

CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF ART

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Independent Filmmaker, Ed Emshwiller, Press Conference

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Ed Emshwiller: The film works in various stages for quite some time. It is going through growing pains, I've a shot at that, roughly 30-31 rolls of film so far but I don't really feel like I'm into it like I am want it. I'm just trying to get my reels going.

Bob Haller: There is a theme?

Ed Emshwiller: The theme is choices

Bob Haller: Awesome.

Ed Emshwiller: Decision making and how-how one tries to get to that sort of thing-because I don't try going to that sort of thing. Incidentally I thank you for sending that photograph you did [crosstalk 00:00:45]. That was very nice [inaudible 00:00:49] now give and take.

Bob Haller: You want some more I'll give it to you.

Ed Emshwiller: Thanks.

Speaker: You have an extra one I can take back with me [crosstalk 00:00:56]

Ed Emshwiller: Take one of those.

Speaker: Good.

Bob Haller: Yes.

Ed Emshwiller: One time I was going through a short-[a version of the thing that I am involved with right now, cybernetics, classic, psychology and dance, but I expanded the concept and its choices and basically focus on the human making [phone rings 00:01:32] decision making corresponds to those problems.

Bob Haller: That's great. This is a-Some of the things you are working with is choices.

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah.

Bob Haller: Nice.

Ed Emshwiller: There is [crosstalk 00:01:49]

Bob Haller: Cybernetics [crosstalk 00:01:54]

Ed Emshwiller: Cybernetics, class psychology and dance. I find it all interrelated in the sense that I would make the connections that don't have to do with process, with feedback, with decision making, and I simply expanded beyond this particular

definition of “problem of choice” stories. This is thematic material. The form- I’m making movies. It’s not a discourse on choice. It is simply the material that allows me to focus and to structures that I find-

Bob Haller: It’s more an exploration.

Ed Emshwiller: It’s an exploration [crosstalk 00:02:38] all my films explorations of thematic material-They’re not preconceived, they are- Except in the sense that usually have a need at a particular stage in life to explore certain concepts in the films that are the result of this explorations and then formalize that structure.

Bob Haller: Your not so interested then about reality or showing the physicality of the landscape. You are more concerned with [crosstalk 00:03:19]

Ed Emshwiller: Much more subjective, because that’s its own form of reality of course.

Bob Haller: What about your interest in surrealism? Because it is just-[crosstalk 00:03:39]

Ed Emshwiller: I remember that it’s there as an influence, I mean it shows in my work, I have endurance surrealism. I did when I was young and I know it’s a part of my reading of-[crosstalk 00:03:59]

Bob Haller: They are speaking in a similar language in a different kind of dialect.

Ed Emshwiller: Somewhat yes. Although I don’t regard myself as a surrealist. I feel that’s a historic movement which has reality and like all the other influence that form my understanding of things is something that had this impact and it was-I am somewhat what you call it- but I know of it and that sort of thing-

Speaker 1: You are already in processing I understand?

Ed Emshwiller: No. I do everything but processing. I have done some processing, but I find that that’s no-I just don’t find it worthwhile.

Speaker 1: Everything in color?

Ed Emshwiller: No, I alternate-I find that what I like to do, what film making has come to be in an important way for me is a way of maintaining a varied life and I require of myself that each film I undertake or each project that I become involved with give me experiences in some form rather different from what I have just been through. [00:05:43]

I don’t want to repeat myself and film is very nice in that and it’s good. As a painter I did in essence go through myself over and over and over again and I found that within my own internal resources for painting I became exhausted that medium for myself.

Bob Haller: Were you immensely frustrated?

Ed Emshwiller: [crosstalk 00:06:14] part of the term, that's a subjective question.

Bob Haller: Yes it is. [crosstalk 00:06:19] Comes out in the film there is a sense of violence that you are in and repression too. Repression mainly the disciplined eye creating these pictures that are going on and that is one of the things that-

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah, I think I have my share of frustration and have my sheer desire to break free from various constrictions.

Bob Haller: Can you get done what you want to get done?

Ed Emshwiller: Never fully-never, never fully. I feel that's impossible. The most you can do is try and-I am resigned you can say to a certain extent.

Bob Haller: What about the folly of what you come across, that aspect [crosstalk 00:07:16]

Ed Emshwiller: That's a very important thing, because that is one of the ways in which I feel the film *Liam* keeps my life, you know, enrich it let me put it that way things-

Bob Haller: Do jump from- [crosstalk 00:07:39]

Ed Emshwiller: It changes. I am in trouble right now as a matter of fact very seriously because cybernetics, class psychology and dance is quite well formulated thematically in my style and approach and everything that is very definitely in my mind and last summer as a result of making a film which had to be done and was done under very different circumstances, I usually were to my way it seems and my way of approaching it completely open.

Now I still have to work with the same material but I no longer was satisfied with my previous way of going about it and I haven't found a satisfactory resolution of the conflicting approaches that I want to use to make this and it is terrible frustration. It's a problem. How do I do this? How am I going to make this-I work with art types in the past. How am I make going to make these function in work and at the same time work with totally improvised interpersonal relationships on an individual basis not on a removed basis but on a personal idiosyncratic basis with the individuals who are absolutely out of my control just to give me content within which to work.

Bob Haller: Okay.

Ed Emshwiller: Which is more or less the way I filmed *Liam*, *My life*, *My Son* .Now I don't want to make that film, that work an interesting experience for me, now am trying to fuse those and that's hard.

Bob Haller: You were sort of answering the call in the sense of-

Speaker: While you are talking about the future and it sounds very scientific the last few minutes and having to film your varied interest in life and-or was the human aspects whether pleasant and unpleasant.

Ed Emshwiller: Yes. I'm fascinated by science in so far as it will reveal things to us so that we can use them in understanding ourselves more.

Bob Haller: The alternatives in cybernetics is the human aspect in relation with [crosstalk 00:10:16]

Speaker: It will be ready.

Bob Haller: [crosstalk 00:10:30] which almost a kind of frame in a picture which is film you kind of began in the summer-it's the "dream state".[pause 00:10:40]. What are you immediate plans for the summer? Where do you go from here?

Ed Emshwiller: Home. I have a [inaudible 00:11:18] I will probably be here 10 tomorrow for thing for today .My schedule is not that fixed. I usually go and take my camera, and I go and if something seems to pertain to my interest at the time then, I'll try to-

Bob Haller: Did you do any commercial work right here, commercial work at all.

Ed Emshwiller: I've been in four commissioned films which are a major financial support for my filmmaking. Prior to that, I supported my film making largely by illustration in this painting. I also now support my filmmaking by doing this sort of thing: running around, lecturing, and sharing my films.

Bob Haller: Without teaching?

Emshwiller: No. I've been asked to teach numerous times but I feel that I would become terribly involved in that and I feel I can become a better teacher by making films than I would be teaching. [inaudible 00:12:41] the film making resident at Cornell last summer I made a film and he was trying to reach out to assist me in making the film in essence we are collaborators and they learned in the process of helping me and that was enjoyable. We worked very hard and had a very good time and it was a learning experience for all of us.

Bob Haller: Were they totally square?

Ed Emshwiller: Next year?

Speaker: I understood what you were trying to get at-

Ed Emshwiller: I put it straight to him in my very first day and I told him that, "I'm going to make my film, I need your help and if you want to help and if you stay around if you want to do your own than leave." Everybody seemed to enjoy. It worked out very well.

Bob Haller: What are the public reactions to these films? I mean do- [crosstalk 00:14:01]

Ed Emshwiller: Well last night, I had a discussion on how these personalities like individuals, masses of people who are dozens or hundreds somehow do have all these qualities that go about [crosstalk 00:14:33]

Bob Haller: It really derives much from the audience and [icrosstalk00:14:41]

Ed Emshwiller: I think that one of the things that I-

Speaker: Okay, thank you very much.

Ed Emshwiller: I get besides the fact that I kind of enjoy going to new places and seeing original things and have different experiences. The audiences are totally unpredictable, I shouldn't say totally, but very much and sometimes they are loving, sometimes they are hostile, sometimes they are quick and sharp and probing, sometimes they are kind of "blah" and it's a kind of a- [00:15:18]

It's almost a matter of going out and what's going to happen this time, that feeling, if you are trying to predict what it will be like. So many different factors enter into it, what collection of films do I show? Under what circumstances are they showing that? How does it get started? I mean such a strange thing is the introduction, the tenor thing. Is it precious? Is it pompous? Is it funny? Is it-You know, all these things really affect the way people view the films.

I'm impressed and dismayed, I will say that, by the conditions under which films are viewed frequently, because physically, especially in the colleges, the conditions for viewing films are terrible in general, really bad, when one recognizes that say in the average community theatre, at least the theatre is dark. It may or may not have [door slams 00:16:35] the audience that, how will we feel about our audience reactions and so forth, is annoying or not.

At least the theater is usually arranged in such a way that the movement of late-comers who are the-The movement of people is minimized and in so many colleges it's the opposite. That's one thing that I have a sort of annoyance with theoretically going to a school. I don't want to-You're going to a school where the theoretically they are dealing with the "visual arts".

Damn it, the School of Visual Arts in New York City has the rottenest facilities for showing movies of any place I have ever been, to me there is something wrong about them calling themselves "The School of Visual Arts". They do that when they are not taking themselves seriously. Hahaha, my outburst hahaha.

[phone rings 00:17:51]

Bob Haller: Do you know Lawrence Jordan?

Ed Emshwiller: No I don't.

Bob Haller: [crosstalk 00:17:57]

Speaker: Yes, I want to introduce this by saying his last international [crosstalk 00:18:10]
his own work [crosstalk 00:18:14]

Bob Haller: What do you think of the film- [crosstalk 00:18:38]

Ed Emshwiller: I like it. I like it because it reminds me of 716. It's the most catholic of the
programs that I've seen in a long time, and I like that. Some people are turned
off because it is, I like it.

Bob Haller: [inaudible 00:18:59]Did you see Eric Chaote's *Windmills*?

Ed Emshwiller: Yes,

Bob Haller: Fascinating.

Ed Emshwiller: Fascinating film-

Bob Haller: [crosstalk 00:19:07]

Ed Emshwiller: It's a fascinating-Pardon?

Bob Haller: [inaudible 00:19:20]

Ed Emshwiller: No you need to see it for a-I would say it's the nearest thing certain forms of
contemporary poetry and the Johnson School of Dance, nearest thing to that,
use in simple body form and the most basic elements, script and sort of thing
with a lot of revivoration- a lot of tension, sexual tension in ... It is explicitly
sexual but aside from that there is a modicum of tension in the body to object
relationships. [00:20:25]

Speaker 1: Very well done, mister.

Ed Emshwiller: I remember trying to warn the audience trying to show that every night, last
of July, trying to see that to find a give them permission to finally find a way to
[phone rings 00:20:49] a hundred people could have [crosstalk 00:20:52]
and the manager saying that [crosstalk 00:20:54]

Bob Haller: Is that-

Speaker 1: Just a second, I'll be done.

Ed Emshwiller: That is actually incredible, I just cannot comprehend. hahaha ...phew [pause 00:21:17] I would say if you get a chance [inaudible 00:21:24].

Speaker 1: Yes I noticed [crosstalk 00:21:30]

Bob Haller: Do you stay and request pretty close to your place in Long Island? Are you in a loft? An apartment? -

Ed Emshwiller: No I'm in a small house, a small suburban house. I've lived there for twenty years.

Bob Haller: Twenty years [inaudible 00:22:14]

Ed Emshwiller: I fixed the upper floor into a personal-studio for painting, most relatively shot in the house, obviously the desert seems pure and warm, but a lot of cave things not the actual cave but the cave shot there and I work.

I work- It's not that fixed, we film a better shot mainly up at Woodstock a couple of weeks sometimes, this current film choices I did some film, I do a lot of film in New York because a lot of people were-I did some filming of a hospital, I hear its Brakhedge in a hospital and I did some filming in a hospital, I've done some filming in New York, New Jersey, for this film that I am doing now in Washington D.C. in different ways. I could carry a camera with me [crosstalk 00:23:53] a lot of traveling because these lecturers-

Bob Haller: The characters to be filmed are highly energized?

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah, very tensed. I have made films that are not, but generally they are very, very concentrated.

Bob Haller: Causing you to pay full attention or else-

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah, in a sense it's a problem because the density and the demands they are-Tend to be exhausting especially if you have several different ones and the- Each one is bland, bland, bland-its rough and hard sometime.

Bob Haller: How about films for suppressed violence, I asked one of my first questions about the sense of frustration, is it so, the communication of I am working on the ideas and gaining and communicating them it's very exhausting. While you are watching the part of the film. Thank you very much. It's a very successful time, [crosstalk 00:25:19]

Ed Emshwiller: It happened sometimes. Generally with this type of program, doesn't happen so often.

Bob Haller: I think our people are pretty sophisticated by now.

Speaker 1r: What we talked this morning about my 12-year-old son, these films would be adequate for him, [crosstalk 00:25:43]

Bob Haller: It's [crosstalk 00:25:44] dream of for the next five years.

Speaker 1: I wasn't expecting this.

Bob Haller: You didn't give her a yes [laughs 00:25:53]

Speaker 1: I would say that-Well, make your own decision.

Ed Emshwiller: My own kids of course grown up seeing these things, they were there and the orgy sequence was shot-with the slow motion [crosstalk 00:26:10] -

Bob Haller: That's a curious thing. As an orgy, it is a rather restrained one. Actually you are more conscious of the bouncing breasts and of course [inaudible 00:26:24]

Ed Emshwiller: Its a dance; orgy is not the right term for it [crosstalk 00:26:27]

Bob Haller: A certain ambiguity, a sort of takes away a lot of the fun, it's probably at the same time it's like where is the blood or the body-

Ed Emshwiller: Actually that's one of the things that fascinates me, ambiguity and paradox is one of the things that fascinates me the most.

Bob Haller: Clearly and practically it's never-That's what I like about it, it's never fully there it's always this plus something else that keeps on revealing itself, the kind of thing that makes something live. It's like a needlework . You can't encompass a work of art in [inaudible 00:27:16], if you do its a sort of [door slams 00:27:23]

Speaker 1: When you are speaking of [telephone rings 00:27:29]

Ed Emshwiller: Some people, they have been extremely [crosstalk 00:27:35], that's-

Bob Haller: There are things there that most people, a lot of people would view as automatically as [crosstalk 00:27:41] deliberately obviously evolved in [inaudible 00:27:48]. I don't want to see it anymore but there it is [door slams 00:27:53], the pressure

Speaker 1: I have this [crosstalk 00:28:10]

Ed Emshwiller: Is this the photo that you were trying to-

Bob Haller: I think that's one of the [crosstalk 00:28:21]

Speaker 1: Yes.

Bob Haller: Upcoming pictures [inaudible 00:28:41] [crosstalk 00:28:49] is next week, and I have a pretty accurate film program here.

Speaker 1: Yes.

Bob Haller: That while you are

Ed Emshwiller: This isn't complete, I think its complete isn't it?

Speaker: Yes.

Bob Haller: Reasonably complete [crosstalk 00:29:06]

Speaker: Possibly [crosstalk 00:29:11],

Ed Emshwiller: Okay, [crosstalk 00:29:29]

Bob Haller: Thanks a lot.

Ed Emshwiller: This thing that you did, how did it come about? You just did it because you wanted to or because it is a project in school or-

Bob Haller: No, I'm not in school. I just did it because in terms of not saying I had to say something or else I would explode-

Ed Emshwiller: Someone got a story that is illustrated with a cover and I-You know, I say okay that's it. I would end up maybe doing one cover or two covers a year. That has been going around now for around '69 where you apparently felt that I stopped. Joe Fern had me do a cover last year and it was a bad time so, I actually did mind not [door slams 00:30:26] answering I wasn't going to be able to be do it at that time. [00:30:38]

Actually this past year in '70, in one point I was sick, I was in bed, I couldn't make movies, Hall and Nelson bugging me for a long time what you do a thing for around dangerous visions revisited or something like that. Or again dangerous visions-revisited or something like that. Okay, I happen to be out in Hollywood and there is and, "Okay, send me your pictures. I got to be in bed for 3-4 days, anyway I need to think on some illustrations." I did the illustrations for it, and I did a cover for it.

Bob Haller: This is a book?

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah.

Bob Haller: It hasn't clouded [crosstalk 00:31:20]

Ed Emshwiller: I also did a cover, a fellow called me up a couple of months or so ago, and he used to live out near me and he is an art director and he is working for some publisher. It is actually [door slams 00:31:08] education books so they had me-Sam Oscar has got this covered. I mean this book coming out of-a hard cover book. We did a little cover and it be like "oh okay".

In that sense, I have really-I have not said that I-would-never-do-another sort of thing but in essence my commitment, my involvement, my work ethic has stopped in the summer of 64 and ever since, it has been on a sort of-If the time happens to be right and it is really for old time sake, I think. Also, my kids kind of enjoy to see me do something other than making movies occasionally.

Bob Haller: In 1957, '58, '59 you did an incredible number. I think in one December you had 6 covers. You were at the cover of 6 different magazines, I think you did them all in one month.

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah, at times, I was doing 4 covers a week. We have all [door slams 00:32:48] covers. That is the maximum I did before-that is really cranking them up.

Bob Haller: Did you just do science fiction covers or did you do some other covers as well?

Ed Emshwiller: No, I did adventure, I did western, I did mystery, detective but mainly science fiction. I didn't really care for the other stuff that much, I did other things. I did things for Eleanor Queen. I did things for-People would call me from odd places, and I would do a few covers. Maybe some sort of detective magazines. I probably did part of the 500-600 covers that I did, I imagine that maybe 20 or 30 of them were nonscience fiction. You can see it is a miniscule fraction.

Bob Haller: Peace [inaudible 00:33:58] was your [inaudible 00:34:00]. You were going through his library, it is-He has an apartment about 4 times big as this room and it is literally stocked with books he has not placed a catalogue in so many. We went to the index and pulled out the magazines that way and I started going through his books and I have seen some books that were obviously in your covers. There were just so many of them, I just gave up on the books entirely. We did 300 magazine covers and I could guess there were 200 book covers [crosstalk 00:34:31]. I hear there is a lot of your stuff on these space books in the early 60s

Ed Emshwiller: Oh yes, there are awful a lot of those. That was a strange sort of relationship because it was a good steady account but it was not particularly fun [door slams 00:34:54] because I didn't like the publisher win, his attitude was like that of some of the other publishers. It really didn't feel that he was interested in doing good work. He was just out for a buck. He was an entrepreneur, and he didn't care about science fiction or anything else. He used-He was not

generous in terms of his relationship with writers and artists and so forth. He was a very grubby type of publisher, and there are people like that who are just buck-manipulators and I don't like that. [00:35:35]

The Ferns for instance on the other end of the scale. I really think that of course they had to survive economically and just barely did. They were just interested in doing within this genre the best possible absolute work, literarily whatever you want to call it. They are not businessmen but they had to be but they didn't seem like it. I really appreciated that.

Bob Haller: Did you have much difficulty with printers not reproducing your covers as you [crosstalk 00:36:08] as in [crosstalk 00:36:11]

Ed Emshwiller: Oh yes of course, after a while you just get sort of, you are surprised if it comes out well. It is what you feel; it is really when-Of course, there are times it actually improves, there are times when you look at it and say it is going to snap it has brilliance that you really didn't put in. The way they use the links and the way they gave to cut the plates will give you a little more than you actually originally put in yourself.

Then it is the happy rare exception, it is more like a favorable mutation. As opposed to most mutations that are pretty destructive. I just got to a point where I was just very pleased if I got something close to good reproduction. After all these magazines were not printed out in the fanciest of presses, stocks and so forth. In most cases, they were done inexpensively as the people could afford to do it.

Bob Haller: I noticed something that-there is one shop there was a woman in a blue night dress or something I think. She sort of went like this, and I think that there was a flash dissolve and I think a little girl stood up. Is that a wrong thought or was I just seeing things.

Ed Emshwiller: There was a place where a girl spun, she had a rose, she spun. She is the principal girl in the thing, and she spun she was a little girl. She is getting her little things she is a little [door slams 00:38:03] from. That is true; that little girl happened to be my daughter.

Bob Haller: It looked like it might have gone from a mother to a daughter; the features are very similar [crosstalk 00:38:16] by two sisters to exchange places.

Ed Emshwiller: They did, or they do look pretty much alike too-I sort of like that because somewhere, actually at one point in the early version of the film, one actually dissolved into the other by dying, but I cut that out.

Bob Haller: Have you ever wanted to do anything else? Like sculpture?

Ed Emshwiller: I have done a little sculpture. I had done a little while in college that makes me –that shows I suppose a bit of a change from strange movie making. I enjoy doing that; I did it. I worked in TV –would be nice-I mean to have technical means in the studio. Do image manipulation and then perhaps sit in front of a computer generating imagery might of interest.

I am possibly going to be involved in some 3D type of work, but both of those things really are second. Secondary to me, my prime interest and where my energy is focused is finding ways of expressing or forms of dealing with thematic material so there is as described in my choices. Film is the medium, I feel I like to work in, mostly. [00:40:25]

Bob Haller: Trying to think of questions-Oh, there is one question, this might sound crazy but I know nothing virtually about your childhood and I suppose it is irrelevant, but were you ever of a boy scout?

Ed Emshwiller: Yes I was. I got to be 2nd class.

Bob Haller: I didn't realize that [crosstalk 00:40:54]

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah, all my friends that was in Washington D.C. every Walter Reed Hospital

Bob Haller: Oh, you grew up in Washington?

Ed Emshwiller: I was born in Michigan. I lived in Michigan until I was about 7 or so. Then I went to Chicago for a couple of years and then to Washington where my father came and had me examined. I lived in Washington suburbs I grew up in Washington spring. I guess from the time I was 10 till I was about 17. Then I was in Richmond Virginia for a short time. I was a senior in high school in Richmond, Virginia, and I went into the army after that. My boyhood was largely in small town in Michigan where my father was a teacher at a Junior college science and engineering and then to Chicago where he was working on his doctrine for-in physics during the depression. I learned to fight there because I got beat up every day.

Bob Haller: When Frank- Carlos Frampton was here a couple of weeks ago in connection with his visit, I read an interview that he did on film culture. He pointed out that his parents and his background are scientific and not artistic and sounds like yours. You didn't grow up as an artist as such, but you went into it. What can you pin down a particular point in your life where you decided you wanted to become an artist as opposed to a technologists or a scientist or something?

Ed Emshwiller: I loved to draw when I was very small, and I remember earliest recollections of drawing was when I was a child in this small town in Michigan. I used to make really Tarzan figures and with a hand like that and I would cut them out with paper dolls and I would hang in my bushes. Play Tarzan, I would swing from one bush to another in front of my house where there we bushes. You

know make Tarzan go through bushes and there would be apes. I could draw quite well for a child.

When I moved to Chicago, I think the teachers and so forth said, "He ought to take art lessons because he seems a bit flare sort of thing." I went down the community university of Chicago. I wanted on the ICC to the Chicago Art institute on Saturday mornings. I took art lessons there. One of my mother's favorite story is that I came home, and she asked, "How do you like taking art lessons in town at the Chicago Art Institute?" I complained she said, "Oh not very good because you are supposed to draw flowers and create trees and things like that I want to draw wars, cars, [laughs 00:45:08] you know airplanes and all that sort of thing."

I had a comic strip that I drew for myself when I was a kid in Chicago. *Jack the Anteater*, that was before *Smiling Jack*, but I use them. I think I got the idea at the time I lived in Chicago there was the World's Fair in Chicago. I think there was a petroleum cartoon in those little booths that showed movies, and I was really fascinated by a couple of the cartoons there. It was just a drop of oil that sort of stick with arms and legs. I must have copied you know thinking- that there is a Smiling Jack and that Jack the Anteater he was just a little tear drop thing that had all kinds of dimensions. These were people with no bodies. That is a strange thing that I think of it now because it sort of give you a creepy feeling. There were creatures in the world like a body [inaudible 00:46:30]

Bob Haller: In the amazing biographical, I think it is amazing science adventures or something, you said you and your wife had motorcycled throughout Europe and in 49-50.

Ed Emshwiller: Right.

Bob Haller: Which, of course, was-I guess Europe was still recovering then.

Ed Emshwiller: Yeah.

Bob Haller: Are there any signs of that you have been doing since? Did that influence you in joining the army particularly?

Ed Emshwiller: I know that my pain in the early days when I was out of the army, I painted a lot of sort of macabre thing is death type things. I must have been shaken up by the whole business.

Bob Haller: You were in the infantry?

Ed Emshwiller: Yes, but I never really saw any combat, I was shot at a couple of times. Basically, I was in this country during the war and the occupation forces after in Italy. The whole thing left a mark I supposed on me. I have-everything influences you in that sort of way. I would be in particular if it did contributing

like a way of seeing things today or not. I could define how to do-speaking of your paper, there was something that I said which I said recently to film distributor and then I looked it up and I saw that I was wrong. I said that "the film that I would have loved to have made was Alfred Bester's *The Demolished Man*. I went to a bookstore, I got *The Demolished Man*, and I read and I realized that is not the story that I wanted. But the *Stars in Destination* which is another Bester's story

Bob Haller: Yeah you are right, , that would be even better, I can see how it can be filmed.

Ed Emshwiller: I said I don't have to be filmed either. I remember when I did the illustration for it. I was really taken by it, "Oh wow, this is fantastic. I don't know how you really do it, but you really blow out experience."

Before the whole psychedelic scene, you know he was really into methods of writing and imagery, and this is mind blowing and currents have turned. I realized that I had made a mistake in telling you and this other fellow that, that was the story. I remember being taken by *The Demolished Man* because some sort of innovative thing this was science fiction methods of using language. I also realized that was not-I had forgotten the story so in terms of - if you publish it, for instance, in court I would prefer that you make it dry as possible.

Bob Haller: Of course, of course -I have lots of corrections-

Ed Emshwiller: In terms of that thing you were talking about of John Campbell and *The Cartilage* that you like very much. I forgot the exact circumstance, but he would discuss with the artist or director in what their own interests. In perhaps their sketches, their ideas.

It would wind up being a lot of feedback back and forth. I don't remember specifically the images for this particular concept, but I do know that basically the idea not spelled out in details or rendering anything like that because he didn't do that. The idea of having an everyday kind of scene. You know, just something you look at and say, "Wait a minute now." You realize it is not just this kid going down the hill country path. That [inaudible 00:51:30] say do what can you come up with do that. You think it is here, but it is not [inaudible 00:51:38] then it is. Sure as hell isn't you know, and that is the way.

Speaker: Looking at the cover, and there are a lot of scenes like that. At first you could just go outside, and they could look straight and everything but there were things that were proverbially safe. [crosstalk 00:52:01] out of the ordinary.

Ed Emshwiller: I think one of the things I used to enjoy a lot when I would drive or take a train into the city I would sit there. I would figure I would see certain people. I would try to dream of ideas to present as a couple of sketches and ideas to people like [inaudible 00:52:27] Campbell, Bob[inaudible 00:50:29]. There

were certain people that I would simply discuss concepts with and then maybe do a sketch or sort of do the work.

The covers were done in all different kinds of ways; some were done in response to reading the stories. Others were done just because I would in essence think of an image that was a little story in itself. The covers had some science fiction thing, and it was self-contained. It was like a short story that is dead you know. Other times, it would be just some sort of imagery that could be an departure frequently as we wrote in this later version. It was very frequently that we had writers write stories that we were going to cover so I get [inaudible 00:53:25].

I know was kind of fascinated. One of the things that was most enjoyable about the whole the back and forth was in terms of this illustration is that the writers very frequently would tell me how they felt about how I had-What I had done in terms of the concepts that they had worked with.

Most of the time they were talking to me at all, I suppose, they were saying something complimentary. I was kind of fascinated when I did a cover someone wrote a story and incorporated it, I was fascinated to see how they used that as a point to incorporate in the story. Sometimes we would really have a subtle thing. Others would throw it in the most gratuitous sort of fashion and you had no justification in the story at all except that that was the agreement with the editor that they were going to have it you know.

Out of the blue they would make a reference they could refer to, they could use as a reference to the story. Someone who thought they were doing it the other way around would look at this cover and say, "Jeez, it has nothing to do with the story." It has nothing to do with the story; it is just a tangential reference to it." That is very true.

Bob Haller: One cover in particular that I noticed that looks just like an illustration of *Charlie* the thing that was turned into a movie-

Ed Emswiller: Right.

Bob Haller: Only *Charlie* wasn't in the issue, I wondered if you were the one who is responsible for pulling [inaudible 00:55:06]. There is a maze-at the top of the maze, there is a guy and at the bottom of the maze there is a mouse and in between them there is some cheese-[00:55:33]

Ed Emswiller: That is for flowers for [inaudible 00:55:39] and that was historic

Bob Haller: It was?

Ed Emswiller: Yeah, I created the story, so it is the correct one but it was not done-it was done in response to the story. This was not my concept, what is illustrated in

the story, would be illustrated in the story. My cover illustrated the story. That brings up an interesting thing in terms of my own feeling about movies; I think. If you are interested in the sort of difference at all you know about movies and covers, I was recently asked by a guy to direct a movie, kind of a Hollywood movie which is an interesting story. Sort of a satiric western, and he sent me a script, and it was like a really good script.

He asked me if I would do it; I said, "No thanks for asking me but I would be an illustrator of the story." Basically, what I'm doing in film is discovering and growing and developing in certain ways. Trying to use the medium in ways which I am predefined. As a director of a film like this, I would be an illustrator. I have been an illustrator, and I know what it is. You can be a good illustrator; you can be a bad one, you can be imaginative, you can make your stamp, whatever. If you are really responding to someone else's work and there is nothing wrong with doing that.

The artist or illustrator can use any kind of source for their input that they want. Then you are doing something that is structured on the work of someone else. In this case the screenwriter if I made that movie for him. I am really interested in discovering for myself and start really making the shape of the movies and am trying to work in the form of medium to discover ways which are not simply illustrations of a story. If that makes any sense.

Speaker : Many people don't read books would have that a film. You find a lot of people that rather go see a movie than to read a book but a book holds just as much as in a movie. A lot of time it is a waste of film, good footage that could be used in a creative way for some.

Ed Emshwiller: I feel that most movies are simply just that. They are illustrated stories, and they have been done well. We are battling skillfully or not.

Ed Emshwiller: It is much easier to sit for 2 hours in front of a screen than to read for 12 hours. You know after 2 hours you liked it you go and get the feeling.

Bob Haller: I was struck in total by the way you changed dance into something dance like, but on a super danceby destroying one of the lines of people with flares by cutting off their feet and just having their heads floating around things like that. I wondered how you feel about the whole possibility of dance on film. Particularly a couple of songs [inaudible 00:59:39] she is on song by Hillary Harrison. Where he shows you the same motion 9 times an increasingly complex way, and if you feel the dance is particularly quasi-cinematic, particularly cinematic subject to treat. [01:00:00]

Ed Emshwiller: I am attracted to dance for that reason. It is a from a perspective stand point; it is a kinesthetic appreciation of a body. It has the-movie camera itself can move which you are done the audience can't do that well in regards to the dancer. The whole idea of the choreographic sense is very central to my liking

film, because actually in a way when you make a film, I feel like I am dancing with my environment, and I'm trying to respond in a sensual way to its reason and to its texture, and to it's- I mean by "it" out there to its nature in trying to create through my response a work which is familiar dance its happened to be film. Dance to me is a very expressive thing, People of all cultures dance it's relayed through the mind through the body during I feel it- a good way to feel it you know what I mean you do through your head. You can't turn your head off, but you do feel it. It is good to go through the mind to-

Ed Emshwiller: I spent all of last week photographing Pittsburgh Ballet. Trying to catch some of that-I succeeded about 4 times. I took about 400 pictures. Those 4 times were more than worth it just to show the effort. These are still pictures; these are not movies. I think movies would be much more difficult but much more rewarding. How did you come to make Totem? You make it-It was a commissioned film but-

Ed Emshwiller: No.

Bob Haller: It wasn't?

Ed Emshwiller: No.

Bob Haller: I thought it was

Ed Emshwiller: [inaudible 01:02:31] Fusion was but Totem occurred in 1951-'61 I made a film with Peter Cash and Peg Sanford all time the heathen, Peg Sanford ,was a girl who was facing a lot of-She was wealthy, and she danced and played musical instruments and she painted. Did that sort of thing. She was [inaudible 01:03:12] studying with [inaudible 01:03:15] Nicolai. She saw in my early movies Nicolai's work at that time; parallels which were there and she said, "you two should meet. Maybe you can work together." So she arranged a met and each of us liked the work of the other, we said, "yeah let's make a movie together." We split; I made the movie he provided the dancers and place to shoot in. We split the cost of it 50:50 and agreed to split the proceeds in such as they were-and that is how the film was made.

Bob Haller: Do you work on a dancer he would setup and then break it apart or [crosstalk 01:03:57]

Ed Emshwiller: What happened was that when we were introduced he was just in the early stages of preparing this ballet tune and I said, "Well you might out sit me and see what you can do and I could try and come up with a film in a way with dealing with those." I went to about half a dozen rehearsals and so I knew it quite well. Then I made it kind of a storybook which is with stick figures and it was just enough to [inaudible 01:04:43] me really how I was I going to do this thing [inaudible 01:04:44] say this is the kind of thing I can do about it just- [end of recording 01:54]

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