David

CANNELL:  [00:00] (overlapping dialogue, watching inaudible video) That was a scream.

DAVID:    She’s got a great personality. And she’s very funny -

CANNELL:  I laughed so hard.

DAVID:    She’s very funny, and I know, she’s very funny --

CANNELL:  I laughed so hard. In fact, I asked a coworker of mine, whose office is right out here --

F1:       Could you?

F2:       Starting.

CANNELL:  I won’t put you through that. (aside to cameraman) Any time.

CREW:     I guess we’re rolling. Whenever you are ready.

CANNELL:  OK. All right. [00:20] I’m Karen Trivette Cannell, Head of Special Collections and Archives, here at the Fashion Institute of Technology, here in New York City. And this is yet another installment of the oral history program that Ford Models Incorporated, represented wonderfully by Patty Sicular, who is also in charge of archiving there. She and I are working on this project together, and it’s only getting healthier and healthier.
And today’s dose of healthiness is Ms. Nesta David. Thank you so much.

DAVID: My pleasure.

CANNELL: Oh, well, true to form, Patty always sends me, ahead of time, [01:00] either a resumé or a biography, and a set of questions. And I rarely stick to a script, so -- (laughter)

DAVID: It’s OK.

CANNELL: But reading the information kind of --

DAVID: Go ahead.

CANNELL: -- tells me that your preference to --

DAVID: Just go ahead --

CANNELL: OK. (laughter)

DAVID: -- go for it.

CANNELL: But some of the questions are great for frameworking. So, tell me a little bit about, when you were young, and what you had envisioned for yourself as a career, or a focus for when you grew up.

DAVID: I actually was originally interested in music, and I played the cello.

CANNELL: Oh, wow.

DAVID: I actually played at Carnegie Hall.

CANNELL: Wow!
DAVID: And, at a certain point in my life, it got to be a bit much, dragging it around the city. And then, we used to wear short skirts then, and then putting it in between your legs --

CANNELL: Lovely, lovely --

DAVID: So I decided to move on after that. And I was also always interested in art. So it just became a natural progression, and then I moved...

CANNELL: Well, I was curious of -- as to the instrument, [02:00] but in terms of art, because I read you were interested in music. In terms of art, did you already have a medium, or...

DAVID: No, I just -- my dad was a photographer, and my mother was always artistic. But my dad -- it really, you could see it in my dad, because he took photos. And it was something I was always interested in, and after music, I kind of just gravitated to the -- to the art side, really. And I went to the High School of Art and Design and actually blossomed there.

CANNELL: Now, are you a native New Yorker?

DAVID: Born in Brooklyn --

CANNELL: Oh, wow!

DAVID: -- about as native as --

CANNELL: There you go.
DAVID: -- as you can get. Born and bred in Brooklyn.

CANNELL: Excellent. So, when you decided -- you fell on the side of the fence that was art. How did you start to manifest that interest professionally, or academically?

DAVID: Well, I went to the High School of Art and Design, and realized that I actually was really enjoying what I was doing there. And then I went to Pratt Institute, and I was a graphic arts and illustration major, and all of that really was very intriguing. I enjoyed the design work, and I became interested in type and copy and stuff like that. So, from that, it just manifested into my first job, which had absolutely nothing to do with anything I had studied. But, you know, that’s how it is, and you go from there.

CANNELL: Well, there’s a -- what we call a dangled carrot.

What was your first job?

DAVID: It was for a greeting card company --

CANNELL: (laughter) Not upper (inaudible)?

DAVID: -- in the Empire State Building. After --

CANNELL: Oh, fine then!

DAVID: -- when I got out of Pratt, I just assumed that I was going right to Vogue, and so did my mother.

CANNELL: Well --

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DAVID: But that, that didn’t materialize, so I wound up for a little greeting card company in the Empire State Building --

CANNELL: Oh, that’s fabulous!

DAVID: -- drawing little halos on angels for Christmas cards, and little wings, and...

CANNELL: So the illustration training came in handy for that...

DAVID: Everything.

CANNELL: Had you already shown an interest in photography, such as [04:00] what your father had --

DAVID: I used to help --

CANNELL: -- demonstrated?

DAVID: -- my father had a dark room, downstairs in our garage. It was set up. And, although he actually shot his own photos, he also did weddings and bar mitzvahs and things like that, confirmations... So I used to help him downstairs. But it was like the old fashioned kind, with the camera went down the red light. We couldn’t go in when the red light was on, and all of that. And I remember being fascinated by the whole process, of watching the pictures develop --

CANNELL: Yeah!

DAVID: -- and sloshing them back and forth --

CANNELL: There’s a little bit of magic!
DAVID: -- holding them with tongs and all that.
CANNELL: Uh-huh. And -- and with that kind of activity, I think, it’s almost like a reverence to --
DAVID: I -- very much.
CANNELL: -- one slip and it’s gone, very God-like.
DAVID: And then -- and I also used to retouch his photos.
CANNELL: Oh, wow!
DAVID: So if we had a photo and there was a little spot on someone’s face, or on their dress, or whatever, I would sit there --
CANNELL: The spot fixer!
DAVID: -- and fix it up, or retouch it, yes.
CANNELL: Excellent! When -- how long were you with the greeting card company? [05:00]
DAVID: Not for -- I think for about a year.
CANNELL: Yeah?
DAVID: I stay-- yeah.
CANNELL: What was the -- the impetus to pull you away?
DAVID: Well, because it wasn’t really something I wanted to do. I didn’t really want to spend the rest of my time drawing wings and halos on angels for --
CANNELL: Yeah, well...
DAVID: I mean, it just -- they were wonderful. They were great to me, and it was fantastic. It was the 62nd floor of the Empire State Building.

CANNELL: I was going to say --

DAVID: It was great.

CANNELL: So the perks sound really good.

DAVID: It was great. Sometimes, we could watch a pencil, on really windy days, kind of just drift across, because it was -- we were really up high, and building this kind of design to, yeah.

CANNELL: That -- I have sort of, sympathetic --

DAVID: Vertigo?

CANNELL: Vertigo.

DAVID: Yeah, yeah.

CANNELL: When I hear you tell me that.

DAVID: You don’t have that when you’re on the...

CANNELL: Oh my word! So, so what was next for you, after the 66th floor?

DAVID: Something I had -- something I actually don’t talk about often, but it was the next job I could get, which was for a company [06:00] with about four men, who did girly magazines.

CANNELL: Oh!
DAVID: OK. And -- and -- but they had one magazine that was a little fashion and beauty magazine. And none of them wanted to do that, because they wanted to do --

CANNELL: Of course!

DAVID: -- the other stuff.

CANNELL: Yeah!

DAVID: And so they threw it at me, you know. And so, that’s what I did. And so I started to learn about, you know, type and about layout, and about cropping pictures, and moving things around, the mechanicals and...

CANNELL: Had you been anything like a fashionista, in terms of following those --

DAVID: Look at me!

CANNELL: What, no!

DAVID: No, because there are people who see me, run into me 40 years later, and they go, “Weren’t you wearing that 40 years ago?” It’s been the same dress for me. I’m not a fashionista.

CANNELL: Well, what was -- how were you mentally, then, prepared to dive into this particular subject matter, a fashion -- was it just a job, or did you find an -- an appreciation develop?

DAVID: It -- I, I -- [07:00] my mother was always incredibly well dressed, very classically dressed. But we always had
those magazines in our house, whether it be *Harpers* and *Glamour* and al-- *Mademoiselle* and all those things. And so that was the natural part of what we were interested in. It was just not something I put on my back. But I loved looking at it, and I could appreciate it all. Just -- it’s just not something -- I’m not primpy like that, so I didn’t do it.

CANNELL: Gotcha. Did you ever find yourself thinking back to those magazines when you were, say, a student at Pratt or in early work experiences?

DAVID: Truthfully? No.

CANNELL: That’s, that’s -- only the truth please.

DAVID: No. No, no, not at all, no.

CANNELL: Wow!

DAVID: No. I’m -- I’m not a person who looks back, really. I’m just kind of --

CANNELL: That’s interesting.

DAVID: -- on to the next thing.

CANNELL: What, like, call off or ... (laughter)

DAVID: Except when it’s my friends, except when it comes to people.

CANNELL: Oh, that’s --

DAVID: But for things, no.
CANNELL: When it comes to [08:00] inspiration, then, if not some of these early fashion magazines, or even your mother’s appearance, what -- what did you find particularly inspirational when you were having to, say, produce a project?

DAVID: It could be anything. It could be -- I could be in the doctor’s office, going through magazines, seeing some type that I liked. Or I could see something that had absolutely none -- a travel, something, a little travel section that had nothing to do with anything I was doing, but, liked the layout. And I was totally visual, and I would tear things out of everything. And I just have thousands of tear sheets. I still --

CANNELL: Wow!

DAVID: -- and I still have a lot of that.

CANNELL: Oh my goodness! It’s interesting because I -- in the documents I got about you, the type of text interest was not included, and that’s a strong interest of mine as well. And in fact, we’re about to accession Upper & Lower Case -- [09:00] I don’t know if you know that magazine?

DAVID: Yes, I’ve heard of it.

CANNELL: Yes, so, do come back and browse --

DAVID: OK. Yeah. Absolutely.

CANNELL: -- to your delight.
DAVID: Yeah.

CANNELL: So when -- when I looked at your resumé, I saw Art Director and Creative Director. How are they different?

DAVID: For me, they’ve actually always been the same, and the reason is that I was always a, sort of, department of one.

CANNELL: I knew that!

DAVID: So it made it -- it made it a little easier, because sometimes as -- for Art Directors, they get their marching orders from -- from the Creative Director, and then it’s their job to take it and bring it to fruition. For me, the concept, the presentation boards, choosing the models, picking the location, the photographer -- all of that was always something I did and I always wanted to do.

CANNELL: Yeah?

DAVID: Yeah.

CANNELL: Interesting!

DAVID: Yeah, because I figured that if you have to stand in front of someone and take heat for something that’s not right, you might as well have a say --

CANNELL: Well, there you go! That makes perfect sense.

DAVID: -- in what, you know, what you’re showing, so...

CANNELL: [10:00] So how was it that you segued from the legitimate fashion magazine into something where you were
in -- in a lot of control, it sounds like, picking -- picking every nuance.

DAVID: When -- what I -- what I had was a job offer to work for a company called Bel-Aire Associates. I got the job because of a photographer’s rep who knew me and knew the man who owned that company. He said, “I -- I have a great job I think you would love.” And I said, “OK, well, you know, what is it?” And he told me what it was. I said, “Sure.” And he said, “Call this man and --” his name was John Grubman, “and see if he will -- will interview, and I’ll talk to him about you.” And so I called him, and he said, “Well, you, you need to come down, like, now, because -- because I’m going to go away, and I really want to make a decision really quickly.” And I think it was Saint Patrick’s Day. [11:00] And I said, well, I don’t have a portfolio. I’m thinking to myself, I’m not really properly dressed. I have a little safety pin closing the top of my skirt. And I thought, oh what, what the heck? So I walked down there. I walked up there, actually, I was downtown. I walked up to 57th Street, and I interviewed, and he came back. Before he left, he called me and said, “You got the job --

CANNELL: Oh, how wonderful!

DAVID: -- you can start in two weeks.” And so...
CANNELL: Did you feel prepared?

DAVID: For the interview?

CANNELL: No, for the job?

DAVID: No. No, but I -- I, I just felt like I could get through it, yeah, yeah, yeah.

CANNELL: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, it sounds like at some point, photography showed a growing strength in your creative work.

DAVID: Yes, yes, yes, absolutely.

CANNELL: Wow! So how would you, then -- if they’re very much the same, with that little bit of a difference you illustrated -- how would you -- what would you -- how would you define that director’s position?

DAVID: [12:00] Well, Creative Director is the person, I think, who really comes up with the concept and, you know, it’s their -- basically the idea for everything. And then it’s for them to, most cases, give -- turn that over to a -- an Art Director, and they, kind of, oversee it. But I -- I just, either never had that luxury, or I think I was actually very lucky, because I think if you do everything yourself, you’re much more apt to know when someone else isn’t doing their job properly. So if you know that you’ve had to, you know, do all these things and you know that something doesn’t sound right, then at least you feel like
you have, you know, some reason to question something if it’s not --

CANNELL: Sure.

DAVID: -- if it’s not what you think.

CANNELL: Was Mr. Grubman’s operation well known?

DAVID: Yes.

CANNELL: So, was it already, like, with an established client base?

DAVID: Yes.

CANNELL: Who were some of the clients?

DAVID: [13:00] Oh, they ranged from Woodward and Lothrop up to -- I mean, this was a long time ago -- to [Crowley’s?] department store, and Macy’s, and Moss Brothers, and just, you know, and then -- and then as I -- I stayed there for 25 years. But we -- our client base grew and changed, because he opened an office in London.

CANNELL: Oh my goodness!

DAVID: So then we got to do, you know, things like, Harrods and --

CANNELL: Oh, fantastic!

DAVID: -- then we opened an office in Madrid, and we did Galleria. So it just -- it just kind of, just grew from the -- what it was, originally.
CANNELL: How did your -- over the 25 years, how did your job evolve and -- and change while you were there?

DAVID: I think, to be honest, I think it’s been pretty much the same. I mean, I think the differences, you know, the stores have been a little bit more upscale, and there’s been a lot of traveling. You know, I spent, sometimes, two weeks out of every month in Europe, and so it was a lot. And -- but you learned. That’s another learning experience about getting places on time, and how you need to figure it all out. And yeah, meetings at first thing in the morning, and getting in late at night, and... It was -- was just another learning experience, something else that I could put in to everything else that I knew.

CANNELL: That’s fantastic! Did you find that you had a growing staff over time to help you --

DAVID: It was --

CANNELL: -- say, these visions come to fruition?

DAVID: No, we had an Art Department, which really never changed. And I was very lucky -- I think at some point, I was able to get an assistant. And the -- one of the times that I had an assistant --

CANNELL: I’m just looking at your facial expression, like, “She’s gotta be kidding!”
DAVID: Oh, one of the times, the assistant was the daughter of the man who owned the company, but it actually turned out to be OK.

CANNELL: Excellent!

DAVID: And then -- and then another assistant, my other assistant, was Patty Sicular.

CANNELL: Oh! Patty Sicular! Hi, Patty!

DAVID: Extraordinaire!

CANNELL: [15:00] So, when was it that the two of you came together?

DAVID: Patty and I?

CANNELL: Yes.

DAVID: I don’t even remember what year.

SICULAR: I remember.

DAVID: You do? I don’t remember. It was a long time ago, because we’ve been -- we’ve known each other, probably, 25 years.

CANNELL: Should we ask the lady behind the curtain?

DAVID: You may, you may.

CANNELL: When did you and Nesta get together?

SICULAR: In 1977, I went out to sell locations, and then she hired me in 1978.

DAVID: There you go.

CANNELL: Incredible, wow!
SICULAR: And I became her assistant a few months later, and Mr. Grubman said, “And don’t make a big deal over it.” So I had to know, what can I -- if I wrote real big -- YAY!

(inaudible, laughter overlapping)

DAVID: And we’ve known each other ever since.

CANNELL: Wow!

SICULAR: And I wouldn’t be where I am today if it wasn’t for her --

CANNELL: Excellent!

SICULAR: -- because she really taught me.

CANNELL: Excellent!

DAVID: Well, al--

SICULAR: It wasn’t easy, but she taught me.

DAVID: But also, having someone like Patty made my job easier --

CANNELL: Well, that, yeah --

DAVID: -- because she was able to -- to really, help me to get what I needed to do my job, so it’s a two-way street.

It was a two-way street.

CANNELL: When you think, I guess, either before or after, I guess it’s AP -- After Patty -- what were some of the [16:00] highlight commissions that you got?

DAVID: Well, Harrods was a big deal because we -- we didn’t have that at the time, and we pitched for the job. And one
of the ideas that I had was to do the catalog in a box --
put the whole catalog into a little present box and number
them, the first one going to the Queen, of course --

CANNELL: Oh my God!

DAVID: -- and then Mohamed Al-Fayed, or whoever else, and --
and the whole -- I mean, I just, you know, it was just --
we went all out in doing it. I mean, it had raised things
that had, you know, the type was raised and the things
moved, and, you know, it was just, you know, as much as I
could do, I did. And although they loved it, it was, like,
impossible to produce. It was just -- never got off -- it
never got off the ground. But the presentation was what
got us the account.

CANNELL: Amazing!

DAVID: So...

SICULAR: We also did Dior.

DAVID: We did Dior. We, we had a lot of -- from there we did
-- yeah.

CANNELL: Oh, wow! Tell -- if you don’t mind, tell me a little
bit --

DAVID: No, no, no -- but, no, no, it --

CANNELL: -- about the Dior work.

DAVID: -- we -- [17:00] we worked on some things for Dior,
and got to go to Paris and work with people like Arthur
Elgort and, you know, shoot from a moving van, eat French foods, stay up late. It was -- it was great. It was a great experience, because I had really not, I mean, traveling for work, but it’s not the same as, you know, traveling for yourself, and so it was a lot of fun. And I -- I loved it.

SICULAR: (inaudible) said you were hijacked twice, once to Cuba.

CANNELL: Hijacked twice, once to Cuba?

DAVID: No, I was hijacked once. I was only hijacked once. I was -- I was hijacked, in the plane.

CANNELL: I -- I’d like to know about this.

DAVID: I’ve had some really insane things happen to me over the years. That’s why, you know, when I was asked what happens on the -- what’s the worst things that, I mean, anything and everything can happen on a shooting.

CANNELL: My gosh!

DAVID: I -- I was in Florida -- I think it was Moss Brothers -- I was there for a meeting. And I got in the night [18:00] before, and went to the meeting early in the morning, and then was going back home. And I -- it was Eastern Airlines, and I just -- my cab broke down on the way to the airport, I just made it to the plane. I was the last person on, I throw myself down in the seat, and I was
exhausted because we had gotten in late and we were up late and, you know, it was hard, traveling. I’m sure you know, you know.

CANNELL: Yeah, yeah.

DAVID: And we took off, and about 20 minutes into the flight, I heard loud Spanish words, which I didn’t understand, but the one word I did understand was Cuba. And when I heard that -- and there had been a rash of these at the time -- so when I heard that, I knew. I knew what was happening. So we just -- I’m actually very good in bad situations, I mean, I collapse afterwards, but at the time, I was very good. And we all went to the front of the plane, and then we were -- the man was sitting in the back, and he had dynamite [19:00] all strapped to him.

CANNELL: Oh my word!

DAVID: So you were just sitting there, really, thinking, ugh! I should have had that chocolate soda --

CANNELL: Yeah!

DAVID: Why did I not have it? Because I would have felt a lot better --

CANNELL: It always comes back to chocolate!

DAVID: Or that drink?

CANNELL: Yeah!
DAVID: Or that drink? But I -- we went up front. I looked down, and I see nothing but water. I do not swim.

CANNELL: Oh my gosh!

DAVID: So I’m looking down and I see wa-- we’re 33,000 feet up -- and I tapped this man who was next to me, and I said, “Do you swim?” He said, “Yes.” I said, “Well, I don’t swim at all. Do you think you could, if we go down, will you help keep my head above water?” Well, of course, I could have been an Olympic, you know, eight gold medal champion swimmer, at 33,000 feet, you hit the water, it’s like --

CANNELL: Yeah, the laws of physics are in control!

DAVID: And so, it was cra-- we went to Cuba. And --

CANNELL: Oh my gosh!

DAVID: -- we went to Havana, and we waited there. The pl-- they took the gentleman off the plane -- and, and he was sick. He wanted to go home, and at that time, you couldn’t go from the States.

CANNELL: Right, right, right.

DAVID: The whole thing in the plane [20:00] was really harrowing --

CANNELL: Yes!

DAVID: -- because you really -- your mind is just racing.

But anyway, I got home, and luckily, two days later, I had
to travel again, which was good. Because I think had I had a lot of time to process it --

CANNELL: Right, I think you’re right.

DAVID: -- I would’ve said, “No, I don’t think so.”

CANNELL: I’ll take a boat.

DAVID: Yeah, right, or something else -- not a boat, because I don’t love water!

CANNELL: Oh, that’s right.

DAVID: But someone could drive me, it would be great, yeah.

CANNELL: Holy! Well, when you think of the different component parts to actually setting up -- I guess I’ll call it a shoot?

DAVID: Yeah.

CANNELL: You know, however you want to express it, from start to finish, tell -- what’s that story?

DAVID: Well, normally we would either meet with a client, or someone who represented the client, whether it was the Advertising Director or whatever, and sit down and have conversations with them about what they’re looking for? What it is they’re trying to do? I mean, most of what I did was direct mail, so it was their catalogs. So I would ask, you know, [21:00] what it is they wanted to do with it? What they were trying to accomplish? I mean, obviously, other than the selling part, you know, what else
it was that they wanted? And then I usually would ask who
their competition was, or who they considered their
competition, so that I could immediately go some place,
look at their work, and realize what it was that I was --

CANNELL: Something to react to?

DAVID: -- up against. Well, also, what I was up against, in
terms of, you know, whether it was just a straight catalog
with little boxes, or it was something really quite
beautiful. So I would know where I would have to head
within the parameters I had to work with. And then from
there, I would do concept boards, which I did myself. And
we made a presentation for that, and I’d write copy and
spend endless hours, working and looking for pictures, the
absolute right photos so that everything really looked
great. And if they bought that, then from there, it would
go into the production of a photo shoot --

CANNELL: My goodness!

DAVID: -- with models and photographers and locations and...

CANNELL: And how -- [22:00] and how firmly on a pulse did you
have your finger, in terms of choosing photographers,
location, models?

DAVID: I think I was pretty good, I’m not trying to
(inaudible) it.
CANNELL: In terms of -- in terms of -- those were all your decisions?

DAVID: Yes.

CANNELL: Oh my gosh!

DAVID: All of them. Again, it’s because I knew I was going to have to stand up and have to take some --

CANNELL: Right.

DAVID: -- good or bad, for whatever I was presenting, when we were all done. So I thought if it was not right, I might as well, you know, have some input.

CANNELL: Right. And I’ve -- I’ve certainly worked in a position where you had so much dependency on others to do what they were supposed to do, and the -- the stress of that is -- is just incredible. But equally, I would think, the stress of having all of those details --

DAVID: It is.

CANNELL: -- to oversee.

DAVID: It is.

CANNELL: For example, I mean, you obviously have a big artistic eye, but when it comes to choosing a model, what were your criteria?

DAVID: Because I had already [23:00] talked to our client, and I knew what -- I mean, I -- you know, if you’re talking of -- I remember when I first went to work -- did the first
book for Harrods, we went to a meeting in London. And when I sat in the meeting, for the first 10 minutes, it -- I had a notepad with not one thing in it, because I couldn’t understand a word that they said. It took a couple of meetings for me to really, to understand, you know, I mean, the English -- and words like “jumper” for “sweaters” --

CANNELL: Right!

DAVID: -- and “bins” for garb-- you know, things that just -- I -- and everybody else was writing and I’m like, I’m not writing, but I’m trying to look like... So, you know, I -- I came to understand, very carefully, most of the clients that I have worked for, like, who their constituents are going to be, and that is what -- I never directed it to what the thing of the moment was. My -- my concern was always the client. That -- that was what I knew they wanted, and within that, I did my own -- my own thing.

CANNELL: My goodness!

DAVID: [24:00] Lots of times they didn’t agree, but in the end, they usually came around.

CANNELL: Do you recall certain people that you worked with, whether it be models or photographers or other contributors to a product, that you would count on repeatedly?

DAVID: I -- I did. I worked with a lot of people -- hairdressers -- I mean, when you’re on a shooting, it’s
really like a little family, and you really, it -- when you start, you know, you get, you bark the orders. But when you use the same people -- because the results are always good, or what you’ve asked for -- then I would work with them as much as I could, because then I wouldn’t have to worry so much about that hair, I wouldn’t have to worry about the styling. I could worry about the things that nobody counted on. Because on every shooting, there’s always -- no matter how many things that you thought of and stayed up late trying to check on, there’s the -- get up in the morning and there’s something that no one counted on. [25:00] So this way, I’d be able to have the time and the effort put into that.

CANNELL: Who are some of these people that you could count on over the years?

DAVID: Well, I’ve worked with -- I worked with a hairdresser named [Harry von Weinberger?], who now lives in Holland -- went back home. And stylists like [Asmes Stolenard?] and Jason Wood and Barbara Turk. And I used a lot of the models, over and over again, because I knew they could get up there and do their thing, and, you know, I didn’t have to worry about it. And we were like, little family --

CANNELL: Yeah.

DAVID: Really --
CANNELL: I’ve heard that from the models as well.

DAVID: Yeah, it’s like a -- it’s like -- I think it’s like the movies, too. You know, for the x amount of time, it’s -- you are. You are each other’s family. I mean, I had a family, I had a son, a little boy and a husband at home, but I was busy doing all this so that becomes your family.

CANNELL: Sure. Wow. It sounds like such an all-consuming way of life.

DAVID: It is.

CANNELL: [26:00] What would you say the hourly count would be, of how many hours?

DAVID: I had to work 18 hours a day --

CANNELL: Yeah.

DAVID: -- 20 hours a day, because when I came home, I edited my own film, and I --

CANNELL: Oh my God!

DAVID: -- I didn’t have -- so I would have to do that, and then, I mean, I really did it all.

CANNELL: Wow! So when you weren’t actually taking the picture --

DAVID: No, I never t-- I actually did take pictures on two jobs, but most of the time, I was hiring. I was, like, the director.

CANNELL: Which jobs did you take the photograph?
DAVID: Well, Mr. Grubman, who I adored, came to find out that some of the Art Directors in the competing companies -- their Art Directors were taking photos. And they were doing it so they could save money and wouldn’t have to hire someone. So he thought it was a good idea if I did that. But I had never actually really taken a photo. I had never really done that, even though I admired and worked with my dad and all that, I had never really taken a camera and gone out and shot pictures.

CANNELL: Wow. Wow!

DAVID: And so I said, [27:00] “Well, I don’t think I can do this.” And he said, “Oh, yeah, you can do it. I’m going to go with you.” I think we went to -- I’m trying to remember -- we went to Bermuda or Cancun -- I don’t remember --

CANNELL: Oh my word!

DAVID: -- we went some place warm. He said, “I’m going to go with you, you’ll watch me, and, you know, I’ll have a great assistant, and he’ll do the camera, and you’ll learn. This way, you’ll learn.” So, as naive as I was, I said, “OK, sure.” And then, of course, the week before, he said, “You know, I don’t think I can go.” He had that planned all along. And so --

CANNELL: Oh, no, he hooked me into that, too!
DAVID: -- he said, "You’ll be able to do that, won’t you?"
And I said, "Sure." And I was like, oh my God, what am I going to do? But I did it. We had models, we were on location, and I shot. The -- the bad thing I did -- something I would kill another photographer for doing -- but as an Art Director, when I was watching, when I thought I had the shot, I stopped. So of course, sometimes I only had 10 pic-- I mean, you know, for someone who had never shot a photo before, having just 10 frames was not a great idea. I was, like, "OK, I got that." [28:00] You know, and so --

CANNELL: Holy! What -- what was the, sort of, consequence of that?

DAVID: No, it worked.

CANNELL: It worked? Oh, my gosh!

DAVID: I was very lucky! I mean, I was running on the beach, I had models, you know, standing on top of little points on little rocks and stuff, water was slapping in and -- I -- I just did it, and I was very, very fortunate.

CANNELL: Oh, my word!

SICULAR: What was the norm for pictures? How many pictures would did they usually take? A couple of rolls?

DAVID: Well, 10 pictures is, like, you know, yeah, a couple of rolls at least.
CANNELL: Oh my gosh!

SICULAR: Which is what?

DAVID: What?

SICULAR: Which is what? How many frames is that?

DAVID: Well, whatever. At that time, there was -- whether it was two and a quarter, or 35 millimeter, whatever. Well, I actually used -- that was the other problem. I had used a two and a quarter thing, so it was like, you know, full app and (inaudible).

CANNELL: Oh, goodness!

DAVID: Didn’t like it.

CANNELL: I’ve seen those in action, but not --

DAVID: Yeah, you do it, you know, it’s like everything else.

If you -- you can do it. Ev--

CANNELL: You had -- you had sort of worked with the camera beforehand just to get familiar...

DAVID: Not really. Not really. The night before, the day before, if you -- I mean, really.

CANNELL: Do you know, I think that’s [29:00] what makes a person successful, is sort of like a fearlessness, you know --

DAVID: You just have to --

CANNELL: -- or, no, you’re fearful, but you do it anyway.

DAVID: Yeah, yeah, I was petrified.
CANNELL: I’m sure!

DAVID: These models -- I had all these people, and --

CANNELL: Unreal!

DAVID: -- they would just -- they were -- I don’t remember the g-- but I remember they were -- it was for men, I think, with one woman. And the guys are always easier to work with --

CANNELL: Oh, really?

DAVID: You don’t have to work -- yeah, because you don’t have to worry so much about them. They’re not so worried about hair, makeup, and if the lighting isn’t great, they’re not so worried about little circles under the eyes and (inaudible). The women were, like, much worse.

CANNELL: OK, grrr! Did you ever work with Patty at the time she was with Ford?

DAVID: Patty?

CANNELL: Patty Sicular?

DAVID: Yes, I did!

CANNELL: Oh, what were those collaborations about?

DAVID: Those were great because whenever I needed models -- I needed great models, and it was, you know, the -- the thing about establishing relationships with anybody, but especially for Patty and I, was that I could always count on Ford. They always would come through, [30:00] you know,
somehow, even if the model got sick and wouldn’t, you know, couldn’t make it, you know, somebody would get me another person that was comparable. And I know I’d just have to make it work. But with Patty, it was always great because she always came through with the models, and it was always the right thing, and they were always on time, and they were always prepared, and they always had the right stuff, and they, you know, all the things that you need. Then I don’t think so much exists in the business any more, but, you know, I was on a tight budget, and when I’m using — if I was using really good models, that meant, you know, every single second would count. So I really, you know, needed them to be there on time. And if we were shooting white pants, I didn’t need them to show up with, you know, underwear that was, like, red and white polka dots and stuff like — just all these things. And know where they were going, and, you know, whatever natural nail polish, whatever it was — and Patty always came through. And Ford always came through. Always.

CANNELL: [31:00] Wow!

DAVID: I mean, they’re really the rock of the — of the modeling business. They really are.

CANNELL: Well, before we started this series, I had that understanding as a very distant outsider. And since
working with Patty on this project, it -- the -- the core of -- of the work has been focused on the work of Ford modeling. And every model speaks to that sense of discipline and readiness and professionalism that came from the top-down.

DAVID: It’s the old fashioned way.

CANNELL: Yeah, yeah.

DAVID: Exactly.

CANNELL: Well, when -- when you -- when did you break out on your own?

DAVID: Just about four years ago.

CANNELL: Wow!

DAVID: I had been working for people all along, and I thought, well, why don’t I just try and do this myself? And also just -- just made it a little easier for me to regulate my time a little better --

CANNELL: Sure, sure.

DAVID: -- because otherwise, I was really in and worked late. And so, it was easier for me to have a little more control over my hours, and what jobs I took, and what I didn’t want to do. I haven’t traveled in a long time because I don’t really want to do that any more.

CANNELL: Yeah. Well, when -- if you sit back and you think, well, I have a choice of this multi-layered process, what
part of the work do you enjoy the most and still try to participate in?

DAVID: I, you know, I still enjoy it all. I love doing the concepts. I love trying to go through all those things to find, you know, kind of, very different tear-shoots and type and stuff and making it all work. And now we’re designing it all on the computer now. I love photography. I love the idea of taking 15 crazy and different people on a photo shoot, and having them work all together to give you what it is that you want, when you -- before you can end the -- you know you need to get by the end of the day. And I like to edit film. And I love to work on the layouts, and then change them, depending upon --

CANNELL: I can see a lot of change happen for you!

DAVID: Yeah, I mean, well, the computer has been [33:00] an enormous change. You know, because when you shoot now, lots of times people are, like, “Oh, just fix it on the computer.” But when we were doing it, there was no such thing as fixing it on the computer. You had to do it -- the styling had to be right, the hair had to be right, couldn’t take out all those little things, and that was -- it’s --

CANNELL: Well, when -- when you think of what is that at your disposal now, in terms of technology, are you purely
digital?  Or do you still use some of the older forms of taking photographs?

DAVID:  We do everything on the computer, I mean --

CANNELL:  Gosh!

DAVID:  -- we do everything on the computer afterwards.  But the photography is -- it is digital photography, but I try to be very, very strict with the photographers and not let them get away with -- you know, because they don’t care.  I have to pay somebody to retouch it.  So they go, “Well, we’ll fix it later.”  Well, they’re not going to fix it.  I have to fix it, you know, so...

CANNELL:  Do you find that your selection of location or model or any [34:00] component part of the shoot has changed because of the editing properties of software programs?

DAVID:  I think it does change everything, but I try not to let it change everything because I still approach this the way I always did everything.  I just -- it’s just the way I am -- I’ll probably be that way to the very end, you know.  And, and I try not to let anybody get away with too much because they think it can be fixed, you know, later, and --

CANNELL:  Yeah, yeah.  I see that -- I see that pervasively in the work I do as well.  It’s so quickly grasped now, something that you think is close to final, when it’s really far from final.
DAVID: Yes.

CANNELL: So, how was it, morphing from -- I’ll call it the analog --

DAVID: Very, very difficult. I was, like, I -- when we first got a computer, I was like, oh, I’m not going to use that! [35:00] Don’t be ridiculous! I used to do -- I used to do mechanicals as well, I mean, I have done mechanicals on the way to see a client, in the back of a limo on the way to the airport --

CANNELL: Oh my --

DAVID: -- with a T-square --

CANNELL: No!

DAVID: Yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

CANNELL: Doesn’t every limo have a T-square?

DAVID: Not really. I brought it with me.

CANNELL: A very deep cup holder.

DAVID: No, I mean, I’ve done it. So I was like, I’m not using that! But now, of course, I can sit and then, you know, in half hour or so, and design a 40-page book and just --

CANNELL: (overlapping dialogue) Wow! Oh my goodness!

DAVID: -- you know, do it quickly.

CANNELL: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
DAVID: And so, it -- it does have its benefits in terms of time. But there was something gr-- I’m a kind of touchy feely person. It’s like, I have a 29-year old son. Everything he does is technical. He’s got the latest this, the latest that. He doesn’t talk to anybody on the phone. It’s all text messaging. It’s all --

CANNELL: Oh, my word! Yeah, I’m not quite there yet.

DAVID: -- and I don’t get it, you know. I don’t get it. We have fights all the time about it.

CANNELL: All right. Pulling back a little bit, [36:00] when you think about your accomplishments, are there any that stand out that are so significant -- for those that were flops, or things to be extremely proud of, that you feel is a signature commission or campaign?

DAVID: I -- my portfolio is filled with things, none of which look the same. Some look quite beautiful, like Dior or Harrods, and some are, you know, luggage for, you know, a big store. I just sort of approached it all the same way. And they’ve all had their disasters, you know, and so, I just try and approach them all as if I was doing, you know, Vogue. I try and just do it that way, that -- try and make it look as good as I can, do it the best I can, the best way I can, and...
CANNELL: But -- but if there were a signature, or, if not a specific campaign, then perhaps a signature [37:00], I don’t know, compilation?

DAVID: I’ve done a lot of, sort of, interesting things for Harrods and for Dior, and then I did the first -- when the Plaza opened their spa, when it was still the Plaza. We did a beautiful catalog for them, really beautiful. We had to do it at night, because they didn’t want us in there during the day. They had, you know, fancy people lying around. And so we went in, like eleven o’clock at night, and we worked to, like, three in the morning, you know. Coming out of New York, at three in the morning, it’s -- it’s kind of, really -- it’s a, you know, a completely different thing. It was beautiful and -- a lot of pieces that I think I’ve done are beautiful. I’ve done beautiful stuff for Sulka, men’s store. I did a lot of men’s things. And I like them all. I love, you know, the initial thing we did for Harrods. I -- it was beautiful, the box was just beautiful.

CANNELL: I’m going to google that when I get back to my computer.

DAVID: It was beautiful, you know. But it was many, many years ago. We’re talking [38:00] a long time ago.
CANNELL: I was going to ask you -- something came to mind as you were speaking. Do you -- do you recall there being a certain pattern, over time, develop? Like was there a sector of -- of industry that kept coming back to you, over and over again, whether it was a particular -- was it fashion design or, perhaps, service industry, or was it as varied as your approach?

DAVID: It was -- it was pretty varied. It literally was pretty varied. I mean, and we had clients for -- for quite a long time. I mean, we were very fortunate. I mean, we -- we had, you know, people like Brooks Brothers for many, many years, and Harrods. We had a lot of clients and -- even Gimbels we had for, I don’t even know, how many years, you know. We just -- we had a lot of clients who we had for, really, a number of years, so they would come back. And it was -- it was fairly consistent.

CANNELL: I know that over many decades now, of knowing [39:00] Brooks Brothers’ catalogs, it’s the kind of arrangement -- whether it’s the people in the pictures, or the furnishings. You just want to be with them.

DAVID: That’s the idea.

CANNELL: Yes!

DAVID: That’s the idea.

CANNELL: You want to emulate...
DAVID: But you have to remember that all that has been -- I mean, I remember being at the -- I think it was the Doral Country Club, in Florida, or was it -- a very fancy, actually, it wasn’t. It was a very fancy -- fancy hotel in Florida, and we were shooting with Ted Dawson, who is a very famous model, a very handsome man. And Patti Hansen and Mary, yeah, and Mary Maciukas, and a lot -- and some other people. We were there, and we dressed everybody, and they came down. Ted was extremely handsome, and all the women that were in the hotel were, like, looking at him, until he passed them, and then they were, like, horrified because, of course, in the back were all the clamps and all that. So, you know, never look at anything and think that [40:00] it’s going to look like what you see because it probably doesn’t.

CANNELL: Wow!

DAVID: Somebody spent a lot of time, you know, hiking up the skirt, or pulling it back. And then, the shoes are, you know, $800 and the skirts, you know, $80, so...

CANNELL: Wow, it’s funny because, like, I said earlier, Patty will supply questions, just to set a framework for both me and the subject. And one of them was a bit startling, like, what was the worst lie you ever told, or something
like that? And I looked at it, and it was just something --

DAVID: I didn’t answer that one!

CANNELL: But you know -- but you know, when I think about what
you just described, “lie” is a pretty loaded word, but
ther-- it’s all this fantasy. You know, to think that
behind Mr. Dawson was --

DAVID: Exactly.

CANNELL: -- all of this fabrication --

DAVID: Exactly.

CANNELL: -- going on.

DAVID: Exactly, and that’s why when the other -- it was a
question that said, were you upset when -- when people
copied your work, or did you know?

CANNELL: Oh, yes! Right.

DAVID: But, no, because we’re not [41:00] curing cancer here,
you know --

CANNELL: Yes! I loved your response too.

DAVID: I mean, so I know -- I never took it more seriously
than it -- what it -- for what -- than what it was, you
know.

CANNELL: Well, and is it -- is it bold of me to say that, you
know, you’ve got to have fun with what you’re doing?

DAVID: Absolutely.
CANNELL: And as soon as you get too serious, you’d probably lose that property to the experience?

DAVID: I loved what I did --

CANNELL: Yeah.

DAVID: -- for all these years. I just absolutely loved it. And interestingly enough, I work-- I worked in the emergency room at Saint Vincent’s Hospital, which was -- but, that -- all those years of art directing kept me in good stead, because I had to sit sometimes in a waiting room with a number of people and keep them happy, organized, and -- so all those years of dealing with all those people on photo shoots has really come in handy in doing that. I was shocked at how much I had learned that I was able to bring over to that. So you just -- all these things that you do can be carried over into a number of other things.

CANNELL: Tell me about this particular [42:00] situation? I mean, so, are you volunteering?

DAVID: I’m a volunteer.

CANNELL: Oh!

DAVID: I work as a volunteer there.

CANNELL: That’s so amazing!

DAVID: But, you know, you have people coming in. They’re all very different. They all, you know, just like on a photo
shoot, you get all these people who come in. Some are cranky, some as sick, some are on another planet, some don’t show up. I mean, there’s just all these things that happen. And you have all these people coming in, all of whom have different problems, they’re different personalities, they speak different languages sometimes. And it’s your job to, kind of, focus them in to giving you the information that you need, so you can move them into the next step --

CANNELL: So you did intake?

DAVID: -- and to keeping them -- and to keep them calm, and to keep them, you know, get them relaxed, and make them feel secure that you and that hospital will take care of them. And it’s kind of like what you do on a photo shoot.

CANNELL: Incredible! So, being a director is being a director is being a director?

DAVID: Correct.

CANNELL: Wow!

DAVID: Yeah, yeah. It’s just learning to deal with people, different kinds of people other than yourself. It’s...

CANNELL: When you -- when you think about taking charge, though, and leaving a company that’s not your own, developing one that is your own -- what about the business side of things? Do you find that from your directorship,
over the years -- that aids to being a good business person?

DAVID: No. I am not a business person. I have -- I wor-- I have one partner, and he and I have known each other for, probably, 20 years. And he’s much better at counting money than I am. And so, it’s something I never -- that was something that I never liked to do. I -- I still count on my fingers, you know. 78, 79, 80 --

CANNELL: At least it’s reliable.

DAVID: So, you know, I am totally creative. So --

CANNELL: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DAVID: -- he does that, and I -- I do my thing.

CANNELL: Well --

DAVID: I do my thing.

CANNELL: Let’s see. It’s just an amazing -- I mean, just sitting here -- this is probably the interview I’ve known the least about coming in, even with your resumé and the questions [44:00] and everything. I guess, looking back, do you see any --

DAVID: You know, it’s not very -- really very different from what you do.

CANNELL: The more I hear you talk --

DAVID: It really isn’t, it’s just --

CANNELL: Well --
DAVID: -- you know, it’s whatever you’re doing, you have to prepare for it --

CANNELL: Yeah!

DAVID: -- you have to organize it.

CANNELL: Yeah!

DAVID: Yeah, it’s just --

CANNELL: And I think about all of the people that come into my realm of activity that come in, basically thinking, you know, they have this one function, when it can grow, or even recede, somewhat, depending on the person’s capabilities. That’s -- that’s something I’m curious about. When you work with people, like models, photographers, designers -- do you see them sometimes show a capability in another role? I know some models -- I think of Helena Christensen, who’s now doing photography work. Have you seen that kind of talent develop?

DAVID: [45:00] Well, very good models usually know something about the camera, and know -- I mean, you know, people like Lauren Hutton -- I, I’ve worked with Lauren Hutton -- and she always knew. She could tell the guy who’s working the camera, I think, it should be over -- the light should be up a little bit, I mean --

CANNELL: Oh my goodness!
DAVID: -- and then, you know, she always knew what she wanted herself to look like.

CANNELL: How receptive were they?

DAVID: Well, they’re not very receptive. But, you know, depending on who is it. I mean, if it’s her, they listen, of course, you know. They were “Yes, yes, yes, yes.” But --

CANNELL: My goodness!

DAVID: -- you know, it’s like everything else. It’s always good to know everything about what’s going on around you, so that you can make comments about it and know when it’s not right.

CANNELL: Sure. You mentioned Lauren Hutton, who’s obviously a woman, maybe even directing gentlemen photographers. It made me think about the fact that you worked through the sexual revolution. How did you find [46:00] that play into your progression as a professional, if at all?

DAVID: I -- you know, I was never into it. I just did my thing the way I always did it, and, you know, it’s -- it kind of was, like, what you see is what you get. And I have not changed, I don’t think, very much, over all these years I’ve been doing this. You know, I’m -- I -- I just never played the game. I just -- the game was my work, and
that spoke for it. And I just relied on that to get me through everything.

CANNELL: Have you ever -- have you ever been contacted by someone who saw you as a role model? Or wanted to, I don’t know, sort of, shadow you, or follow in your footsteps?

DAVID: No.

CANNELL: Golly!

DAVID: No!

CANNELL: Would you be interested in anybody like that?

DAVID: Sure, but I mean, I -- it was just so many people, you know, over the years. But no, because I -- I -- it’s not rocket science, and I think there are a lot of people who were -- are very good [47:00] in this business, who do that. And I think most people want to shadow very glamorous people anyway.

CANNELL: Well, but I think, too -- I mean, I’m just thinking of -- of the student body here, who would probably, I think, benefit from all the lessons you’ve learned over the years. I don’t know, it just came to mind, because I depend so heavily on interns that come through various curricula.

DAVID: They’re usually exhausted by the end of the day with me!

CANNELL: Me, too!

DAVID: It’s the best way to learn.
CANNELL: It is!
DAVID: It is.
CANNELL: It is -- it is.
DAVID: It’s like the teachers you had in school that you hated. They’re the ones you really learn the most from.
CANNELL: Oh, yeah, that always wrote the most commentary on your report cards.
DAVID: Right, right.
CANNELL: No, because I’m thinking -- I’m thinking, you’re probably a natural teacher.
DAVID: I don’t know. That was something my mother wanted me to be, but I never went into that, yeah.
CANNELL: Well, that -- that reminds me of another question that was posed, in terms of how your family [48:00] reacted to your work?
DAVID: They were -- they were proud of what I did. They were proud of what --
CANNELL: I’m sure.
DAVID: -- but they never quite understood me or what I -- what I do. They just -- they just didn’t, yeah. I know, sometimes I’d come home, dressed all in black, and my mom would say, “Don’t come here dressed like that!” And I’d go, “I just left a big meeting at wherever,” and she would go, “I -- I can’t believe you just dressed like that.” You
know, I mean, it’s just, you know, they just thought I was a bit quirky and --

CANNELL: Uh-huh, but I think, well, I think the creative side in people eventually works itself to the outside as well.

DAVID: They were proud of me because I accomplished -- I was the first grandchild -- my grandparents came from Europe -- so I was the first grandchild that graduated from college. So for my family, it was a big thing. I mean, sometimes I would get introduced as, “This is my granddaughter. She graduated from college.”

CANNELL: Oh my goodness!

DAVID: That was my complete title, you know. And so, for my family, it was -- it was important. And they were always, you know, [49:00] proud and supportive of what I did, even if they didn’t understand what it was. So...

CANNELL: How -- how would you define success, for you?

DAVID: If you love what you do, I think you’re successful.

CANNELL: True.

DAVID: That’s -- that’s all that it is. If you can finish the day’s shooting and go, “Gee that was pretty good.” You know, when you can go in in the morning and think, “How are we ever going to get this done?” You know, because all of a sudden, you know, it’s raining when it was supposed to be sunny. Or somebody didn’t show up, or the van’s a half
hour late, or it closed on their eye where -- and when you’re finished, and you’ve done it, and everybody’s kind of still talking to each other, and you think, “Well, I guess we did something right here.”

CANNELL: That’s a good sign.

DAVID: It’s good that -- yeah, we’re done. So, that’s successful.

CANNELL: And, well, like you said, I mean, the people who were, you know, the family, that would stay a family, by choice --

DAVID: Yeah, yeah, because they always could say --

CANNELL: -- is a lot to be said.

DAVID: -- yeah, they could always say, “No, I don’t want to do that,” you know. But we always had a pretty good time, you know.

CANNELL: Well, what’s next on the horizon?

DAVID: [50:00] Hollywood? I don’t know --

CANNELL: Whoo!

DAVID: -- I have no idea. I have no idea. I really have no idea because I’m kind of getting up there, and --

CANNELL: Oh, please!

DAVID: -- I don’t know how much longer I want to do this, or, I don’t know. I really don’t know.
CANNELL: Do you have a -- a set clientele now that you work with?

DAVID: No, it’s not, it’s not -- no, it used to be. I used to have a tremendous amount of clients and work, but we don’t anymore. I -- I actually -- it’s a choice I’ve made, I -- because I -- for personal reasons, I need to have -- to be able to be home much more than I was before, and so, you know, it’s very small and that’s -- that’s fine, because I’ve kind of been there and done that, and I’m OK. I’m OK. It’s family time, because I actually didn’t spend a lot of time with my family when I was running around doing all this.

CANNELL: Is it privileged to ask who -- who has -- who’s on your client list now?

DAVID: Well, they’re -- they’re varied. I think I wrote it out [51:00] for Patty, you know. We have some -- they’ve come in. A lot of people that we have had as clients -- we didn’t -- we never had a lot of clients because that was the whole purpose of doing this. But a lot of them have taken work in-house, and, you know, I think when it -- when things get better, I think we’ll, you know, we’ll get them back. It’s just a matter of waiting it out. It’s OK, yeah.
CANNELL: Do you think some of the clients assumed they might --
can do some of the work internally now --

DAVID: Yes, absolutely!

CANNELL: -- that things have gotten so technologically
advanced?

DAVID: Absolutely. That’s what they -- oh, yeah, absolutely.

CANNELL: That’s what they’re doing?

DAVID: Yeah, a lot of people have done it.

CANNELL: Interesting. Do you think that your role -- meaning,
in the larger sense, creative design -- uh, Creative
Directors or Art Directors -- that role is inflating or
deflating? In the whole of what, I guess, you would say,
promote -- promoting...

DAVID: I -- I don’t know. I think, it’s something, again,
that’s in a state of flux. [52:00] Because if you’re, you
know, if you’re great on the computer, then what -- perhaps
what I used to do in pulling tear sheets and that way, you
know, my son will do on the computer in no time, and then
present that to clients. And the type that you can use,
and the way things appear when they’re -- my son is a web
designer and developer -- and, you know, so many times,
I’ve had fights with him because I was -- and so he says,
“You know, what you do in print has no bearing on what
happens on the web.” You can’t use the type-face, you
can’t do this, you can’t do that. You know, the technology is kind of the ruler of all this. Before that, we were kind of the rulers.

CANNELL: Yeah, yeah. I know, in terms of -- if nothing else, but calibration on a monitor -- if color is important to a sheet, you’re sort of at the mercy of everyone’s computer, and how they’re going to --

DAVID: Absolutely.

CANNELL: -- experience it.

DAVID: Yes.

CANNELL: [53:00] So, yeah, there are benefits and liabilities, but I guess that’s been the case for every turn of technology.

DAVID: Sure, because it’s a learning experience. Once you put it on the computer, and it seems to be right, and then you get the first proof, and it’s completely off, and you’re, like, “How did that happen?” And then you have to realize the process. And once you learn that other process, you can then adjust what you have to do to make it work for the printer -- you know that you have to take out some red, or add some more black, or whatever it is.

CANNELL: Right.

DAVID: But you just, you -- you know, it’s just another step, and you just -- you just do it.
CANNELL: And you just don’t need tongs anymore.

DAVID: That’s right. That stuff smelled so bad. I remember that, the --

F3: When was the first time you ever met Eileen and Jerry Ford?

DAVID: A long time-- I mean, a long time ago, because when I first went to work at Bel-Aire, I had -- was look-- I think I was trying to pick out some models, and I -- Eileen got on the phone, and I spoke with her, and that was the first time I -- I had actually met with her. And [54:00] it was, you know, it was, like, quite an honor. And then I just met them over the years. They were very good friends with Mr. Grubman as well.

CANNELL: Oh, OK.

DAVID: So...

CANNELL: Excellent. And then, I’m just assuming that you worked with bookers after that? Or...

DAVID: They’re -- yeah, I mean, that’s what I do. I mean, if I need a model, I call Ford and I would just tell them I’m looking for this, that, or whatever. You know, and they’ll send me, you know -- now they email to me. It used to -- we used to get cards, or we used to get books. But now it’s just -- it’s on, on the computer and -- I still like to see books, because, you know, I know they’ve all made selections that look good on the paper. But I want to see
the book with more stuff, but -- I don’t trust anybody, but -- but it’s easy because it’s quick. I mean, I don’t have to wait for anything to come up. Just shoot me an email, and I can look and say, “What about this person? That person?” or whatever. Or when models don’t show up, or they’re sick, and then you have to call and say, “Who -- who else is available?”

CANNELL: Exactly, exactly.

F3: Remember, you always like straight on. You never trust it if the model is looking up or away. See, if I can’t see you straight [55:00] on, that --

CANNELL: That’s interesting.

DAVID: Yeah, and I also -- I then -- and a lot of agencies want you to see the model in person, which, for me, is meaningless --

CANNELL: OK.

DAVID: -- because it’s only what the camera sees.

CANNELL: Yeah, and that’s so --

DAVID: I’m not dating anybody that comes in, so you want to know what the camera is going to see, not what --

CANNELL: Right.

DAVID: -- what you see with your eyes, very different.

CANNELL: Oh! That’s --

DAVID: Yeah, yeah.
CANNELL: -- that’s a powerful statement --

DAVID: Yeah.

CANNELL: -- for someone who’s not ordinarily on either side of the camera.

F3: I understand --

DAVID: And they also -- they don’t always look like what you see, you know. I mean, I’ve been at shootings with very famous models, whether it was Patti, or you know --

F3: Patti Hansen?

DAVID: Yeah, Patti Hansen, or, you know, even -- oh, it doesn’t matter -- whoever. But people would say, you know, “When is that person getting here?” They’ve been here for 20 minutes, you know, that girl that came in the T-shirt and jeans?

CANNELL: Oh, my!

DAVID: That’s your model. Because they, somehow, think they’re going to come in all coiffed and, you know, and --

CANNELL: But I’ve learned the term, clean and clean.

DAVID: Yeah.

CANNELL: I know what that is, now, [56:00] so... And it usually involves nothingness, whereas all you know is all of this, you know --

DAVID: Yeah.

CANNELL: -- fluff and frill.
DAVID: Yeah, because I -- I think some people think that’s how they’re going to come in, you know, with -- like, Sunset Boulevard, with a big light on them --
CANNELL: Exactly!
DAVID: -- and waiting for their close-up. But they don’t come in looking -- like, because -- that is because it’s what the camera sees, not what you see with your eyes, so...
CANNELL: Sure, sure. I think we’re almost out of time.
DAVID: OK.
CANNELL: Is there anything else you’d like to add before we close --
DAVID: No.
CANNELL: -- what is -- has been a delightful conversation?
DAVID: No, no, this has been a pleasure --
CANNELL: Absolutely.
DAVID: -- painless pleasure for me --
CANNELL: Good, good!
DAVID: -- because I’m used to being over there, and not over here. And I don’t like being over here, but you’ve made it very easy.
CANNELL: Well, thank you very much. It’s been wonderful, and I -- I just love knowing this element beyond what I’ve ever
known, in terms of getting what is the final product in front of me. So thank you very much.

DAVID: But always remember, it’s just like what you do. It’s really no difference. It’s just different --

CANNELL: [57:00] And with pins in the back!

DAVID: Yeah, and I mean, there’s some sorts, you know. Whatever.

CANNELL: Thank you so much.

DAVID: My pleasure. It was nice to meet you.

CANNELL: Yes, nice to meet you, too.

DAVID: OK, all right.

F3: Can I just -- I can tell you something funny -- [57:12]

END OF AUDIO FILE