Objects Conservator**

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This interview is part of the Artists Documentation Program, a collaboration of the Menil Collection, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, Harvard Art Museums.

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About the Artists Documentation Program

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, artists have experimented with an unprecedented range of new materials and technologies. The conceptual concerns underlying much of contemporary art render its conservation more complex than simply arresting physical change. As such, the artist's voice is essential to future conservation and presentation of his or her work.

In 1990, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a grant to the Menil Collection for Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, then Chief Conservator, to establish the Artists Documentation Program (ADP). Since that time, the ADP has recorded artists speaking candidly with conservators in front of their works. These engaging and informative interviews capture artists' attitudes toward the aging of their art and those aspects of its preservation that are of paramount importance to them.

The ADP has recorded interviews with such important artists as Frank Stella, Jasper Johns, and Cy Twombly. Originally designed for use by conservators and scholars at the Menil, the ADP has begun to appeal to a broader audience outside the Menil, and the collection has grown to include interviews from two partner institutions: the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, Harvard Art Museums. In 2009, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a grant to the Menil Collection to establish the ADP Archive, formalizing the multi-institutional partnership and making ADP interviews more widely available to researchers.

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[Speakers (in order of appearance): Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Whitney Museum of American Art; Josh Kline, Artist; Margo Delidow, Assistant Objects Conservator]

[BEGIN INTERVIEW]

[00:00:39]

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Today is February 7th, 2017. I'm here in the Whitney Museum with Josh Kline and Margo Delidow, and we're here to discuss Josh's piece that's in the Whitney's collection, *Cost of Living (Aleyda)*, 2014. Thank you for coming.

Josh Kline: Thanks for having me.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK, so let's start by talking about process, sort of how it was made. Then maybe a little bit about -- we'll get into materials, and so on.

Josh Kline: Sure. These are maybe the third works in, like, an ongoing series of portraits that deal with people kind of at the losing end of the American economy, like on the other side of the financial crisis. So there were two works, two portraits of FedEx workers that I did in 2014, like, in spring and summer of 2014. Then this work was completed in fall, 2014. I showed it for the first time at an exhibition that Claire Barliant curated at EFA Gallery. With these works, they're all -- they involve 3D scanning and 3D printing, and street casting. Like, I went looking for --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK, let's talk about that. Explain all that.

Josh Kline: OK. So I started -- and maybe I should back up. In both cases, they came out of, or were inspired by, people that I encountered just in my work situation in 2014. I was working out of the back of a friend's design studio in SoHo, and ordering quite a bit of office equipment off Amazon, that was all showing up in --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Part of the job, ordering the equipment.

Josh Kline: Exactly. And it was all being delivered by FedEx people. I started thinking about those jobs. And at the same time, there were also cleaning people in the hallways, who were pushing janitor carts very similar to the ones that are on display here at the moment, they're in the Whitney's collection. So after

making the FedEx works, I thought about the janitor carts and about janitors. I specifically was thinking about hotel maids, and wanting to engage with them. In some ways it might be a response to an artist from the 2000s, whose work I found particularly problematic. Like, I always ask myself, there's this artist, Dash Snow.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, yeah. I know Dash Snow.

Josh Kline: Oh, I'm going to get in trouble, since somebody else --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: No, you're not. Go ahead. Go ahead.

Josh Kline: Like, he did these works where, like, there would be these hamster nest works, where him and a bunch of his friends would get debauched, and they would shred, like, Yellow Pages, and they would defecate in this hamster nest made of shredded phone books, do drugs in them, like, urinate in them, do all sorts of things in this nest. They would sometimes do these in hotel rooms. And then of course, they would leave. For me, these were always sold to everyone as, oh, this is so transgressive, isn't he punk? And for me, I always just thought, well, who's cleaning up after this? I just pictured, like, basically brown women coming in and, like, cleaning up this guy's mess.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Josh Kline: So, you know, I think that might have also been something behind this, is just to think about, like, who is maintaining these kind of boutique hotels throughout New York, that in some ways are part of this new landscape that is shaping the city right now, between the hotels, the condos, the new office buildings that kind of define the architecture of our time. So at the time, actually another artist, who's -- is Chrissie's show still up?

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: No, it just came down today. Yeah.

Josh Kline: Dora Budor, who was in that show --

Margo Delidow: Took photographs for --

Josh Kline: Yeah. She -- I hired her freelance, and she helped me do the scanning at the time-- and the casting. So --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So before you get to that -- so you're sitting there, and you're watching these FedEx people come in, but you're focused on the stuff, I mean

the boxes and the stuff that kind of -- you're just kind of getting the idea at this point.

Josh Kline: I was more interested in the people.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, OK.

Josh Kline: And I was also thinking a lot about -- I mean, most of my work happens within these installations. You know, I make these installations and I make work that fits into them. And I had had an idea for work that was outside of these installations, like a kind of longer-term, ongoing series of just standalone sculptures. And I wanted to explore some formal issues, in addition to some kind of content. I wanted to both look at these people, but also explore some formal issues that came out of the 3D scanning and the 3D printing, and think about what it means to digitize people, to digitize human beings, our information, and where that goes. I had had this idea about kind of distributed portraiture, based on the way that our information is being collected by credit card companies, or companies like Amazon, or, like, the health insurance companies, or whatever, the way that as we go through our lives leaking information, it accumulates into these kind of different portraits, in these different databases. I saw that as a kind of methodology for producing artwork. I wanted to scan working people, and then, in a way, like, process them through the computer and then export them in these different formats; the sculptures, potentially these images, videos -- like, other works. Not all kind of -- just look at what it means to be processed through these systems, and also in the works themselves, to look at what it means to be objectified in certain ways, or to have your identity consumed by your profession.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So digitization is your process, pretty much?

Josh Kline: Exactly.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah.

Josh Kline: You know, I mean, at this point, all image-based works involve digitization, except for a few holdouts working in film. But photography -- you know, photography, film, video -- you know, almost every medium, even painting occasionally, involves digitization. Like, it's been something -- like, I went to film school in the late '90s, and already things were being digitized. So it's been something that's been present in almost all media-based artwork for a very long time.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: What was your first step?

Josh Kline: Well, the first step was to find the people. You know, so Dora assisted me in going out and trying to find hotel maids. But first it was approaching people in hotels directly, then they were kind of freaked out, so then she started approaching hotels, the management, until we found a place, a hotel that was willing to work with us. Then we talked directly with the staff and engaged with the people who were interested in working with me. We ended up working with the Hotel Rivington, which is like a boutique hotel on the Lower East Side. Went down there one day, and I met with a bunch of people, and I think I called three of them in for scanning sessions. Aleyda, this guy Wangyal, and a third guy named Angel, who I have not produced sculptures of yet, but I have done scans.

Then at the time I was working in a studio -- like, my friend's design office in the Cable Building, which is at Broadway and Houston. And I would do the scanning in the middle of, like, the courtyard of those I. M. Pei, those NYU Brutalist buildings, like, Houston and Bleecker, because there was just even lighting coming from above, sort of even lighting, and I'd use a single digital SLR camera, much like the one that's recording us right now. And we would try to have the people stand very still, and then Dora would walk around them, shooting hundreds of photos, which would then --

Margo Delidow: But no scanning? So when you say "scanning," you're not doing white light or laser scanning? You're using photogrammetry?

Josh Kline: Exactly, although that's also referred to as "scanning" by the people who do 3D scanning. It's all whether you use cameras or lasers --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: It's all the same rubric.

Josh Kline: It's all the same thing in the end. Then you just differentiate based on the technology that you use. So yeah, we used the camera, and it was photogrammetry, but really poor photogrammetry, because it was just a single camera. And, you know, the subject would have to stand very still, hopefully the wind wouldn't be blowing too much. Then we would shoot all these photos and then take them back in the studio and run them through this free software called 123D Catch, which would produce a very, very rough 3D model, which would then get reworked in a software called ZBrush endlessly by a 3D modeler with me art directing next to them, until I got something that matched the photographs we took in my eye. And you know, in terms of the -

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So there was a fair amount of interpretation going on at this point. I mean, you were trying to be as close to your memory as you could.

Josh Kline: No no no, I was comparing. I would literally have the photos up and --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: And then comparing them together?

Josh Kline: And the model, and, like, you know, until I felt like the nose matched. Because the scans are very inexact. Like, even with laser scans, there are issues when we scan people, particularly with hair. Like, you can't scan hair very well. And there are other things, like the color black. There's trouble with black, anything even vaguely shiny, like shiny leather shoes. Yeah, there are still lots of problems with it, because it's a very, like, new technology. I've moved on from that, luckily. It was more trouble than it was worth. Now I use the big scanning rig.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, but that was your first engagement with this. Yeah?

Josh Kline: For sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: You know, I would ask -- I asked Aleyda and her counterparts to all wear what they wore to work, so to wear their professional costume or uniform. Also to bring tools, things that they use on the job, which would also be a part of the scan. Of course, before all this would happen, I would talk to them about the project, about what I was doing, about what the sculptures would end up being. I didn't want there to be any surprises when they come into a room and see their body dismembered, in a way. I would explain also where I was coming from, in terms of the project. So it was very important to me.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Philosophically.

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Uh-huh. OK.

Josh Kline: It was important to me that they understood my intention, and that they were comfortable with what was going on. I mean, I also paid them. It was -- in every way that was possible for me, I wanted to make sure that they were going to be okay with this happening, and acknowledge --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: (inaudible), nice people.

Josh Kline: Yeah. I still have -- I've done interviews with the FedEx people. Aleyda is actually finally going to come in for an interview probably at the end of the month, like, a short video interview; it will be pretty straight-forward.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: That you will use in some other work? Or just to document?

Josh Kline: No, it's a work. I mean, I'll give it to the Whitney. It kind of can be shown with the sculptures or not.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: I see. As part of the work.

Josh Kline: Yeah. Just as another kind of element, you know. It doesn't need to be shown with them, but it adds something to have the person speaking in their own words as well, so that they have their voices present.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Are you interviewing her? Uh-huh. I like that. You're using many media, really, to convey this concept, or your statement that you want to make.

Josh Kline: For sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK. So then we get to the actual making of the objects.

Josh Kline: So after months of work in the computer on the models, they then were printed at NYU at what the time was called the NYU Advanced Media Studio. Now I think it's the LaGuardia Studio. I forget, they keep changing names as their funders change --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yep, that happens.

Josh Kline: -- and they move. But they've been very supportive. I've kind of snuck in as a visiting artist there. So they do the printing. They printed all of these.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Do you want to talk about specific ones? Or just in general?

Josh Kline: Just in general.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: All right, just in general. OK.

Josh Kline: I mean, they were all printed at once. I mean, you know, these were made as a set. All three of them were shown in this exhibition that Claire Barliant had --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: But you saw these as three separate works.

Josh Kline: Yeah, but --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: But made at the same time?

Josh Kline: But with, you know, all my work. Like, it's, like, how separate are they? They can go off on their own and they're fine. But they're also, like -- in addition, they're also meant to be together. So if they're shown together, it's great, you know? That's also part of the intention. But they can also go off.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Does three have a specific connotation?

Josh Kline: No.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: No. OK.

Josh Kline: I just felt like -- I guess that's just an aesthetic decision.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK. So in making the actual forms -- and jump in here if I'm --

Margo Delidow: OK.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: -- I'm curious about coloration decisions that you made.

Josh Kline: You know, I guess in many ways it was based on the objects that Aleyda brought. You know, she brought sponges, brushes, what else? Cleaning supplies. You know, various other things. Like her uniform. I always just take the colors from those objects, so it's all kind of coming out of what's there. Either her or the objects that she uses on the job. Those are where all the colors come from. With the 3D printing, I have this long history of working in Photoshop, like, I can Photoshop for a long time, kind of image compositing. Also on video. You can now do this with objects, which is, I think, one of the things that I was the most excited about, like, when it became possible to make these works, was learning, oh, there is a 3D printer that can print in photographic color, like in CMYK inkjet ink. Basically, oh, I can make solid photographs. I can make essentially holograms of people. I can

also Photoshop these objects, which was something that was very appealing to me.

So in these works, and the entire series, there are always sculptures that are photographic, where her head is present, or her hand, something that just feels like a three dimensional photograph. Then there are other objects where the surface has been replaced with other images or forms that also come out of the scanning sessions. So with these portraits of Aleyda, they call it the “texture,” it’s, like, the texture map is what sits on top of the surface of the model, the 3D model. Then the model itself is referred to as geometry, meaning the actual structure. So you have, like, a photographic texture, but then that can be replaced with something else. So what I would do with the 3D modeler that I worked with was to essentially composite other images of photographs of her uniform, or the sponges or the brushes --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: The labels, that sort of thing?

Josh Kline: The labels, the cleaning spray bottle. You know, I would composite these into other kinds of textures that could be overlaid on top of these objects, and then printed with those photographs on them. You know, with these Aleyda works, I went a little further and actually did some re-sculpting of the model itself, so when you look inside her legs, you have a sponge texture. It’s not just the image of the sponge, it’s also kind of the feel of it, which is a bit different. Like with the FedEx works I did, it’s just the images.

Margo Delidow: What about manipulating the forms themselves, and some of the *Nine to Five* work, *Eight to Four*?

Josh Kline: Mm-hmm?

Margo Delidow: There is a brush on a shoe. But these seem to be, what you see is what you get. The forms are not composites.

Josh Kline: No, they are.

Margo Delidow: They are.

Josh Kline: They are.

Margo Delidow: OK.

Josh Kline: Because like I said, if you look inside her legs, the sponge texture --

Margo Delidow: Texture.

Josh Kline: -- that's actually sculpted in.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Can we go over and take a look?

Josh Kline: We can. Yeah.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Let's do that.

[00:18:48]

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: So if you look inside, you know, inside her leg at the sponge, there is the image of the sponge, but there's also literally the sculpted --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: The tactile feel of the sponge. So that you did by hand?

Josh Kline: Well, I mean in the computer.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: In the computer. OK.

Josh Kline: I mean, and not me. The modeler did it. I know how to use video editing software.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: I don't know how to use --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: No, I've heard you say, or I've read somewhere, the computer is the studio. So it's that sense -- do I have that quote right? Or something like that. That concept that a lot of it, obviously, is happening in the computer.

Josh Kline: Yeah. I mean, I'm like an office artist.

Margo Delidow: OK.

Josh Kline: I haven't had, like, a studio practice in, like, five or six years.

Margo Delidow: But in a way, you have a very big office, because you list, you very generously give credit to all of the people who help you.

Josh Kline: They have their own offices. (laughter) Mine is quite small.

Margo Delidow: So you have a big team --

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Margo Delidow: -- that does contribute.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Come over on this side and take a look at some of --

Josh Kline: So there are things like her head has been altered, like, the actual surface of it.

Margo Delidow: Texture.

Josh Kline: You like here, this sponge has been re-sculpted, like the shoe, to put the texture of the kind of yellow rubber kitchen glove onto it. On some of the other works, like if you look inside some of the hands, there are brush bristles that are inside the wrist. You know, so there are those elements. These are made before those other works that you just referred to.

Margo Delidow: OK.

Josh Kline: So these were earlier. Then when I made those, I went a little bit further than I did with these.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: And that's what you're doing now?

Josh Kline: No. Now I'm kind of going backwards.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: I mean not really. I'm working on portraits of, like, a waiter and a waitress. With those, I don't think I'm going to do any re-sculpting, it will just be images overlaid. Because it's a lot of work.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Talk a little bit about the cart, and the decision about the cart.

Josh Kline: I just looked on the internet for "janitor carts," and I picked one that I liked.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: I mean, yeah, they were really based on these carts that I saw in the halls of this office building that I was, like, working out of at the time. You know, I mean kind of just generic, like something very generic. I mean, other than the LED lights which I added.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK, the LED lights are under here, and that's to give the -- obviously to give this effect on the objects themselves.

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Do you want to talk a little about that?

[00:21:33]

Josh Kline: I mean, part of it is so that they're lit well. You know, without them, this cart, they would be pretty dark, pretty dim. Then, you know, the LEDs are, so, part of my work, or have been part of my work, or lighting specifically. I think lighting is something that helps lock works in specific historical times. You know, like LEDs are something that's specific to the time that we live in now, you know, like they didn't exist in the '90s in terms of commercial lighting. They may not exist in the '20s. You know, I hear rumors that someone's created a more energy-efficient incandescent bulb, that may be returning to our lives. But you know, like I had a moment in 2010, where I walked into a Duane Reade, and there were these banks of refrigerators. And the bottles looked really strange, you know? I couldn't figure out what it was. Then I realized that there were LEDs on the inside of the doors, and these little pinpricks of cold light. They were also lighting the shelves. It's just that the LED's are so cheap, that you can use them, like, everywhere. So it's kind of, like, a way to create a period piece, you know?

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So it does create a period piece.

Josh Kline: It does create -- it's deliberate.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So in the future -- and we'll be getting to this if these are remade -- what about the period -- what period are we making them in?

Josh Kline: The LEDs are important.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: Because it's, like, she's working now. And the LEDs are something that, like -- it's the lighting that exists in our time. You know? So, like, that lighting, in the same way that, like, you know, all the sodium lights have been replaced, the street lights have been replaced with LEDs. Now the street lighting looks completely different, and you know, this kind of, like, soft orange.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: The feel is so different, yeah.

Josh Kline: Lighting, that I think we all took for granted, is like the lighting of what nighttime looks like in a city, in an American city, is now dispatched with. You know. I noticed when it snowed, like, a month ago, like, it just doesn't look the same. It doesn't look like my childhood anymore.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: That's a good point.

Josh Kline: You know?

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: It's true. It's true.

Josh Kline: And, you know, so this is the same thing. I just see lighting --

Margo Delidow: Can you talk about the light above as well?

Josh Kline: It's the same thing. It's just there's no -- there's obviously nothing above this as part of the sculpture to provide, like, matching light. So with these carts, I always leave instructions that, you know, the lighting in the gallery space should try to match as best as possible the lighting of the cart, so that it just feels like a uniform lighting scenario. You know, like, the color temperature changes and different works that I've made for a different effect.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Purposefully.

Josh Kline: Purposefully. But I feel like this 5000K daylight lighting is really the look of the 2000s, and the early twenty teens, or whatever. Whatever we call this decade. You know, and I think historically, like, when you present this later, you know, it will aid in terms of that kind of, like, temporal specificity.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Specificity. Mm-hmm. And that's your intent. I mean, that's what you would go for.

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So let's talk a little bit about materials and aging, and the possibility of even remaking these.

Josh Kline: Sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Because that possibility certainly exists.

Josh Kline: Yes. So I have -- my background, my professional background, I worked for a long time as a video art curator. I worked at, like, a nonprofit that deals with video art, archiving it, exhibiting it, distributing it. And, you know, I saw what was happening with older video, and it informed how I thought about these works. You know, because you have these videos from the 1970s, the late '60s that look worse and worse the further into the future that they get. You know, like, you have a Baldessari video, or, like, a Nauman video or Joan Jonas video that gets put on, like, a flat screen, like a 1080i, 1080p flat screen. And it looks terrible.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Josh Kline: You know, with the pillar boxing, and the resolution looks awful. You know, it gets further and further from the way that it was meant to look. I mean, along with the work itself degrading, even if very slowly, over time, because of video. You know, with these works, my goal was always for them to be photographic. You know, like, to use this technology as photography. And I've been kind of dealing with the limitations of it, you know, with all the 3D modeling, the printers can't match the files. There are many limitations right now, you know, which keep me from having, like, a kind of point and shoot relationship with these works. Like, in an ideal world, it would be like a point and shoot situation, almost like street photography. Maybe that's the wrong word. "Street photography" might be the wrong thing. But, you know, like --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: The immediacy.

Josh Kline: Yeah. The more immediate way of capturing an image, even if it's a three-dimensional image, which is not possible yet. And with the printers, like ideally, they would be fully photographic. But the printers can't match the resolution of the files yet. And also just these materials and the printers themselves, they're all made for rapid prototyping. There's no kind of archival thinking going on at the companies, or in any way with these objects and the materials. So I just knew these sculptures were going to have, like, a kind of in-built obsolescence, which would be fine with certain works, but with these I want them to continue into the future. So with these sculptures, I

see them very much as, like, solid videos, in a way. I think of them as solid videos. As with video, the DVD may get scratched, but you can just burn another one and then you can keep playing it. Then at a certain point DVDs may go away, and then you burn a Blu-ray. And then the Blu-rays may go away, then you just have a succession of, like, you know, higher and higher resolution, lossless files.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: That's how you would see the genesis of these to keep going?

Josh Kline: Exactly, except unlike video, which will look worse and worse as it migrates onto higher resolution platforms, these will actually get better looking, in my mind.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK, but what about the LED?

Josh Kline: Oh, the LED should stay, because that's specific --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: But that may become aged and unavailable.

Josh Kline: Yes. It might.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: And that's our problem, right? (laughter)

Josh Kline: I don't know. I mean, with these, it's not -- they're not, like -- I mean, I guess you could have a continuous strip of light, like, tape inside all the way around. It's kind of more about the color --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: It's the quality. The quality -- color and quality?

Margo Delidow: The color. It's the fifty-five Kelvin.

Josh Kline: You know, like, in the same way that this thing -- I mean, that might be LED. But yeah, it's really about the color.

Margo Delidow: At some point, the cart and the LEDs will stay 2014, and the prints will become something else.

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Margo Delidow: So there'll be a different -- can you talk a little bit about what you think would happen? When you'll see a dramatic shift between the different objects?

[00:29:21]

Josh Kline: Sure. The subject, Aleyda, she was photographed, scanned in 2014. So in terms of her relationship to the year, it's more about the image acquisition happening in that moment. In terms of the sculptures, like the prints that are on the sculpture, you know, with those I don't think it's so important to lock them in, or even possible to lock them into the technology of 2014, because the printer that these were printed on, they no longer make it. It's already advanced. So later editions of the sculpture are actually higher resolution now than the ones that are here, even. There's another model beyond this. When I look at the newer prints, I can already see the difference in terms of, like, a slight jump in resolution, in the prints.

So I think it's kind of hard to, like -- and the printers are so expensive and obscure, and hard to maintain that I just saw it as being counterproductive to lock them into that one technology. Yeah, because it would just be a nightmare, like a conservation nightmare. And it would --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, it would be challenging, to say the least. Yeah.

Josh Kline: In the long run, it would get in the way of, like, exhibiting the work in the future.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So at what point should we be remaking them?

Josh Kline: You know, I tend to say as elements break, you know, they should be -- if they can't be easily fixed, they should be reprinted.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Then is that -- you would reprint all of them on the cart?

Josh Kline: No no no no.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Just the one that's broken. So you're okay if they're looking different.

Josh Kline: Yeah. I think moving forward, it's just going to change over time.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Of course maybe you may change your mind as you see that, you just don't know at this point. But that's sort of conceptually, that's acceptable.

Josh Kline: Yeah. I mean, at a certain point it will get cheap enough to print, assuming that Trump doesn't destroy our country completely. Like, you know, it will get cheap enough to print these, that it's not a big deal to reprint them all, you know, like, 20 years from now. You know, you won't think anything of it. You know. Just be, like, oh, it's easier. It will look better. You know.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Then in 20 years from now -- let's just stay with that -- do we buy new carts? And do we buy carts that are being used then? No. We can't. Can't do that.

Josh Kline: No, the carts --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, because it could become completely different.

Josh Kline: Yeah. The carts -- the carts, the images themselves, the lighting style, all of this is from 2014.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: And the cart -- the cart should not fall apart in 20 years.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: It's unlikely.

Josh Kline: You know? So all of these things I want to stay the same.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: Then the prints themselves, just because of necessity, as the color degrades, you know, as the color fades, they should be reprinted. And as they break. Or if there's significant water damage, like, whatever might happen. If somebody drips water on them. The material doesn't matter to me. Like, it doesn't matter if it's still this kind of proprietary plaster material. Like, the only reason that I use this material is because it was the material that you could do full-color CMYK printing with. Now there are plastic printers that apparently have -- you can do color management, like, photographic color management, which is not possible with these printers, with the ZPrinter or powder printers, you can't do color management, which has been a nightmare. But with these plastic printers, you can. So I'm probably going to start doing tests on them in the coming weeks or months.

With the works I'm doing now, I may continue printing them on the plaster printer, just so that at least the first version of all these works, as long as I can,

kind of have some material continuity, maybe. But I may see the new prints and then change my mind and just go with those. At the moment, the plastic prints are a little -- they're not a little, they're significantly more expensive to make, which may be another reason that I stay with the powder for a bit longer. But if the color is better and the jump in kind of photographic quality is better with the plastic printer, that may shift things for me, and I may start on that sooner rather than later. So in the future, when these are reprinted, it's kind of -- the material doesn't matter to me, as long as it doesn't look any worse than whatever was used the last time. It can't go backwards.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So "looking worse" means --?

Josh Kline: Like, a lower resolution printer.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: I guess I've thought a little bit about it. At a certain point, there will be a one-to-one correspondence with the files. Then at that point, it's just, like, whatever printer makes the most sense. You know, whatever the most affordable, best printer is at the time for kicking out 3D prints, or whatever comes after 3D printing, further down the line.

Margo Delidow: Do the works have to stay sculptural? Can they be holograms?

Josh Kline: I like them as objects. I think they should stay as objects.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Do you think of yourself as a sculptor?

Josh Kline: Sometimes.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: And sometimes you think of yourself as --?

Josh Kline: I make videos, too. I mean, that's half my practice.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: I see. Mm-hmm.

Josh Kline: If I wanted to really, you know, something I could also call myself, an installation artist. Yeah. I don't know. I mean, I do think of myself as a sculptor when I'm around sculptures that I've made.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Despite the methodology, you're still dealing with solid material.

Josh Kline: For sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah.

Josh Kline: You know? Yeah, I don't think these are meant to be holograms. That's an interesting question. But I think I want them to stay as solid objects.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: What about the question of -- are these an edition?

Josh Kline: They are.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: These are not unique. OK.

Josh Kline: No.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So there is a -- do you know the number in the edition?

Josh Kline: Everything I do is -- every that's edition is edition of three, plus two APs.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Uh-huh. So in terms of loans, these will undoubtedly be requested for loan, we would lend them as an individual solid piece to go on loan, as opposed to authorizing anyone to do any kind of remaking in another area of the world?

Josh Kline: I think it depends. Like, a hundred years from now, like if it's really cheap and easy to materialize objects, you know, print objects, materialize them, whatever objects, yeah. You could send the file, maybe if it's trustworthy and you trust the people not to --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Mm-hmm. Or go with it.

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Josh Kline: You know, and that's cheaper than sending the objects. I mean, I'm fine with that.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: You talk a lot about that, materialization just kind of the way it goes, what seems to make the most sense. That's very much a part of your process.

Josh Kline: Yeah. I guess I just think about them the same way that I think about video, you know? Like, sometimes it makes sense to ship an actual box with, like, a file embedded in a box. Sometimes for screening, you just, like, send a file on Dropbox, or, like, whatever. You FTP a file. I mean, sometimes there's a real emergency, and you're, like, I guess I need to kick out a Blu-ray and send that. You know? It's really about expediency, like, what makes the most sense. Then there are objects that I've made videos embedded in them where, like, it must have this specific thing, because that's the only thing that fits in the sculpture, with, you know, like, an SD card in it. With these I think about them in the same way. Like, it doesn't -- the specificity of these objects themselves doesn't matter. I mean, the cart maybe matters more. I guess you'd have to send the cart. But the sculptures, if it reached a point where, oh, it's easier to just print them and send the cart, that's fine. That's fine by me.

[00:37:52]

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Mm-hmm. What about the installation of the carts? We have three of them here in the gallery right now. Is their juxtaposition something that you set up, and it's important to you?

Josh Kline: I mean, if I do it myself, it's important. It doesn't always matter, you know? I mean, Scott and his team set these up.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: I think they look great, you know.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK.

Josh Kline: Yeah. I mean, when I set them up, like, I have a specific kind of idea of how I like to see them done.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Which is what?

Josh Kline: Pretty much the same way that they were done, like, the EFA Gallery. They kind of fan out in a group. But that's also, I think, because I'm accustomed to smaller spaces, where I'm usually dealing with -- I'm, like, against a wall.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Margo Delidow: OK.

Josh Kline: You know? So I think this is a great solution for a space. I think they could be done in other ways. I tend to like to install works like these to make them look not so systematic, you know, so they look like somebody's just left them in place, you know, the same way that somebody would leave a janitor cart in the hallway while they go to do some work somewhere. So I don't want to say, like, a careless installation, but the appearance of kind of, like, working objects.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: There's a real allure to them in that way. I mean, we've had visitors who were very tempted to move them. You know, it's a janitor cart.

Josh Kline: Sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: It's kind of that concept of familiarity, and yet recognizing that they're in an art museum.

Josh Kline: You know, I like to make objects that people feel familiar with. I mean, I feel like that familiarity is a part of how the sculptures communicate, you know, giving people something that they instantly recognize without having to think too much about it, so that they can just deal with the content, you know. Like everybody knows, at least right now, you know, you don't need any context. At least with an American audience, to explain what these objects are. You know, everyone has seen them, even if they've never thought about them. You know, you've been in a high school, and these things have roamed the halls. But you may not think about them. You know, but somewhere in the back of your head, there's a kind of, like, physical visceral memory of how you feel when you see a janitor cart, even if you don't think about it. So that's a kind of scaffolding for, like -- for me, it becomes a scaffolding for hanging content, in this case, the kind of experience of doing this kind of work in early twenty-first century America.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Mm-hmm. Margo, do you have other questions about materiality, or preservation over time?

[00:40:40]

Margo Delidow: The other question is, we've already talked a little bit about how the polyethylene of these carts, that's going to stay for a while. We know that. The bags, could we replace those if they got creased or crinkled or ripped? Or would you want us to repair them?

Josh Kline: Oh.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Good question.

Josh Kline: I think maybe if they tore, I'd rather they were replaced. But I don't know. It doesn't really matter to me that much. Like, you know, I mean -- I need to think about it. Because, like, it would become more abject if there were big, sewn-up tears in them, which could be fine. Then it could also clash with everything else that's on the sculptures. You know? I think maybe I would say, if I'm not around to weigh in, erring on the side of caution, I would just replace the bags.

Margo Delidow: OK.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: You might change your mind over time. We'll talk to you again.

Josh Kline: Yeah, people will --

Margo Delidow: We'll talk to you. We'll talk about it.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: We'll come back to you.

Josh Kline: Some things look good when they, like, have wear and tear on them.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah.

Margo Delidow: Then what if at a certain point we would like to show an older version than we have printed? What if someone wants to show these, of all prints from 2014, even though we have ones from 2035?

Josh Kline: I think I would rather have the prints in, like, a vitrine.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: The older ones.

Josh Kline: Yeah.

Margo Delidow: The older ones.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So they were like archaeological specimens.

Josh Kline: Because I think if the colors faded, it's not really the work anymore, you know? Like, because it won't have the same impact on the viewer, like, the impact that I want. You know? Like if you look and it doesn't have the physicality of seeing a person's head, you know, like, it fades too much. It

starts to look like a water color, you know, or it starts to look black and white, or something else. I think that could diminish the kind of visceral impact of, like, the --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So you want them to look fresh. You want them to look of our present time, whatever the present time is.

Josh Kline: I want them to look -- I mean, I want them to look as close to being real as possible, you know? Like, the next best thing to exhibiting, like a shoe. Like, a real shoe, you know? Which was, for me, was the goal with the scanning in the first place. So I would rather have the new prints displayed, and then if somebody wants to see, well, what do the prints look like, which is something else outside the work, I would say just put them in a vitrine in the corner.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Or that would be our material archive, or something.

Josh Kline: Exactly. You know. You know, I'm not opposed to people seeing those objects, or those objects continuing to exist. I just think I wouldn't want them -- like if it's the year 2200 and these things still exist, New York still exists, hopefully in some form, and these things have -- the color has faded beyond all recognition, and they're just like these grayed-out objects, I would rather have the new prints shown on the carts, and then the kind of grayed-out objects shown somewhere else. Just so -- you know, like, I think it's important for these things to still have some kind of impact on the viewer, as much as possible. You know, obviously translated into another time and culture.

Margo Delidow: So color's important. So the colors, is your color somehow embedded in the digital files we have, that we would know what we were going back -- what we're shooting for?

Josh Kline: Yeah, I mean, like I said, these, with the current printers, you can't do -- with the current powder printers that I've been using, you can't do color management. So I've kind of largely washed my hands of controlling the color the way that a photographer would, within reason. You know? If I get a print back and there's a person and the skin color is dramatically different, or the lighting on it has changed, or it comes out red, you know, I will reprint and adjust the color until I get something that looks remotely close to what I know to be sort of true from the photographs. It's kind of about the vibrancy of the color, more than specific matching a specific set of, like, Pantone colors, or whatever.

Margo Delidow: OK.

Josh Kline: You know, it's more about how saturated and vibrant it is, so that it looks like -- you know, from a distance, when you're walking up, it looks like a person, you know, rather than a painting.

Margo Delidow: And we all know what the green of a scrubbie is, and the yellow of yellow rubber gloves. And that gives us an emotional key --

Josh Kline: Exactly.

Margo Delidow: -- to what they are.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: And that's what we have to strive to maintain.

Josh Kline: Exactly. In the future, that emotional key won't necessarily work with the audience.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Josh Kline: Like the scrub brushes, I doubt that people will still -- will be scrubbing their kitchens in a hundred years. That would be shocking to me.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Assuming we have kitchens.

Josh Kline: Assuming we even have kitchens. You know? These things are time-specific. I still think it's important that they have the color, so you have this feeling of being in the presence of something sort of real.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Are there any other questions been on your mind to ask us? Or anything that you'd like to talk about that we haven't, that you've been thinking about with them?

Josh Kline: Not that I can think of.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: We've kind of covered a lot of territory.

Josh Kline: Oh, I will say -- since we're saying this on camera, because there was that *New Yorker* piece.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, do it. Oh yeah, let's talk about that.

Josh Kline: Which was great.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Well, let's talk about that. What that is, is a article on conservation at the Whitney that was in *The New Yorker* in January of 2016. And we referenced --

Josh Kline: Ben Lerner.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Sorry?

Josh Kline: Ben Lerner.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Ben Lerner wrote it. And we referenced this piece because it was so almost kind of indicative of where we may be going, or directed in the future. So go ahead, talk about it.

Josh Kline: Well, one thing that Ben wrote in the article, even though I told him that it was not the case, he insisted that for me, the file is the artwork. I think, if I'm on tape, I do want to say that the file is not the artwork. The objects are the artwork.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yes.

Josh Kline: And something else that was kind of asserted in that article was that, you know, that these objects are not the finished work, because in some way I'm waiting for the better technology. I don't feel that way. Like, I think these are very much the finished work. And part of the work is that it will change over time. I feel, like, about the file the same way that I feel about my video files. Like, you know, the video files are important, they're an intrinsic part of the work. But they're not the work. The work is the experience of sitting in front of the monitor or projection and watching the video. That is the work. Like, the person with the work in space. I feel the same way about the sculptures. The file is just a technical part of it. And, you know, these archival and conservation aspects are just part of me thinking about, well, how can this work translate into the future as the technology changes? You know. But it's for me, it's like these objects are the work. It exists now. It's not, like, incomplete.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: I really appreciate your thinking about that and your describing that in greater detail. A lot of my questions were coming from wanting to flush out some of those comments as well. It's really interesting to hear how you are thinking about it. But the one thing that always comes to mind when I

think about your work, and you, someone who is so thoughtful about this, is the question of aging, and is the question of the effect of time on material. From what I'm gathering, from what you're saying is time isn't really something that you want to deal with in this, it's not about watching some patina develop that has a certain romantic quality, maybe. It's about seeing these fresh each time, and getting the impact of that. Is that correct?

Josh Kline: Yes. Like, I think about these works as, like, you know, time-specific. Instead of sight-specific, they're time-specific works.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Of our time now?

Josh Kline: Of our time. Or no other our time --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Twenty fourteen.

Josh Kline: - but 2014. You know, them aging into the future, it takes them out of that. So I want them to still have this kind of fresh feel that, like, you're encountering something, you know, almost like an object that's been taken out of time. With other works that I've made, I feel differently. But with the 3D printed works, I want them to look fresh. "Fresh" might not be the right word.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: That's interesting that you feel differently about the 3D printed works than you do about other works that you've made. What is that?

Josh Kline: I guess it's, like, just like seeing something on a screen, or seeing a photograph. And you're, like --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Or maybe that it can be done in the future.

Josh Kline: Yeah. Or, like, yeah. There are just certain works where, like, their degradation is part of it, you know? With these, it's not. I don't know if I have a good justification for that yet.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: You don't need to. I mean, it's evolving.

Josh Kline: For sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: You know? And as more times we talk, the clearer or the more interesting and engaging it becomes. I hope we will have this conversation again and document it.

Josh Kline: Sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Because I think your ideas may change, just as our questions may develop over time.

Josh Kline: I mean, it may have something -- I'm just answering my own question right now -- it may have something to do with the process of digitization, you know, which is fundamentally different from some of the other processes that I use in my work, like for instance, refrigeration. You know, with the digitization, the idea is to lock things in digitally.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Josh Kline: You know, like you're trying to preserve something almost cryogenically. You know, you're trying to freeze something in time, you know, at the highest resolution that you can to stop degradation. It just feels like to me like maybe it's something that's native to that process, compared to works that I've made using bacteria, where it's meant to go horribly wrong, and not last.

Margo Delidow: But the cart is not meant to be replaced.

Josh Kline: No.

Margo Delidow: So how did you make the choice not to print the cart?

Josh Kline: I just didn't see the need to. You know, with the scanning, it's usually about finding a way to exhibit things that can't be exhibited themselves, you know, with a lot of the work I make, to exhibit the real thing. But for many reasons, part of which is just respecting subjects, I don't want to exhibit Aleyda as a person in the gallery. Like some of these other objects are, like -- you know, I've scanned food recently, or certain other things. Things that I actually can't take. A lot of these are things that she uses at her job, I can't exactly take. She's kind of borrowing them for the afternoon. I can't just be, like, hey, going to keep these. Another part of it is about the replication of these objects as well, like being able to reproduce people, reproduce real things, reproduce ephemeral things. A big part of it is just, like, the cart, it's easy enough to buy the carts. I can't, like -- I can't ask Aleyda to sit in this gallery for nine months, you know?

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Right.

Josh Kline: I think that's a part of it. Did I answer your question?

Margo Delidow: Yeah.

Josh Kline: I kind of trailed off in the middle of it. It's, like, what did I say? Like a post-lunch --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Well, I think that's where we're at, you know? No, it's very provocative. We're thrilled to have this work. And we're also really engaged by you and the prospect of looking after them over time, and how they will survive in time the way you want them. So thank you --

Josh Kline: Sure.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: -- for coming today and talking with us.

Josh Kline: No problem. I mean, my pleasure. I'm honored.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: OK, good.

Margo Delidow: Thank you.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Thank you.

[00:53:58]

Josh Kline: You could replace the carts. You know, they should just be, like --

Margo Delidow: But sourced from what time period?

Josh Kline: No no, they should be these carts. But if you need -- like, if the carts break, you could buy new ones.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: So that -- OK.

Margo Delidow: Two thousand fourteen ones?

Josh Kline: I mean, this model I think is not specific to 2014.

Margo Delidow: I don't think it is. It hasn't changed in 20 years.

Josh Kline: But I think the bigger issue is just, hey, this cart fits the sculptures.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Good point.

Josh Kline: And the others are different. You know, like, they'd have, like, different structures, different trays, different size trays. So that would change the work.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah.

Josh Kline: But these specific -- I'm not attached to these specific carts. I like the model of the cart, but these actual specific carts that are here, if they break, I'm not going to sob tears --

Margo Delidow: There's a lot of conservators right now, rapid prototyping, making fills and parts, and it works because the conservators are using something that's not used in the work of art, different material.

Josh Kline: Sure.

Margo Delidow: For your work, I could see where we -- if we'd ever want to do something -- so we would never want to rapid-prototype your cart.

Josh Kline: I don't know. Like, I mean, like a hundred years from now, or even, like, forty years from now, maybe that would be the most cost-effective thing to do, you know? I guess I keep coming back to these video analogies, but at a certain point, it will become easier to, like, produce, like a CRT monitor, like to print a CRT monitor, or whatever, than to go hunting for an old one and then refurbish it. I'd say the same thing with the carts. Like, I really believe that, again, assuming that Trump doesn't destroy the planet and his successors, and that we're not all, like -- that we don't head back to the stone age with a smaller population, like these technologies will continue to advance. I think people will be shocked at how radical the possibilities are that they present us with fifty years from now, a hundred years from now. I mean, it's moving quite quickly, you know? I think there will come a point where, like, it's no problem to print an object, in this material. It's just like, does a file exist for the cart? Or do we just, like, you know, draw one up in the computer, or whatever?

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: It really changes our whole notion of preservation, it really does, coming -- thinking about this.

[00:56:47]

Margo Delidow: Because what you're saying of whatever is reasonable, you think about people and you think about their lives and what they're going through -- we don't get

that all the time. Sometimes it's, go through whatever means. I want it perfect, I want it now. And I don't care what it costs --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Just like that --

Margo Delidow: -- and this is what it's got to be.

Josh Kline: Oh, yeah. Well, I mean, I'd rather the work exists and be shown.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: No, exactly. But it's so interesting to think of what this is really going to look like in 20 years. You know, really.

Margo Delidow: And when it starts to look dated. I mean, our eyes can't see it, right?

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah. Yeah.

Margo Delidow: So I had to think to myself, like, a 1970s, you know, TV set.

Josh Kline: I think it will --

Margo Delidow: I had to think about what it's going to look like.

Josh Kline: I think it will look pretty dated soon. You know? Like, I think with the lights and everything, it will, you know, very soon, I think we're heading into that --

Margo Delidow: The strip lighting already --

Josh Kline: -- the stage where, like, you know, this color -- it just, you know, like, you know, just thinking about the early 2010s, you know, it's going into that part of -- we're flushing it out of the system.

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: Yeah, we are. We are.

Josh Kline: So it will look, I think, very, very dated, like, soon. Then probably by, I don't know, 2035, it will have come around, you know, with everything else. Then it will look vintage, or whatever. You know? Then it will just become historical.

[00:58:13]

Margo Delidow: And how did Aleyda react when she saw herself?

Josh Kline: Well, she came with her son and her sister. They were just taking selfies. You know, she also -- I mean, she was both amused by them, but also, like, you know, she looked at them and she's, like, "Oh, this is my life." So I don't think -- because, you know, I was a little worried. Like, I talked to her about it. I think we had even maybe sent her, like, you know, these things called "turntables," video previews of the sculptures. And she -- you know, but I was still, like, how is she going to react when she sees these things? And she came to the EFA Gallery, and she was just, like, "Oh, yeah, this is my life." She seemed -- she was into it, you know. She was, like --

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: She's beautiful, in a way. She's very beautiful.

Josh Kline: No, she is. You know, like, she

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro: I'm not sure how I'd feel seeing my head on a cart.

Josh Kline: She, you know, knelt down next to it, and her sister took her photo.

[END]