

Quite often, when I finish talking, people say to each other—and not to me, usually—"I don't understand his point, I don't get the point of what he was talking about." In my talking and in my work, I try not to have a point. I think it's an architectural idea. I think that meaning goes away both from a point and from having a point.

In visual art we have a disease now: we want to get the art, we want to get it, we spend about three seconds looking at it and then say, "Oh, I get it!" and then we can move on to the next thing. I like to move on, I'm not against it, but I don't like the point. I don't like architecture in general.

The title of my intervention in Como was suggested by Dirk Snauwaert. He said that it would be a nice title for my next show. But it wasn't good for my next show, which already had a title. So it has become the title of this show and of this talk. It's very poetic, isn't it? I like it for the poetics of the idea of stones rejected by the builder. Several people have told me that it comes from the Bible, but I don't know how it comes from the Bible. It doesn't sound very Christian to me and I don't know enough about the Bible to know where it might come from. But whether or not it's from the Bible, when you say *Stones Rejected by the Builder*, you assume that there is a builder, which to me means an architect, and the fact that this builder can reject the stones means that the architect is hierarchically on top, he's the boss of the city, the boss of our lives. It's not a very nice idea to me.

I find that when we give so much power, so much of our own power to the architect, to the planner, instead of to the investigator or to the questioner, we have a hierarchical program instead of an intellectual one.

I was in Venice last autumn, with a lot of people speaking, and I heard Jean Baudrillard saying that art is dead, because belief is dead. Europe no longer has beliefs, which means he equates art with cathedral building.

I suppose that must be a general idea in Europe, but I never understood so clearly that art comes from the Christian movement and the cathedral building movement in Europe, as well as from the program around cathedrals and what to put inside them. This is a program of belief. Art serves the idea that you must believe in the cathedral, in the architectural Christianity, we might say.

I don't mean to disparage this art, especially this Italian art. I was in Toscana last year and a friend took me around to a couple of museums, where there were quite old carvings of saints that have been in local cathedrals. They were always

done anonymously in those days, and they were done pretty much by a village guy or some person who became a good carver as part of building the local cathedral, and did a very good wood carving of a saint, trying to do the best to honor the Christianity that he was working for. They were just beautiful carvings, beautiful sculptures, so graceful and so good.

I like the idea that these actually quite simple workers were good artists and didn't think very much about it, except for trying to do a good job, like workers can do. But that doesn't mean that this is art, that this is somehow the basis of art. There isn't anything that is called art, there isn't any basis to art. It's not architecture. There isn't a foundation, there isn't any beginning, as we can now see, as we now see how free we are.

One of the architectural problems we have is that as humans we like to make categories, so we have these categories, especially in European languages. They are quite tight, I think. We have a category called art. It's just a funny trick of linguistics, as Wittgenstein would say. It's just the way that we talk. It doesn't mean that there is something called art.

There is something called music, but it's not what we think is music. It's something in our brain that is connected to syntax, as I have said before. Syntax is putting a sentence together, so that we have a complex sentence instead of individual words. This is language—I would say the intellectuality of language. This is the biology we have, it's part of our real physical brain. The part that makes music also makes syntax, and I think that's why language and music are close to each other.

I don't like music. I don't like the biology of it. I don't like the biology of language or of architecture either. I don't like music, because we are not given a choice with music. It is biological. I was once in the military and I was in basic training. They played that stupid march music. I felt so happy just marching along with everybody else. Just the music made me do that. Maybe I have a backache, maybe I feel bad and I'm walking down the street and hear some reggae music, I start to feel pretty good. It's completely physical, I have no choice over it. I want to be an intellectual, I want to choose, I don't want my body to choose for me. I want to have some free will in my life, instead of just the beat or hunger or these kinds of things.

There is a song from the Fifties that was a television commercial for a Norelco electric shaver. I remember it because I have a curse: Oh, I don't remember all music, but I remember all bad music that I hear, and my brain replays these things over and over, all the time. Roz Chast said: "My brain loves stupid music. 'Why don't you hum that song?' and you say consciously, 'I don't want to hum that song,' and your brain starts humming it anyway."

So that was the advertisement for Norelco electric shavers. They had three round things that were called heads, and they were floating heads, Norelco said.

So the song goes: "Floating heads, floating heads, floating all the way..." (to the tune of "Jingle Bells"). How can you forget it? This is what music does. What I like is listening to Coltrane play his instrument, or listening to anyone play Beethoven's instructions for how to make some music. These are two different things. Both come from individual artists, they don't come from music. The artist is using this stuff that we have the category of music for, and we don't really mean the category. We know what we mean, we don't mean floating heads, we don't mean every stupid song that you hear in popular music in any generation.

I know American popular music from the Twenties on, just because popular music is always bad and I love bad music. Part of my brain loves to record all these things. I know so many bad popular songs. When I think what is the worst moment, it's the Fifties. It is not the Nineties, it is not this time, it is not MTV, it's the Fifties. They were really horrible for music. "How Much is that Doggy in the Window?" Can you imagine this was a popular song and that people sang it?

There is a category that we know is just a category, that we know is just for convenience, and that's really a lie and that we shouldn't believe in, and that's writing books. Sometimes we say literature and we know we don't mean it, we know that we don't put high literature with some popular trash that somebody turns out on his computer or something. We know that's not what we mean by writing, we know the category is a lie in the way we are using it, knowing that it's lie, that writing is not what we are talking about.

We ought to know more about art than about music or writing books, but we know less about it, because we have been taught that art is connected to belief or to something impressive, or mostly that it is not connected to our intellect. The tradition is that art is not connected to our intellect.

For me art is intellectual, it's an intellectual exercise that we are doing. Sarat Maharaj, who teaches where I teach, says: "Making art is the production of knowledge." Everyone in my school goes round saying that, because we love it so much, teachers and students. We love this idea that art is the production of knowledge. I hadn't really thought of it before Sarat said it. Then immediately you start to say: "What kind of knowledge?"

We don't have to think what kind of knowledge, we don't have to take this step that gets us to the point and say "This kind of knowledge" so that this ends the discussion and we can go back to being asleep.

This is a time when we ask: "Who are humans?" It's not the American invasive kind of globalization, but globalization where humans try to talk to each other. I think that humanity is trying to talk to itself now, for the first time in human history, maybe. We don't necessary like each other, or like what we are trying to say to each other, but to me it looks like we are trying to see ourselves.



When I say to myself "Who are humans?"—if I put myself above us, up in space and look down—I see that we are architectural animals. We make cities, we make architecture. I've said in very many texts already, that there is an integral connection between written language and architecture. These two things come together and they were invented at the same time. It's kind of strange to think they were invented in Iraq, but that's where they were invented. The first city was in Iraq. It was Gilgamesh's city and he made the first written language. It was all about him and how he made the city.

Cities are for taking us out of nature and putting us into human nature. I grew up in the forest and I wouldn't now live outside of the city. I love cities, I love big cities. I live in Berlin because I can be social, I can be anonymous, I can be intellectual, I can be any sort of strange eccentric. I don't have to worry so much about snakes biting me—the mosquitoes, maybe. I don't have to worry about nature so much. I can talk more constantly with my neighbors. The fact is that we usually don't talk much with our citizen neighbors.

There is a nice thing that I've just learned reading a book about Athens. In Greek, in Hellenic Greek, the word that we get "idiot" from—it's almost the same word—didn't measure intelligence, it didn't have anything to do with intelligence to the Greeks of Socrates' times. It just meant that an idiot was a person who didn't socially engage in the political discussions of the moment. That's what the word originally meant—whether or not you were socially engaged, which meant politically engaged.

Architecture and text, written language, take things from our bodies, from our souls, and put them next to us, a kind of alienation that's like a trade off. Before we had written language, we had memory. Written language takes away memory and substitutes law. That is the first thing that's written: the laws. Architecture does a similar thing with cities: it takes away our direction, our autonomous social direction, and gives us something like law at the same time.

This is a European knife, made of flint—of stone. It's made by human beings maybe between thirty and forty thousand years ago. It's not sharp anymore,

but it is still sharp enough to cut tape or to trim things. It is still a workable tool. This is the primary cutting edge and the two things up at the top you see quite often in these old, early stone-age tools. These tools by the way are made early on, before twenty thousand years ago, by people who had just started to make stone tools. They were quite good at it, but they weren't yet making spear

points and arrow heads. They hadn't yet got to that point. So they are all quite primitive tools and they are not prettily made, usually.



These tools have a part for smoothing a stick that you might use as a spear, an arrow or a shaft, and you just use that to straighten the stick and get it to a uniform size.

I find these tools all over Europe. This one is from a park in Paris. I found several of these stones there. I did a series of etchings in Germany, in Kiel, a few years ago. I went to the etching studios looking for tools. Then I went on to a parking lot and found some old stone tools, as part of the stones in the parking lot. They are made by humans, they are not naturally made, they are not made by accident. I used those to do my etchings and they all worked perfectly well.

You can't mistake a piece of flint that has been worked by a human with a piece of flint that has just been broken naturally. Broken naturally doesn't make these kind of things, even though some are really quite primitive.



This is also a knife. It's quite dull now. It has two cutting edges and a point in the middle, that you can do like this to a piece of bone or a piece of hide. A number of these stones are between thirty and forty thousand years old, made by Europeans. Well, they weren't Europeans at that moment. Europeans didn't appear until about five thousand years ago (maybe only 1500 years ago).

This has one main cutting edge. It was made very simply, very quickly just by chipping flint. This is a piece of flint that was just chipped off a larger piece and then sharpened by making these little indentations along the edges, so it's a small knife blade—a general utility knife of the time—and so is this one. It already begins to be something like the point of an arrow, the stone point of an arrow. This artist was getting a little bit better, but he still just chipped off flint.



These people knew how to work stone in the quickest way. This is another one of the same kind, a little knife.



This is a flint, chipped off a larger piece of flint and then shaped.

That's another one. You can see also the little thing there, that you can use to smooth the piece of stick.







Here's something remarkable. This is a piece of flint, a small stone, and in two places the artist chipped off a piece that he might use to make one of these tools that we just saw. He probably intended to do that, but he stopped there. I think he stopped there, because you can obviously see a face—a human face—of the kind that we would later see across Europe and Eurasia in the abstract human faces of twenty thousand years ago, up to six thousand years ago in Crete and places like that—a very abstract idea of a human face, of a human head.

I think this is a piece of art, in other words. I think the artist stopped there because he saw that human face. I think this is forty-thousand-year-old art.

This is the same stone from two angles. The artist is cutting off pieces to make things, and then he finds that he has a nice curved thing. This doesn't look like a fish, but it has a curve like a fish.



Then you get to this one. It is a fish, isn't it? It was made to look like a fish because he—but it could be a woman, I just say "he" for linguistic ease—was already making stone arrow points of some primitive kind, maybe not for an arrow, maybe just for a stick to poke or throw, and as he sees it, it has a similar shape to a fish.



Here is another fish. These are not made as arrow heads, they are not made as tools, they are made as art.

This is my prize. When you see it in reality, it also has two sides. You don't see it very well, but when you look at it as a carving, when you look at it sculpturally, you see it's not only a fish, but a genuinely made piece of carved stone. Think of how difficult it is to carve flint. It really has movement, it's an alive little fish.



It is art to me just because I love it, but it was only made as a tool, and it's the strangest stone tool I've ever seen. There it is. It's like a hammer, some sort of chopping tool, very old and primitive. This side hasn't been worked at all, because he didn't need to work it. He found this natural flint shape and just pointed it on this end. I don't know what he used it for, but it fits your hand



very well. I don't have anything to smash, but you could smash something with this. So that's what I'm going to do for the next couple of weeks. I'm going to have a bureau of smashing things and anyone can bring something to my desk and I'll smash it and give you a certificate of some sort.

*Since when do you work with flints and stones, and why do you like that?*

*Jimmie Durham:* Since I moved back to Europe in 1994, just because I started finding all these tools everywhere. It's a very strange stone, not very good for sculpture but it's for making little things.

*So you try to make some tools and also sculptures from that?*

*J. D.:* I haven't tried, just because I don't need to. There are already so many of them. It's such a nice thing to pick up, an old tool in a parking lot.

*Do you do many shows, or just one show, or no shows?*

*J. D.:* I started working quite hard when I came to Europe in 1994, because I wanted to engage here. So since 1994, I've tried to do everything that people asked me to do, and that has got me extremely busy, often doing quite silly things that cost me money and a lot of time. But I like it all. I like being very busy and I like doing things.

*Why have you come to Europe?*

*J. D.:* It's where intellectuality can exist place to place, city to city, and the cities are all close by. I said to a journalist just today that I can go from Stockholm to Oslo, to Copenhagen, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Paris, Lille, an endless number of cities across Europe, all very close to each other, and I can intellectually engage in every single place.

In the Americas, North or South, there's normally one city and then a vast track of oppression. And you can't very well intellectually engage even in New York City—it's commerce more than intellect. I like Europe for that reason. I can be homeless and still be engaged in Europe.

*Why do you say homeless?*

*J. D.:* It's my ambition in life to become a *homeless* orphan. I don't want to be at



home. I've lived in Berlin now for six years and I went there just for one year and I stayed. I'm leaving in the next couple of years, because it's such a nice, easy, soft life in Berlin. I don't want a hard life, but I'm too lazy and too stupid to accept home.

*Do you already know where you go after?*

J. D.: I'm thinking of going to Rome now.

*Why do you destroy things?*

J. D.: I don't really destroy things, I just change them, I change their shape, just like any sculptor does. I chose the refrigerator. I stoned it for a week, every day, until I got the shape really changed. I chose it because I wanted to throw stones at something as sculptural work, but I wanted an object that no one would care about. I thought that if I stoned a TV or an automobile, everyone would be glad and care in some way or another, and I thought that a refrigerator was completely neutral. It was, until I started stoning it and then it wasn't neutral anymore. Then it started being brave, so that in the end I called it *Saint Frigo*, because it was a martyr. I saved its life by making it a martyr. It was going into the trash, now it's eternal, now it's art.

*Do you think that it became art because it passed through something dramatic or because it passed through something ironic? Do you think that it becomes more valuable and more eternal because it is something ironic or because it reflects something more dramatic?*

J. D.: If I try to imagine looking at this refrigerator in a museum, as someone who doesn't know it—it's a silly exercise, but I can do it a little bit—I would notice human intelligence having done something to this refrigerator, by the fact of stoning it so often. I might not call it intelligence, I might call it human work or human deliberateness. But then I hope I would think: "How did the artist do that? Did he throw stones, that many stones, at the refrigerator? If so, why did he do that?" Then I might think: "It's like sculpture, it's like chiseling a piece of marble." Or I might think: "That's kind of stupid, that's not intelligent," or I might go away wondering what that piece was about. That's what I think art is. Art is in the not ending-ness of the experience.

*I like what you said about art. It's strange because critics say "He's an artist" and then whatever the artist does is art. People just choose whatever they like and then it becomes art, because critics feel and think that it is art.*

J. D.: If we imagine that we could forget about the category art, if we could say that we know the category is a lie—as much as the category music is a lie—and then look at everything that is presented to us as that thing itself, and not as

what the artist or the critic says, but look at that thing with our own experience, then I can like Coltrane and you don't have to like him. It doesn't do anything to Coltrane whether or not we like him. He is dead. It's only us that get or don't get something.

*You say it's your ambition to become a homeless person out of laziness or for other reasons. What is a house? What does "home" mean for you?*

J. D.: Safe knowledge, secure knowledge, certainty is home. Expertise is home, I think. Mastery, self-confidence, lack of doubt is home. Your mother is home. You have to love your mother, your mother has to love you, and your mother doesn't want you to move away. She wants you to know just what she told you, not anything more. I'm not referring to real mothers but to metaphorical mothers.

*Is the gesture of launching stones a punishment? Does it somehow have a relationship to your work?*

J. D.: It sounds like I'm not really in touch with my own feelings and motives when I talk about this element of destruction, of violence in stoning things. I don't ever feel the violence and the destruction. I don't feel that I'm being violent. It sounds kind of silly, especially with the refrigerator, because I used the same cobblestones that people threw at the police in Paris in 1968. I knew I was using their same stones. But I thought—as I always do—that I was doing it sculpturally. I think that there is a very strong element of violence and destruction, I see that people read that usually quite well, but I don't ever feel it, it's not ever conscious with me.

*One of the things that I found interesting about the stones you showed us was that there were two kinds of stones, one that was meant to be just a tool and the other one was a sort of sculpture, as you said. I was wondering whether you were also considering as tools some of the objects you broke with your stone. Have you ever thought about throwing the refrigerator against something else and then going on and on as a sort of cycle?*

J. D.: That's a great idea, thank you. I hadn't thought of it.

*We can do it together then. I would be glad to throw the refrigerator.*

*With respect to your discourse on hierarchy, the stones can be the common element that comes before the hierarchy—and which is also an element of anonymity—so returning again to a dimension of creation using tools that everyone has—even someone without a name, without a home, and probably with many doubts.*

J. D.: I don't have a good response except that what you said is very good. I like the lightness and the movability of stone. In English there is an expression



when someone wants to say that something is not an iron law, they say: "It's not written in stone, is it?" The Ten Commandments of Moses are written in stone. I think this is the first example of bad lying art, that God tries to impress us by saying: "See, this is stone, I wrote on the stone."

It reminds me of another very beautiful story of Moses. There was a stone that followed Moses and his people through the wilderness. Remember this in the story of Moses? I love this story, it is so complex and so strange. The stone followed him all the way across, and every time they really needed water God told Moses to go and speak to the stone and say, "Give me some water," and Moses got water and saved everybody's life.

One time, though, he was having trouble with everyone and he also had his cousin Aaron's magic staff, another piece of strange art. So he wanted to impress everybody, since they were getting out of control. He went over and hit the stone saying, "Give me some water," and God said, "You are not going to the Promised Land, because you disobeyed me. I never told you to hit the stone. I told you to speak to the stone." That's why he didn't get to go, because he hit the stone.

*If you had to explain your work to a child and you didn't like to use the words "I make art" in general, would you prefer to say something like: "I mess up things with stones?" or "I produce things by using stones?"*

J. D.: I think it would be hard to explain to a child, just as if I wrote a novel. How would I explain it to a child? I think we can let children experience and not expect an adult experience from them, and try to answer their questions. But I don't think that—especially to children—I'm not sure that work is explainable. You can talk and talk and talk around. For me, if it reaches the point of explanation, it means the piece was bad to begin with.

I have two favorite pieces of art in the world. One is *The Magical Lamb* by Van Eyck in Ghent, and the other is one of these stupid flower paintings by Monet. I love them. I love them to death. It makes me cry when I look at them. But I can't explain to myself—or to any one else—how I like these pieces. I can say: "Oh, look at the way he did this magical lamb and put all these little details like some crazy person." I can talk around and around.

*You have a fire in your studio and you have to save either the object—the refrigerator after getting stoned, that's what you said—or the video about stoning the refrigerator? What would you save? The question is: In the end, would you appreciate more the final product or the action on the product?*

J. D.: The beautiful part of that is I don't have to choose, because the video is distributed in several places and it won't burn out in that studio. I would rather have the video than the object.

I made a beautiful little boat that I sunk, and I made it to sink. I put lead and some little holes in the bottom of the boat, to make sure it sank. I put lead in the bottom of the boat to make sure that it did not pop back to the surface after sinking. I loved making little boats and I like the little boat there. I like the film of the boat leaving the world very much. I loved that part where the boat sinks. I don't know why. I never thought that the death of the boat would be just a beautiful scene to me.

I like to make art that is, in English, 'archival,' because I make art to sell and I want people to get their money's worth. I don't want it to go away in five years, I don't want it to fall apart in twenty years. I would like it to last at least a hundred years, so that people get their money's worth. But for myself, I don't care. I don't make pieces and love them. I want them out, I don't want to have them around, I don't ever need to see them again. Not even the videos. I already have the experience, the work and the memory, and that's the part that I need from art.

*Do you think that everybody should work on these pieces which are meant to go to museums and last longer, or for performances which last only for the show? Did you do some art like that?*

J. D.: I have done quite a bit, but what I really would like to see is not the end of museums, but something very close to the end of museums. They don't work for art. A good case for me always is the Prado Museum in Madrid, that has the categories 'painting' and 'sculpture' and has a whole bunch of paintings, miles and miles of paintings made in one classical way or another, in one academy or another, and those are the proofs that these paintings are art, but they are bad paintings. Almost everything in the Prado is bad painting. One out of a hundred is art. It's only a miracle that an artist can paint and make art out of it. Most can't and no one can with every painting. So I see miles of bad paintings that have nothing to do with art, except for the lie of the category, and then I get to El Greco and think, "Ah, even art in the Prado! Isn't that funny?" Art in the Prado!

If there were another way we could do and distribute art without museums, I'm sure we would all get smarter, we would love art more intelligently, I think.

*I know there are artists working on the Internet, and then museums are trying to get their part from the Internet to put it in the museums.*

J. D.: It's the job of the museums to consume our production, to eat it.

*Have you ever tried to work with open projects on the Internet?*

J. D.: I learned last month to send an e-mail and to type, because I never knew how to type at all. I'm still a beginner, it's only one month that I've been doing this.



*For how long have you worked with video?*

J. D.: It looks as though I work at video, but I don't. I have my name on it, but I can't operate a video camera. I have a partner, Maria Thereza. She's the person doing the mechanics. I started out doing videos—as you can see—by doing tricks in front of the camera.

In the early Sixties we wouldn't say 'performance artists,' it was just theater work. I didn't start out as a visual artist. Then I saw over the years that performance things can get very stale and very theatrical, and also you can't video a performance that you are doing for a live audience. The camera doesn't pick it up. I thought that if I want to document a performance, I have to perform it for the camera and not for a live audience. That was the first thing we did when we were still in Mexico. We made a film two years ago, where I was the director, there were really a lot of people and Maria Thereza was still behind the camera. In Sidney, for the Biennial, I did a very big stone with a car on top and my part of making the work was to go out and choose a car, go to the stone quarry and pick up a piece of stone. I painted the stone, I did something, I really am the artist. I don't care if it looks like I'm the artist or not. It's the action on the piece and the experience that's interesting for me.

*Do you think that throughout time and history the stone has changed sense?*

J. D.: I think very much in Europe, the stone has gotten much heavier in a metaphorical way. It has become the foundation of architecture, of the cathedrals and buildings, with the idea that it is unchanging. Of course it is NOT unchanging. Our silly lives are so short that we don't notice that the stone dies away also. So in Europe, and therefore in cities in general, we have a large heavy falsity built around stone.

I have a different point of view, basically from my experience as a sculptor. While I was in the military, I was in prison several times. Once I was in prison in Yokohama, Japan, together with another guy. They made us break rocks. It was celebratory, because it was like a cartoon prison. We thought it never happened that prisoners had to break big rocks into little rocks, and we were so pleased that we were real prisoners, real cartoon prisoners. That was the beginning of my stone work.

*I just wanted to ask if maybe when you think about home and having a home and not wanting to stay there, if it is connected as well to not keeping a work and not wanting to hold on. Maybe if you are selling a work, you are selling people something like an art home to live in.*

J. D.: I don't know what to say about what humanity does. We do a lot of strange things. We are crazy and insecure. We have two things—opposite things all the time—going on, I think, and we like to protect and save the

things we love. I think jealousy between lovers is something close to art collecting. You want this thing that you love and you don't want it out of your possession. People do the same thing with books that they love. But I don't have that. I'm crazy in different ways, I suppose. I don't keep the books that I love and I don't take care about them. I leave them, I sell them. I throw them away, whatever. I treat them badly and they fall apart. When other artists try to give me their art works or trade art works, I say: "I don't have the kind of life that I can honor your art. I might lose it. I don't want this weight around me."

We are afraid of dying, and reasonably so, I think. So we want to create a constant tune of death around us with everything from all of our past, as though we were already dead or something, I don't know.

*You say that you were born in the middle of nature but to me you seem very fascinated by the city. You live in the city, even in Europe where so many cities are close together. How come? What is your relationship to the city?*

J. D.: The part of the city that I like is the constant possibility of human interaction, a new human interaction. Physically cities are very oppressive to me. I need to go out into the forest to get my body back every once in a while. I don't like to have stable things all the time and I don't like being told what to do all the time. But I live in Berlin, where it is really strict. If there is a red light, you are not allowed to walk across the street, no matter if there aren't cars coming. You have to stand there, until the light changes. I want to be able to cross anywhere on the street, like I can do in Marseille. I want just to cross the street when I want to cross the street. But I don't like to always have to turn the same corners either, I don't like that building to always be in the same place or that I always have to do this.

If you live in the forest, there are no corners. There are a million ways, there are so many ways, there are not even ways, there is an infinity of space in the forest, whereas there is no space in the city. There's only the grid, the map and the instructions. But there is the intellectual discourse. The possibility of the intellectual discourse is astounding. It's where if we were not so crazy, we could really start being human, I think, and start being smart in the city.

*Do you think that artists should not cure their insanities?*

J. D.: I don't think about it so much, one way or another. I don't like to be crazy. I wish I weren't so crazy, but when I'm working, I'm just working and I say: "Well, it's probably not going to work anyway, but I'm just going to do this piece, I'm going to work this way." Later I might say: "You have to stop acting so crazy." Nothing more than that happens. If I were really destructive, I would try to fix it.

I used to smoke five packs of cigarettes a day, for maybe thirty years, and I fixed

it. Sometimes you can fix things. I don't think it's the artist's job to fix humanity, anymore than it is the musician's job or the poet's job. I think it is our mutual job, and not specifically the artist's. I feel much more whole when I listen to Beethoven than I do when I—no, it's a bad example, I was going to mention some bad artist. I feel just as whole, just as healthy when I look at a good Fontana, as when I hear Beethoven played well. But I feel wounded when I see a bad Fontana, when I see a work that he has copied or made too quickly. He makes me feel wounded and betrayed.

We have a job: to take ourselves seriously. That might help human craziness get better.