

## Riveted by photography

*Jennifer Dickson – Clip 4*

From very early childhood I believe I was fascinated by the camera and by the photograph. I had a box brownie when I was about eleven years old. Film was a problem because of the expense; we were quite poor growing up. So I was photographing when I was very, very young. I remember the first photography exhibition I saw, it was in South Africa, and I remember that it hit me like a – between the eyes – I couldn't get over it. I was riveted by it; I was riveted by the subject matter, by being able to see things that would not normally be accessible to a child in a small Dutch reformed Africana town, and also by the very similitude of the image. I think I've always been fascinated, but it's been a slow transition. I came to it from the left field. I never had any formal training as a photographer but increasingly it crept into my art and began to obsess me. Then I asked Jeffrey James if I could study under him and he said "Absolutely not." I said, "Why can't I be a student of yours?" and he said, "My dear, you're a natural primitive. It would completely ruin you".

