

HAROLD JONES INTERVIEWS

Biography, LIGHT Gallery History & LIGHT Gallery Calendars 1973 – 1975

Interviewed by Photographer Michael Hyatt on October 10 and
November 7, 2016 at the Center for Creative Photography,
University of Arizona – Tucson, Arizona

INTERVIEW # 1 of 2

Interview with Harold Jones, Photographer & Professor Emeritus

Interviewer: Michael Hyatt, photographer

Date taped: October 10, 2016

Location: The Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona - Tucson, Arizona

Note: The Center for Creative Photography (CCP) has, among several Harold Jones archives, one archive devoted to his time as director of LIGHT Gallery in New York City. While there Harold produced the 1973 to 1975 History of Photography Calendars to promote the gallery's artists. We discussed the calendars and aspects of his life in photography during two interviews. Following his stint as director of LIGHT Gallery, Harold became the first director of CCP. After several years he founded the photography department at the University of Arizona College of Art. He retired from the art department in 2005 and launched Voices of Photography at CCP in 2005.

Michael Hyatt (MH) here at the Center for Creative Photography speaking with Harold Jones. Harold, in looking at the images in the 1973 calendar you produced I notice that none of the twelve photographs are titled. Was that by design?

Harold Jones (HJ): Actually, poor design. Yes, poor design. (Chuckle) We were just getting underway and it was another thing I'd have to paste up, quite frankly. And I thought that the design was just another... I guess it was just cleaner at the time. I felt it was cleaner without a title. And it would be twelve more things that I would have to paste up. Which calendar are we looking at?

MH: This is 1973, the first LIGHT Gallery calendar and the one I found on eBay. Tell me about the cover photograph.

HJ: Francis Frith's photograph, the step pyramid, is on the cover.¹ I love this picture and still have it.

MH: It's a pyramid somewhere in Egypt?

HJ: Yeah, it's in Sakkarah, Egypt.

MH: I see. And for the first month of the year you chose a photograph of a naked baby boy by Wynn Bullock.

HJ: Baby boy, yes.

MH: I think that is a striking image to begin the year with.

HJ: I'll say!

MH: A photograph representing birth and then I notice Alfred Stieglitz was born in 1864 on January 1. Also on January 1, 1958 Edward Weston passed away in Carmel.

HJ: Yes.

¹ Tomb built for Pharaoh Djoser in the 27th century BC.

MH: A couple of stellar artists in the history of photography falling on January 1.

HJ: Sure were.

MH: Did you get to know Stieglitz?

HJ: No, he was before my time because he died in, I think, 1946.

MH: That's correct. What about Weston?

HJ: No.

MH: You didn't get to know Weston?

HJ: He was before my time too. 1958? Yeah. Well I was 18 but photography wasn't anywhere in my mind.

MH: What led to the beginning of this series of calendars? You were at LIGHT Gallery. You had come from Rochester at the George Eastman House. Then you were hired to be the first director of LIGHT Gallery. How did the idea of producing a calendar come about?

HJ: I had gotten to New York in 1971. So I had been there two years, just getting the gallery going. It probably would have been in '72 I would have had to put this together: the boards, the paste-ups for it. So '72...okay, I remember we were at a party sometime during the year and I'm in someone's kitchen, probably a little drunk would be likely, and I looked on the wall and there was, I think it was a Catholic Saints calendar, a religious calendar, probably a Catholic religious calendar, and every day had a Saint on it. Now, I've grown up with Catholic people. I was Presbyterian. I was a lax Presbyterian. But my uncle was a Presbyterian minister, my Dad's brother. So I had gone to church.

MH: You had been to church.

HJ: Yes, I had been to church and seen those calendars. And so, I figured, that is amazing that there could be a saint for every day. And it occurred to me, right there in that kitchen probably holding that beer or something, that photography should have such a calendar. And by golly I would make it. I would have to talk to Tennyson, my partner/colleague/boss, about the idea and hopefully I thought there were so many photographers out there that it would produce an income.

We never had the whole key to making calendars profitable. To market a calendar you really had to have it ready a year ahead of time. We only sold them thru the Gallery. I think I did include an order form for the next year's calendar inside, maybe, for 1974.

MH: Yes, there is a page in here to renew, to get a 1974 calendar.

HJ: Okay, so I am by profession a trained historian. Half of my graduate degree was in art history. At the University of New Mexico you had to do as many units in art history as studio. And I actually produced a dissertation, a research paper that I finally finished two years after I graduated. I typed on it on weekends after moving to Rochester. It was very hard to complete. I had done most of the research in New Mexico. It was on the early work of Paul Stand and Edward Weston in New Mexico. For it I drove around the state and interviewed people,

including Georgia O'Keeffe. I had to take every kind of art history class there was, which was interesting. I enjoyed it. I am not complaining. I am just saying that it was very fortunate that I completed that research because I had to produce a body of work that would pass by two committees: the Graduate Committee and Orals Committee. So I did that.

Two years after I left I went back and had an exhibition at the same time that I did The Orals. That was three hours of them going over different points in the dissertation. It was a long three hours! One of the criticisms was that I used "scatological language" and I was really stuck because I didn't know what scatological language meant. It turns out that I was using normal language. Like I had Tina Modotti talking to Edward Weston in a conversation that they could have had. So, it was probably a little too romantic for the committee.

MH: It wasn't academic enough?

HJ: It wasn't academic enough. Yeah! But it passed and I passed. I didn't mind talking about it. I kind of enjoyed talking. But the challenge was talking about it for three hours. I started to think perhaps I was in trouble. If there was a problem, my mentor Van Deren Coke would have let me know ahead of time. I don't think he would have let me walk the plank without me being able to get back. Anyway, they worked me over suitably. Everything about my artwork went much easier after that.

MH: You got the MFA?

HJ: I got the MFA and with enough units for a PhD. That has always been a source of annoyance for me. In any event, yes I did get an MFA.

MH: And you were working at the George Eastman House at the time?

HJ: Yes

MH: How did you get that job?

HJ: Okay, so part of it starts in New Mexico. In the summer of 1967, Nathan Lyons at George Eastman House taught a summer workshop called Museum Studies for Photographers. There were no museum collections of photography at the time. Nathan was kind of ahead of his time. And, God bless him, he just passed away two weeks ago. So I got selected as one of five graduate students from around the country. Really interesting people. I will give you their names, just for the record: Bruce McDonald, Robert Sobeazack, Marie Zack, John Ward and myself. Anyway Nathan lectured every day and in the afternoon we worked in some area of the collection.

Then I went back to New Mexico to finish graduation. I had no idea what I was going to do. My plan really was... I had worked in a food store in Morristown, NJ pushing carts and stocking shelves and I knew how to do that and it made me qualified to work in other food stores. You know, you go in and tell them, you know what the routine is. So I thought I would just go to Santa Fe and get a job in a food store and make photographs. I was quite happy to go do that actually. Sort of looked forward to it.

So, it is May, this would be May '68 and I am walking down the street and a friend comes from

the opposite direction. He says, "Hey Harold, there is a phone call for you in Van's office. Nathan Lyons is calling you." So I walked over to Van's office and we called Nathan. He said, "How would you like to work at the George Eastman House?" It sounded very good to me.

So I opened my house and let my friends take all my stuff like lamps, tables, couches, and my beautiful brass bed. I had a fabulous brass bed I had found in an antique store way the hell out in New Mexico, it was really beautiful. I just left it there. But I did take my iron frying pan. You've got to have a good frying pan. Well, it worked great all the years I was there and it still works great. But it fit in my suitcase and I guess I was just ready.

So I took the train from Albuquerque to Rochester. The train ride was a fabulous experience. I got to Rochester on June 8, 1968. I remember the date because that was the day Robert Kennedy was buried. Nathan was at the depot to pick me up and we went to a cookout barbeque at Roger Mertin's house. He was one of the guys that worked at the George Eastman House. My colleagues there were Mertin, Thomas Barrow, Robert Fichter and, of course, Nathan.

It took a while to get into the "House" because my first job, out in the old carriage shed, was fixing frames for traveling exhibitions. Nathan had put together a great traveling exhibition program. He'd also invented a cardboard cutout for the wood frames that had a flap on the back so you could insert a print easily. It was an inexpensive system, and very clever. He found someone to make those things. Rochester at that time was an industrial city so that was pretty easy. The frames were held together by nails and another piece of cardboard on the back. They'd get banged up in traveling, so my job was to repair them. Get them all nice and new looking.

So that's what I did. I worked in what was the George Eastman carriage shed. It was as big as a small house but had no heat. It was colder than crap out there. Rochester is off this lake! I arrived there in June so it was alright during the summer but through the winter, it got colder and colder and colder. I did go into the house occasionally for a cup of coffee.

MH: And warm up no doubt. When did you graduate into something more important there?

HJ: I think it was about a year. When I did get inside, I was responsible for getting the exhibitions that Nathan or Beaumont² would select, up on the wall. I had a staff of a couple guys. So I did that which I liked very much. Then this guy called from New York City. He said he had a project, which a friend of his said I would be perfect to run. But I already had a great job so I said, "no. It was nice you called but no thank you." Then he called me back.

MH: That was Tennyson?

HJ: Yes, Tennyson Schad. He was an attorney. A very dignified looking guy and very gracious, with a great sense of humor. He said, "I'd like to come to Rochester to buy you lunch." I remember sitting there thinking, well no one has ever done that before. So, I said "okay." His idea was to sell large sports posters by really well-known Life magazine food and sports photographers. His wife worked for Time Life. His idea was to sell John Dominis, I still remember them... John was a food photographer for Life Magazine and George Silk was a great sports photographer. There were others but those were the main two. It was really a brilliant idea

² Beaumont Newhall was the director of the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House from 1958 to 1971.

and he would have become rich had he pursued that idea instead of hiring me to do this other idea.

MH: He bought you lunch!

HJ: He bought me lunch at the Treadway Motor Inn on East Avenue. But I said, "No, I don't want to sell sports. I don't want to sell posters. I really like my job. But if I was to come to New York I'd want to only show contemporary photography," for which there was almost no market whatsoever. There was a gallery in New York called the Witkin Gallery that sold all kinds of photographs.

Then he called me again to see if I had changed my mind. Well, I hadn't changed my mind. I had a fabulous job. Then, I started thinking. No, I didn't. Then he called one day and I figured I'd have to stop this guy from calling me. He was a nice guy and I didn't want to hurt his feelings. I'd told him no two or three times. Ok, then I said, "Well I'd probably be interested in doing it but I would have to have total independence." Now this guy had to put up money so I figured this, he would definitely say no, I am sorry. That would be impossible and that would be it and I would be free. So he called back the next day and said "that would be fine." It sounded good, but I still wasn't interested. Then I thought, how much pay should I ask for? At Eastman House I was making \$6,000 a year, but I knew in New York it was more expensive. Now I was stuck. I didn't expect him to call me and say yes. So about pay I said \$20,000. I figured that would do it. That was a reasonable salary in New York for doing what he wanted. He said, "Fine!" Oh! What I didn't know and we wouldn't have known was that would be the salary I would make for the next five years.

MH: Twenty thousand for five years in New York?

HJ: Yes. (Chuckle)

MH: So you finally agreed and LIGHT Gallery opened. What year was that?

HJ: I went there in February 1971 to find the space and work out contracts for the photographers. The gallery opened in November '71 on Madison Avenue.

MH: Where did the name LIGHT Gallery come from?

HJ: Tennyson and I discussed a name and thought the Acme Photography Company or the American Photography Company might work. Then one day I took the train up to see Harry [Callahan]. On the way back I was looking out the window and the word light literally popped into my mind, just like you read about in the books. (Chuckle)

MH: A stroke of inspiration!

HJ: Yes, it occurred to me there's all the connections to light in photography. I told Tennyson...and it didn't knock him out at the beginning. But the more he thought about it the better it sounded.

MH: How'd things go at the beginning?

HJ: We just weren't able, you know; the first two years were very difficult. The last three years

things started to take off but there were debts for doing stuff.

MH: So for the first couple years, there wasn't enough foot traffic to support the operation?

HJ: Not really. At the end, when I left, Tennyson took the operation down to someplace on 5th Avenue. It must have cost a fortune. So, LIGHT Gallery survived, I think, probably five years after that, maybe six or seven.³ I do have, and I am happy to give you a printout for your chronology of LIGHT Gallery and what happened. Amy Rule and I sorted out the LIGHT Gallery archives when they came here as it so happened. Fern Schad, Tennyson's wife, gave all the papers to the Center. After me there were seven, at least, directors of LIGHT Gallery. Amy and I worked for two years sorting out all the LIGHT Gallery paperwork. So, I kept that record and made a chronology. Only a crazy person would do that but I have it and it has been useful to some people.

MH: Okay, back to the calendars. You were at a cocktail party and you thought that a calendar would be a good item to sell. Business was slow and this could be a good fund raising effort.

HJ: That's right. And it would be fun and every one would need one!

MH: Sure! Every person that was interested in photography at least.

HJ: That was brilliant, right?

MH: So you spoke to Tennyson about that.

HJ: Yes, I did and he also thought it was a great idea. He was a sweet guy. We were from different universes completely, but he was very patient with me. All of my ideas didn't go over so well, but with this one we thought could make some money. So that made us both happy. Plus it would get attention for the gallery and the gallery's photographers. And there was nothing like it. And there should be something like it now. There is yours⁴ and there may be others that I don't know about. But anyway, it is a good idea because people are still interested in photography.

MH: And all of the artists that are represented in this calendar were photographers that you were showing in the Gallery?

HJ: Many of them, yes, the answer would be yes. But there were.... We can see here there were other things happening.

MH: Right. Well there on January 25: Talbot's "photogenic drawing" process announced to the Royal Institute in London in 1839, plus other dates in photo history. And just 4 days later Sir John F.W. Herschel used "hypo (sodium thiosulfate) to fix photographic prints. Where did those dates come from?

JH: Well, I still had all my books from art history. And in Beaumont and Nancy Newhall's Masters of Photography I knew where to look. When Beaumont heard about the calendar, he sent me a wall calendar with New England landscapes. In it he'd written photo dates of interest.

MH: You both supplied dates?

³ LIGHT Gallery opened in 1971 and closed its doors in 1987.

⁴ The 2016 Street Photography Calendar and Dates of Photographic Interest produced by Michael Hyatt and published by Gallery 1331.

HJ: Yes, he sent me the calendar and I made a list of the rest. I didn't realize what a big task it would be to paste up all that information on each page.

MH: I can see a lot of work there.

HJ: Yes, you have to lay out the lines so they are square and add the text so it is also square. If you look closely here you can see an error.

MH: (Chuckle) But it is minor!

HJ: You know, but I notice them. I bet there are more, like this one here... and the numbers of course. So the whole thing... I must have blanked out doing that but I know it was a real pain in the ass.

MH: Oh sure, it was very time consuming but you were in the gallery and not a lot of people were walking in the door so you had time for this sort of thing.

HJ: Yeah, but we are getting busier and busier by then. And I had to travel. I remember doing one, at least several pages in a Chicago hotel room.

MH: You were traveling for the gallery?

HJ: Yes.

MH: Okay.

HJ: Finding sales, going to museums. I was not very successful at it but I learned a lot by doing it. It wasn't that I wasn't a good salesman; I was a good salesman but you have to have been trained for it. So I was kind of...

MH: A novice?

HJ: Definitely a novice. I remember once I got to Chicago and the people I was hoping to see were not there. They were out of town. For some reason I didn't call ahead or have a schedule booked or anything like that. So I called Tennyson. I said, "Tennyson, everyone is out of town." There was a silence. Tennyson didn't know whether... if I would have been in the room, he probably would have beaten me. (Chuckle) He was not happy that no one was in Chicago when I went there. And he was right but I did work on the paste-ups for the calendar anyway.

MH: So you got something done.

HJ: Right.

MH: Let's talk about some of the other photographers in the calendar.

HJ: Oh Michael Bishop was such a fabulous.... he just passed away two weeks ago. I guess Nathan was three weeks; Michael was two weeks ago. Now Michael, this particular picture I used... he has an apparatus, small on the front of the camera that simply allowed him to move a piece of cardboard to cover half of the scene. Photograph one half then move the cardboard down and make a soft line and he figured out how far it needed to be and all. So he would make these.... very inventive.

MH: I was going to ask you about that. Whether it was a sandwich of two negatives or how he had done that.

HJ: That was his invention. He had a Rollie or something like that. There was only one lens but somehow it worked for him. But, I think he did it on many different kinds of cameras, yes. He didn't get as much attention as he should have or I should have gotten for him so he is one of my failed. I have a couple people I failed to help. Michael Bishop is one of them.

MH: You did sell some of this work but not much?

HJ: Yeah.

MH: I see.

HJ: I should have. People were still getting used to photography so this didn't even look... Something about this wasn't right.

MH: Well, they were certainly used to seeing the world as it normally looks. And, this is... You look at it and... What is that, a lake or what's going on there?

HJ: And he had a number of other kinds of pictures working. He was a very productive guy. You know, he ended up being a carpenter in California at the end of his time.

MH: Oh! I noticed that Ansel Adam's birth date is listed here as February 20th. By then had you gotten to know Ansel?

HJ: Oh I had known Ansel. Ansel was close to Beaumont. They were really dear friends. Ansel was... We were young guys out to change the world of photography including Ansel's view of it. But we respected Ansel because he was the last great photographer of the 19th Century and he had worked hard and done a lot for photography. But we were 20th Century guys.

MH: You weren't selling his work in the gallery?

HJ: No, I didn't.

MH: Were you approached?

HJ: It drove Tennyson nuts that I didn't sell Ansel.

MH: So this goes back to you saying that you wanted complete control and you got it.

HJ: That's right and he never complained. He never whined. He was not happy with it but he never brought it up once he agreed to it. He was a gentleman.

MH: That is admirable.

HJ: It is admirable, yes. Thank you, yes. God bless him.

MH: Yes, sure.

HJ: After I came out here... I think I was gone about six months. Six months after I was gone, LIGHT Gallery was selling Ansel Adams.

MH: I was going to ask you about that.

HJ: Tennyson had a meeting... This is in one of The Voices [of Photography], the early ones, with Fern Schad. I didn't know this but, I did an interview with Fern when she came out here a couple times. She said they were going to sell Ansel because there was money involved and that was good for the gallery. Tennyson had a meeting with the staff because they were totally against it, being my rebel crew. They weren't happy about it at all but Tennyson, somehow, being the attorney he was, explained it in a nice way that they had to do it. On the other hand, they could walk and find another job. I heard from some of them since that they weren't happy but it was inevitable.

MH: Who was the next director?

HJ: Oh there was an assortment of directors...

MH: Right after you?

HJ: Right after me, there was a guy named Victor Schragar, who was a terrific guy and a really good director but he was also an artist and photographer. I think his heart and soul was in being a photographer and an artist. He was very good with people. He was like one of those people, I don't mean this in a bad way, but he kind of looked Ivy League as if he understood money or knew money. You know, you want someone who is comfortable with money people. Because people with a lot of money require a certain kind of person to help them. They are not all that way but I have found... Victor understood. I talked with him about it. He is still in the arts and still a photographer.

MH: Benno Friedman's photograph for March?

HJ: Benno Friedman is still living up in Sheffield, Mass. March, yes. Benno was a fashion photographer, a commercial photographer but also did his own work with all the things that we were taught not to do with the chemistry. Those were the things that Benno looked forward to doing and trying to figure out. He used all kinds of paper, all kinds of chemistry and misused chemistry. But he made some really beautiful pictures.

Now we're talking about a different kind of photography and this doesn't look like a photograph to most people. So, I think, the one thing we did right in this calendar, is show work like that.

MH: So, this is a good example of unusual work exhibited at the gallery?

HJ: Yes, of course, and no two exhibitions were ever the same. An exhibition ran a month long, except in the summer. I would leave it up longer because people go out of town. I had two plywood T-walls and had them on castors so we could move them around. So, even the space would change when people came in. This idea just popped into my head one day; I had never seen them. I wasn't even sure they would roll so when I put the castors on the bottom and they did roll I felt even better because otherwise I had all this lumber up on the third floor. They were very functional and practical.

MH: Were you always doing group shows?

HJ: In the summer we did group shows to attract people. But there was usually a one person

show and a little group show each month during the rest of the year.

MH: Okay. I noticed the reference on March 5, 1902: Opening of the First Photo-Secession Exhibition at National Arts Club, New York. Stieglitz was involved in that?

HJ: Yes, he was the leader of the group. Stieglitz was also the leader of the National Arts Club where he put together several portfolios of photographs. I think George Sealy, who knew a lot about printing, put together some reproductions that were very high quality.

MH: This preceded Camera Work?

HJ: Yes.

MH: I was just in New York, at Sotheby's to preview an upcoming photography auction, and saw a whole set of Camera Work. It sold for \$150,000.

The April image is by Aaron Siskind who was an active photographer at that time?

HJ: Yes. Yes. He was a New Yorker. At that point he was living in Providence, Rhode Island teaching at the School of Design with Harry Callahan.

MH: Did his work sell well?

HJ: Yes. He had been around a long time. He had photographs on exhibition at the Charles Egan Gallery. It was a gallery that showed people like Franz Kline for instance. Other photographers too. Aaron knew all of them and exhibited there. He'd been a very active member of the Camera Club, had done several projects, and had several exhibitions there so he was known in the field for quite a while. Then he started doing what we would call this abstract work. It also got a lot of attention. We sold a lot of Aaron. Not in the beginning but in his third, fourth year things really started picking up.

MH: The May photograph is yours.

HJ: Yeah, this is... I was stuck for some reason. I don't know if I made this up or I secretly wanted to have a picture in this calendar, but I didn't have one from anyone else and I didn't know what to use. This is actually my picture from when I first met Frances⁵. We were out for a walk and she said, "Oh, look over there. That would be an interesting photograph." That's what I saw and it may not be a great picture but it has sentimental value. It's not an Aaron Siskind, but it's an interesting photograph. I always feel bad when I see it. Andre Kertesz loved this picture.

MH: Well, that's a major compliment.

HJ: Yes! I thought so.

MH: I think you got the true story from him. You told me once before that Kertesz had a bit of a temper and if he was mad he would say so.

HJ: He would...and probably having lunch with someone else would say..."that son-of-a-bitch Harold Jones," I am sure. He would never express being angry at me. Every once in a while he

⁵ Photographer Frances Murray is Harold's wife.

would not be so happy and I'd ask him. He was a European gentleman, but on the other hand... The reason I knew he was probably mad at me was because he would tell me how mad he was at other people. (Chuckle) Like Cartier-Bresson, those Europeans... Really. And, I would feel uncomfortable when he would start...

MH: Railing against them?

HJ: Railing is exactly the word. Thank you! Yes, right! He had an apartment on Washington Square, very nice. His wife Elizabeth was very nice. He would invite me over for coffee. Now Cartier-Bresson was a good friend of his... So, I would just listen.

MH: Was it competitiveness?

HJ: Yes, I am pretty sure.

MH: Speaking of Kertesz, here is his photograph of the swimmer for July.

HJ: Yes.

MH: Didn't his work fit outside of the contemporary photography you were showing at LIGHT Gallery then?

HJ: I don't know. I thought it was very inventive. The answer is it could be considered that way because he was so well known.

MH: Right.

HJ: Can that person be considered contemporary?

MH: He was like Ansel in that sense, maybe?

HJ: All his pictures are way more inventive than anything Ansel ever did.

MH: You mean?

HJ: I see no comparison between the two. I don't see them even in the same forest. (Chuckle)

MH: And you included Andre's birth date here: July 2, 1894.

HJ: Oh, so that is why he is there.

MH: Yes, you matched his photograph with his birth date.

HJ: He would have liked that. Actually he was very dear to me. He gave me little things, like a little guy rolled up in a ball carved out of some kind of dark wood.

I worked with all these people and my poor family didn't see me much. God bless Frances. Because most wives would say, you and photography, you be good together. See you later. (Chuckle)

MH: She was very supportive.

HJ: Yes, very supportive. And not really understanding photography to the intensity that I did or

still do.

MH: I have a print of his in my collection: Chez Mondrian. It's lovely. What else can you tell me about working with him?

HJ: We did a couple of solo shows of his work and he'd be in group shows. He would do something that I found annoying but, ah, it's a delicate issue. We had a contract with him. We were his exclusive representative. In this situation, which is one of the reasons why you work so hard for them, is that they can't sell work. It is in the contract. Someone could go to him, knock on his door and get a better price. He wasn't the only person doing that, there were others. So that would always get me because it would take away a sale that I could have, and then show him that we were doing well for him.

MH: So, he was selling on the side.

HJ: He was selling on the side. Yes, I have no idea how much but my guess is that he was doing very well for himself. But that undercut what we were trying to do.

MH: Interesting.

HJ: Having said all that, he was a really generous guy and very sweet.

MH: Was he doing his own printing?

HJ: No, no. He had the same printer as Duane Michals. They had a printer named Igor. Igor was his printer and we actually would go and pick up prints from Igor to take to Andre to sign.

MH: Uh huh.

HJ: Yeah, Igor knew how to print. How people liked a certain style. How Andre liked it.

MH: What about Roger Mertin and the June photograph?

HJ: Roger Mertin, he was always doing interesting stuff. At that point he was doing pictures with mirrors. More often than not, there would be a naked woman on a mirror, lying on the mirror being reflected. For that time, it was a gallery of contemporary art, I am sorry, same difference, contemporary photography, and there were no pictures like this then. Now, it kind of feels common in a way. In a lot of these pictures...people weren't aware of this kind of work. So when they come in, they didn't know what to make of it. Roger is another person I probably didn't do as much as I could. He was a very productive photographer. He is the one we all thought would be the most famous.

MH: Is there much of his work in the CCP collection?

HJ: Yes, quite a bit.

MH: Let's talk about Mark Cohen.

HJ: Oh, he is also one of my favorites. Now, he was able to get a little further up the ladder. By that I mean, people in New York know Mark Cohen's work. I don't think people beyond New York know Mark Cohen but he is still a really terrific photographer. He is well known for an odd point of view. Once I went out for a walk with him. He had his camera and was talking to this

person, a stranger that he had just met. He's got his camera like this, a 35mm, kind of photographing around this guy's head and having a conversation with this guy. And, I am standing back because I don't really want to get too close to this. He is invading this guy's space, but he is very nice about it and he is explaining how he does stamp collecting. He had a little rapport with him. He didn't get a model release or anything like that. But actually, you wouldn't recognize the guy from the picture anyway. So, why I picked that one, I don't know. It must have been summer.

MH: It was August and that's a sunflower. I am familiar with his work through early Aperture... 70s era.

HJ: I love all of his work. I mean, if I had to eliminate one, I would not be able to do it.

MH: Thomas Barrow has the September spot.

HJ: Tom Barrow. Ok, so he was one of my colleagues in Rochester, worked at the George Eastman House but also, we photographed all the time. We were crazy. It was really great because we worked with photographs all day long; we talked about photographs at night when we had beer. On weekends at barbecues we talked about photographs and then on Monday we went back and worked with photographs. A good story about Tom Barrow is, for instance, it snows in Rochester for ... ah... six months. Six months! The last snow is after Easter. There is not much you can do. You have to think of things to do inside really which we all did to one degree or another. Tom figured out how to run the film through the camera multiple times, the same roll of film, five or six times, photographing the TV. So, there are all kinds of things that occur on TV that you don't know about, I mean, you aren't keeping track of what is where and that is kind of part of the beauty. Tom is, I think, close to Benno Friedman, the fellow awhile back.

MH: The March photograph was by Benno Friedman.

HJ: But Benno had another life. He had family money in a way that kept him going, but he was always inventing.

MH: Is he still alive?

HJ: Yes. I am hoping that is true. I haven't heard from him in a couple weeks. He is two years older than me, so he must be 78. He was just here at the center. He didn't look great to me so I hope he is okay. I actually wrote him this morning to see if he is.

MH: I see. Well Tom's photograph is interesting. I hadn't really looked at it carefully until you said that he had run the film through the camera several times. Then, as I was looking, I saw the lips, then there is the leg and a hand figure inside the lips.

MH: Speaking of inventive, Frederick Sommer is listed here: born September 7, 1905 in Anagni, Italy. Was he in New York then or was he already in Arizona?

HJ: He came out here to Tucson with his wife in '32 - '33. The two of them were in Tucson for three years in the 30's. He taught art classes right down near 4th Avenue.

MH: And you chose his photograph for November.

HJ: Yes, now this is like a classic, famous photograph. Back then, Fred was known only to a small group of photographers at the time... Edward Weston, etc. Actually, Fred and Edward Weston traded technical tips because Fred was very technical. A good guy with lenses and developers, but he never really worked. He never had a job. His wife had a job. She was a social worker on the Indian Reservation. She joked that she used to take him out in the morning and leave him in the desert with his bag lunch and his camera and come back and pick him up later in the day. So you can just see him wandering around...

MH: Interesting! Now the October image is by Harry Callahan.

HJ: All the images in the calendar are kind of inventive, although I might be prejudice about that. But Harry's picture of Eleanor...this kind of picture looks so simple to us now, a snapshot. Something about the combo, 8 x 10, and her. Harry did a lot of different things, multiple exposures, all kinds of things. Used every kind of camera there was, actually. He also did color. Is his birthday listed?

MH: Yes, you matched that up: October 22, 1912.

HJ: I'll be damned! That is sweet.

MH: October 22, born 1912 in Detroit and until I really looked at this photo, I hadn't noticed the names carved on the tree trunks there. I mentioned that I was at the Sotheby's preview and there were a number of his photographs in the sale. Two that surprised me were of telephone lines, just lines, blank sky. They sold for small fortunes.

HJ: Really?

MH: Yes!

HJ: I am happy to hear that because there was a lull there for a while. See this, this tonality here (pointing at the calendar). This guy was a master printer. Everyone acknowledges that he was a good printer, but keeping these kinds of tones for those of us mortal printers is not so easy.

Tell you a quick Harry Callahan story: I used to go to see Harry regularly because part of the deal was once we represented you, you would get a one person show every two years, new work that people hadn't seen before. That was kind of the attraction, signing with the gallery. I didn't know if that would work for us but it turned out it did. Harry made proof prints and had boxes of proofs. So sometimes we'd go up to the third floor of his house in Providence. We'd take a bourbon up and look at proof prints. So, this one time there must have been prints six or eight inches high. He said to me, "you know there's not really much in there this time, I don't think." I looked at them and figured he was kidding me or something. And, I don't know if he influenced me when he said that, but I couldn't find anything either! They were all close but not...

MH: They were not pristine prints.

HJ: No, but I'd come back a month or two months later and he'd have another stack, the same pictures but a little different and they would all, pretty much, have that extra something. They were practically the same thing, pictures of houses or something the same as he was doing last time except these did something. I could never figure out the difference between them. It is true

of anyone's pictures -- mine, yours, anyone's. How some of them that are close to what you did the first time just don't do anything. And then, by accident, you do something that does do something. What the hell is that? I am still trying to figure that one out. (laughing)

MH: Yes, and Eleanor...

HJ: Eleanor was a very, very beautiful person. Very good to me also. They were both very good to me. When I went there and stayed a couple times Harry and I would sit drinking, sometimes more than we should have. You would hear Eleanor from the kitchen yell, "Harry, you are getting drunk." And, Harry would say, "Oh Eleanor!" Then, I knew I had better stop wherever I was doing. She was very understanding, I've got to say.

MH: And, a willing model, no matter what... clothed or not.

HJ: That's right. And about that, she once said, "Oh, Harry would never do any wrong," meaning disrespectful to her.

MH: Yes, sure.

HJ: So it was a good...

MH: All of the nudes are very tastefully done.

HJ: He was truly a Midwestern kind of guy, did all kinds of work that was really... (pause) remarkable.

MH: We talked about the November photograph by Sommer. And, also in November, you listed Robert Frank's birthday. Were you representing him in the Gallery?

HJ: Yes, we didn't have an exclusive but I sold many Robert Frank prints. I would just ask him. Yeah, he used to come by. We would go for coffee. He was just an ordinary guy, you know, how people say that.

MH: I understand that he's back in New York, living right off the Bowery. This is what I hear from people I know in New York. His work is selling for a lot of money now.

HJ: It is indeed. He gave me a couple prints. One was of the people looking out the window with the flag draped down. It was a good one and I loved it. But we sold it. My daughter was in a divorce and she had no money so she either lived in poverty or we'd help her so I sold it, for \$150,000! This was like 4-5 years ago!

MH: About a year ago, Sotheby's auctioned most of the photographs from *The Americans* and that print sold for something in that price range again.

HJ: That is great. Because, yes that book came out when I was 59. But before, I guess, the 70s, he wasn't selling that many prints. Once I asked Harry how many prints he sold the year before LIGHT Gallery – "10." And, he was one of the better known photographers. Robert was too. I am so happy they are all doing well and did well.

MH: So you got to know Frank and spent some time casually with him over coffee or beer,

whatever.

HJ: Yeah, we would talk about normal ordinary things. Gary Winogrand was the same way; a little tougher, scarier than Robert. Robert didn't like to go into coffee shops if there was noise. He didn't like noisy places.

MH: You list the birth date for Walker Evans. Did you get to know him?

HJ: No, no, I never did. I met Walker Evans a couple times. But I didn't, in any way, get to know him like Frank or any of these other people.

MH: We are at the December page of the calendar now showing Emmet Gowin's photograph. Is this a typical photograph of his from that era?

HJ: It is. He also did 4x5's that are all sharp focus. This is an 8x10 with a 4x5 lens on it so it has the Gowin effect. Harry did a picture, an 8x10, where Eleanor is a very small figure in a black room. They lived in a Chicago at the time in a ballroom so there was a lot of space. Emmet was interested in how Harry got that and, at the time, he thought maybe if he put a short lens on the 8x10 it would work. So he did a lot of work that looks like this. Sometimes he would get up in a tree to get a kind of perspective. So this is not like anything anyone had seen at the time.

MH: Sure. Now was he photographing Edith then?

HJ: Yes.

MH: He had done some of those nudes of her?

HJ: Yes, the early work. People were very interested in the early work. It was much more snapshot like. Once he started making serious photographs... maybe that's the wrong word (pause). The photographs that didn't have that snapshot quality, the spontaneous quality the early pictures had. Of course, they are beautifully printed. He is another of one of the really great printers.

MH: The last person I want to ask you about is Eugene Smith. His birth date is listed but you weren't representing him?

HJ: That is right. He was.... I was trying. I was working on it.

MH: You were? What was difficult about that?

HJ: Gene was a New Yorker and had been a working photographer for a long time and here I am this young, kind of eccentric guy wondering... I wore a bow tie that probably put a question in all of their minds. But I went to see Gene at his loft. That was amazing. Then, I knew Gene when he came out here. I brought Gene out here. Before I transferred to the UA Art Department, I was working for two years on getting Gene here. Getting his archives. I hadn't thought about him teaching. But, I certainly was interested in his archives for the center. And, he had a particular kind of personality. He was so intense! He did teach for me when I was in the art department. I had started working to bring him here. Visited him and his attorneys in New York. I spent a lot of time with his attorneys. And then John Schaeffer asked me one day if I would be interested in having Gene Smith teach for me, with me? And, I said, "affirmative" to that, so I did that. He

taught only one or two classes but that's a whole Mother Day's story.

MH: Yeah, I want to hear that later!

HJ: Yeah, that is a good story! Gene Smith. Yeah. He was one of a kind.

MH: In New York, you couldn't get him to supply prints to the gallery?

HJ: It was hard. In order to print... Gene was not a neat person, what we could call a neat person. So in order to print, he would have to... It would take him a couple days to clean out his darkroom before he could print. Now, I did get some prints from him and he had boxes of prints. But, I didn't...we didn't get very far. So when he moved out here, we were much closer. We worked together. Did a lot of stuff together. I did arrange for him to do a lecture at Modern Languages on campus because we didn't have an auditorium here. By this time he was living in town with Shelly, his partner. Anyway Gene showed up to do this lecture with eight trays of slides. Most people come with one, some people come with two. Gene came with eight full carousel trays. I looked at them and I said to myself, "what do I tell him because I don't want him to be embarrassed when people leave." I said, "Gene, that is a lot of trays, do you think..." He said, "Oh no, I am going to show them all."

MH: That was the end of your protest!

HJ: I stayed until the end and he showed all eight of them and had people kind of enthralled and hardly a person... I don't remember anyone leaving. I don't know how he did that.

MH: Most people stayed the entire time because they were enthralled, the term you used, by him and his personality. I recently bought a biography⁶ of his life.

I haven't started it yet but I am really anxious to get going on that.

HJ: Yeah. It's really... He was one of a kind...an amazing person. Would we want him living at our home with our family? I don't think so, probably not. But if we had a spare house where he could live...

MH: It was worth spending time with him but not living with him?

HJ: Right. Yes. I'd have to agree to that.

MH: Well Harold, it's been fun speaking with you about the 1973 LIGHT Gallery calendar, the artists you included and the fascinating history of photography. There are two more calendars, '74 and '75, that we can talk about next time.

HJ: Okay. Thank you, Michael.

⁶ Shadow & Substance: The Life and Work of an American Photographer by Jim Hughes