

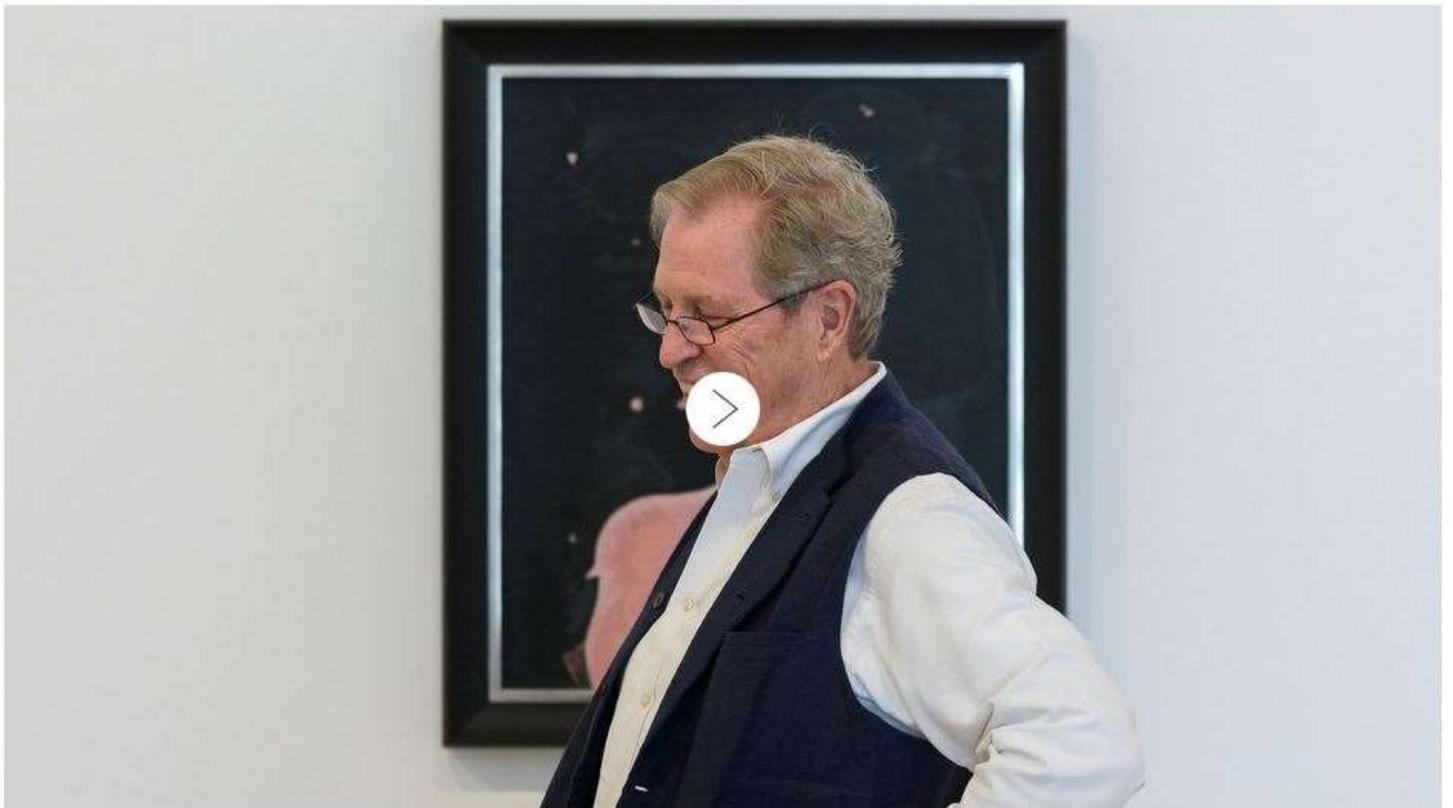
This video was posted to whitney.org on July 18, 2016. You can find the full video at:

<http://whitney.org/WhitneyStories/JaredBarkOnJohnDGraham>

HUMAN INTEREST: JARED BARK ON JOHN D. GRAHAM

JUL 18, 2016

Jared Bark has numerous ties to the Whitney: his work is in the Museum's permanent collection and was included in the exhibition *Rituals of Rented Island* in 2014; he designed and constructed an elaborate sculptural set for an upcoming performance by Jill Kroesen; and as a framer, he has framed many of the collection works currently on view. Here, Bark describes his affinity with the painter John D. Graham.



Hi, I'm Jed Bark. I'm an artist. Works of mine are in the Whitney Collection. I'm a framer as well, and frames that I have made and my company has made are in the Whitney Collection. I'm standing now in front of John Graham's painting, *Kali Yuga*.

I saw this one because we were going to frame it. I thought it was so fragile—I mean, I saw it out of the corner of my eye and I turned around and stared, because here was this piece, and there it was, this slightly distorted, thin sheet. It seemed so vulnerable and insubstantial. And yet it's such a substantial picture. So it needed a frame.

Standing right now in front of her, I feel like this is a powerful being. Maybe it's a goddess. Maybe it's a sage of some kind—an oracle, or something. And then there are all these aspects that start to argue with that point of view, with that understanding—maybe. The eye—the askew eye—the ambiguity of these pink stars, and the blackness, and all of that confusion. The luminous white-ish tone on her left side feels like moonlight. So really, even though the stars are pink, she feels as if she's alone in the night sky.

Most of my performances were involved in one way or another with light. The last performance I did was called *Krishna Concrete*, and [in] that piece, light was really about illumination, and awakening, and the inner light, and so forth. In my work, in those photo booth pieces in particular, they were a private space that I chose because I was—and still am—uncomfortable performing. The idea that here I was in this little performance space—this private space where people can act out fantasies—but I was obliterating my own image with a paper bag over my head. And I thought, interesting, because Graham did a lot of hiding of who he was in his life. I mean, that's an interesting parallel between the two of us. My piece is directly about hiding in plain sight. This picture holds its secrets much closer.