Interview with Phillip A. Bruno
Conducted by James McElhinney
At the ofices of the Archives of American Art, New York, NY
January 13 and 21, 2009

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Phillip A. Bruno on January 13 and 21, 2009. The interview took place at the ofices of the Archives of American Art in New York, NY, and was conducted by James McElhinney for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Funding for this interview was provided by a grant from the Widgeon Point Charitable Foundation.

Phillip A. Bruno and James McElhinney have reviewed the transcript and have made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

JAMES McELHINNEY: This is James McElhinney speaking with Phillip A. Bruno, offices of the Archives of American Art, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, New York City, January 13, 2009. Good morning.

PHILLIP A. BRUNO: Well, good morning to you. I'm delighted to be here.

MR. McELHINNEY: Thank you. It's almost noon.

What is your earliest recollection of any work of art? If you reach back into the past, what was the first work of art of which you were conscious or consciously moved by?

MR. BRUNO: I would say one of the Flemish tapestries in my family home.

MR. McELHINNEY: Which was where?

MR. BRUNO: Well, there have been several: in Paris, in New York, and in Scarsdale [New York]. My father had founded Bruno Van, which was an international furniture company. Subsequently, I would say in terms of my career in contemporary art, it was being exposed to the collection of Morton Goldsmith in Scarsdale.

MR. McELHINNEY: Were your parents collectors of art?

MR. BRUNO: Not in that sense. Collectors of the decorative arts: china, silver, jade, tapestries, and furniture.

MR. McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] So you were, as a child, encouraged to acquire an interest or understanding of these things?

MR. BRUNO: I was very privileged. And a documentary has just been done on my exposure to art, to color, to shape.

MR. McELHINNEY: And where did you study? Where did you go to school?

MR. BRUNO: I majored in the history of architecture and painting at Columbia [Columbia University, New York, NY], majored under Meyer Schapiro. And prior to that I was a graduate of the Scarsdale High School [Scarsdale, NY]. And then prior to that the Fox Meadow Grammar School.

MR. McELHINNEY: I see. Well, that's an illustrious –

MR. BRUNO: With frequent trips to Paris because we had a home there, too.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right in the city or nearby?

Mr. BRUNO: It was A6 rue De Lille. It was an apartment.

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay. So you had, as a young person, exposure to all of the treasures of Paris: Louvre and –

MR. BRUNO: Oh, absolutely.

MR. McELHINNEY: – Cluny and the Orangerie.

MR. BRUNO: I loved Paris. I still do. And I love culture. I was exposed to it. My late uncle, Dr. Bruno, acquired the American Pavilion, which was a replica of Mount Vernon [Virginia], in the Paris International Art Fair in 1937. So he rebuilt it and restored it outside of Paris. And I remember being 18, going for weekends to Mount Vernon. [Laughs]

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, that would have been confusing if you had been able to revive, you know, the Marquis de Lafayette. And not apt to travel so far in order to see a home that you might recognize. So were you also encouraged in an interest in music and literature, opera, other things like this?

MR. BRUNO: Music, less. Certain great arias have always moved me, but sitting through an entire opera has never. Theater, yes. I've always been interested in theater.

MR. McELHINNEY: So I assume you're more interested in [Giacomo] Puccini than [Richard] Wagner.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, I would say so. I've always been attracted to emotionalism.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, yes.

MR. BRUNO: Based on voice or on paper.

MR. McELHINNEY: How about in painting?

MR. BRUNO: Yes, of course. Yes. On canvas.

MR. McELHINNEY: So when you got out of Columbia, what happened?

MR. BRUNO: Well, prior to that, since you asked what key aspects affected me, was I was given as a teenager *Lust for Life* [Irving Stone; New York, The Modern Library: 1939]. And I read every book on [Vincent] van Gogh when I was 16 and 17. And he was a martyr, an emotional martyr to art. And that led me to reading more and more about the Impressionists: John Lee [inaudible].

MR. McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. BRUNO: Your last question was about my first exposure?

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, we'd started the conversation by me asking you what was the first work of art that you can recall that moved you or, you know, that you were aware of as a work of art.

MR. BRUNO: I would say *The Sunflower* [1888] painted by van Gogh.

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay. So you get out of Columbia. You've had all of this domestic training and academic instruction and sort of autodidactic instruction, and are a cultured young gentleman. What's your next move?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I, through my visits to Jimmy Goldsmith's collection – and he had a [inaudible], early [Jackson] Pollock, early [Mark] Rothko in his house in Scarsdale, with art books all over. And he took a liking to me. He had two older sons who were not terribly involved with their father's collecting, nor was Mrs. Goldsmith. But Jimmy was a passionate collector. He had retired, and he knew the galleries and the auction house in New York. And he knew I was majoring in the history of painting and architecture. And he called me one day, and he said, "Phillip, would you be interested in a part-time job at the Weyhe Art Gallery and Bookstore on Lexington Avenue [New York, NY]?" And he said, "I can't guarantee you a part-time job, but I can arrange an interview." And I thought that was a fascinating idea, absolutely fascinating.

I thanked him, and I said I would let him know how the interview went. And I took the subway down Broadway from Columbia and then across town and up Lexington. Got off at Bloomingdale's and walked up a block and a half for this interview with Mr. [Erhard] Weyhe, whose portrait [Alexander] Calder did, one of those portraits he did in the early thirties now on exhibition at the Whitney Museum [New York]. And the interview went very well. And Mr. Weyhe offered me a part-time job as a senior while I was at Columbia. I think it was Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays for something like $20. And it was fascinating. There was total disorganization downstairs where the bookstore was. Mr. Cunningham was in charge of that. Mr. and Mrs. Weyhe had the upper floors of the building. Martha Dickinson ran the gallery, and I was her assistant. It was a potpourri of extraordinary etchings by [Pablo] Picasso and [Georges] Braque, and watercolors by [Charles] Demuth, drawings by [Gaston] Lachaise. You name it, and it was there.

And of course at that time – we're talking about over 50 years ago – there were very few art bookstores in the United States. And Mr. Weyhe's was one of the most well known and respected. And he became a friend. And one summer he asked me to visit his farm in Nova Scotia, where I learned he had dozens of blue ribbons for the delphiniums he raised. And he had an extraordinary collection of Indian – Canadian Indian – porcupine quill boxes. He was a fascinating person. Every Saturday around five-thirty, upstairs, he would motion to me with his hands, ask me to come up and close the door to a corner of the gallery, and he would pull out a 20-dollar bill. I can't tell you how much I resented that. I felt that at least he could put those $20 in an envelope with my name on it – cover. But anyway, that continued until other developments occurred.

MR. McELHINNEY: How long did you work for Weyhe?

MR. BRUNO: Just about a year. And that was my next professional step. Shall I discuss that a little bit?

MR. McELHINNEY: Surely.

MR. BRUNO: Well, I was getting credit for one of my studies at Columbia. And in terms of Meyer Schapiro, there were several people who were sitting without getting credit. And one of them was Miriam Wallach, and we became friends. She monitored a course I was taking for credit. And at one point she started come to the Weyhe Gallery and openings: Antonio Frasconi's graphic works or Edward Stevenson's works on paper.

One day she said, "Phillip, let's have tea," of coffee, I've forgotten, "I have a friend who's thinking of opening a gallery, and her name is Grace Borgenicht. She's looking for someone reliable, intelligent, somewhat worldly possibly, and very enthusiastic, and I think you'd be the perfect person. Would you like me to arrange an interview?" And I said, "Yes. Why don't you arrange an interview. But I won't commit myself. But I would be interested. And frankly I would like to get advice about leaving the Weyhe Gallery, which is so well known, to joining a gallery at its birth." And she said, "Why don't you do that?"

So I did contact [inaudible] Berger, whom I got to know quite well. He was one of the people I discussed the move. And he was very encouraging for me to be grateful for the experience I had and what I learned at the Weyhe Gallery. But he thought being involved with a gallery involved with the arts would be challenging. So I did meet with Grace. And she did offer the associate directorship of the Grace Borgenicht Gallery before it opened its doors, which occurred at 65 East Fifth-seventh Street. And I was the associate director for almost five years.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who did you work with there – artists? Who were the artists who –? It's interesting because you talk about the genesis of the gallery, you know. I'm sure a lot of people are curious, you know. You may have a desire, somebody may have the capital, the opportunity or the desire to start a gallery. But where do you find your talent? How do you assemble your stable?

MR. BRUNO: Well, Grace had assembled a very interesting group of Contemporary American artists. It was a Contemporary American gallery. The most well-known one was Milton Avery.

There was a sculptor, Galvin Halbert. There was the graphic artist Gabor Peterdi.

MR. McELHINNEY: A number of them stayed.

MR. BRUNO: The painter Hans Müller.

MR. McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. BRUNO: That can be further developed, you know, in another conversation if we break down.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, we can explore it now if you want. But it seems like also the artists, some of the artists that you named –

MR. BRUNO: Ralston Crawford.

MR. McELHINNEY: Ralston Crawford, right. Stayed with the gallery for the duration of the gallery's life.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. And Leonard Baskin, of course.

MR. McELHINNEY: Of course. Yes.

MR. BRUNO: It was a highly respected group. And I was basically responsible for sales. I've always enjoyed meeting people and conveying my emotional, possibly intellectual involvement with art. And I think – I've been told I was successful.

MR. McELHINNEY: So you were the front lines of the gallery: You were the greeter and the salesperson and the, you know, the person who would –

MR. BRUNO: Randall Morgan was another artist whom we represented, too.

MR. McELHINNEY: Were any of those artists, artists who came to the gallery through you?

MR. BRUNO: No. Oh, yes, there was one sculptor whose name, whom I showed or was involved with at the Weyhe Gallery, and he did join the Borgenicht Gallery.

MR. McELHINNEY: So how long were you with –?

MR. BRUNO: Just under five years.

MR. McELHINNEY: – Borgenicht?

MR. BRUNO: And then I arranged a leave-of-absence to organize Jose Luis Cuevas's first European show in Paris.

MR. McELHINNEY: And what year was that?

MR. BRUNO: Nineteen fifty-five.

MR. McELHINNEY: 'Fifty-five. So you were with Borgenicht – or you were with Weyhe for a year – then went to Borgenicht and worked there.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: In '55 you organized an exhibition by Cuevas in Paris.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, at the Edward Loeb Gallery [Paris, France].

MR. McELHINNEY: And where is that in Paris – or where was it?

MR. BRUNO: It was. Everything seems to be in the past.

MR. McELHINNEY: Is, was. [Laughs]

MR. BRUNO: At 53 rue de Rennes. I'd met Cuevas – That's another story, I mean –

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, we're here to tell, we're here to collect stories.

MR. BRUNO: Well, some people really want me to write a book.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, what was that like?

MR. BRUNO: Should I tell you the Cuevas story?

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, what was that like? You're leaving a job in New York. You're going to Paris, which is a town you know. And you're organizing a show at [in French] rue de Rennes. And how did that all play out? Why don't you –

MR. BRUNO: Well, it was a great success. And it was a pioneering effort, and the Mexican ambassador to France was at the opening. He helped publicize it, as he could. It was quite an event, for a Contemporary Mexican artist to exhibit in Paris. And there are pictures of me standing in front of the Edward Loeb Gallery. It was a remarkable event. It was pioneering. And I was fortunate in dealing with a legendary dealer; Edward Loeb was a twin of Pierre Loeb. And both of them knew everyone in Paris: Knew Picasso, [Fernand] Leger, [Alberto] Giacometti, all the Surrealists. Oh, here's a double photograph: Here's Phillip A. Bruno in a raincoat, always with a jacket and tie, in front of the gallery with three Cuevas drawings in the window. And this was so noncommercial. We don't have windows like this anymore in Paris, I don't think. And I don't think there was one like this in New York. With the invitation to the Cuevas below. Distinguished at the age of 24 or something like that. Speaking of the Weyhe Gallery, this hangs in my kitchen. This was a Christmas greeting, a woodcut, by Antonio Frasconi, who was a great friend.

MR. McELHINNEY: I have to try to get a hold of copies of these perhaps.

MR. BRUNO: Anytime.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes. That'd be great. But it's interesting. How, practically, did you go about organizing, in the years before jet airplanes and Internet and everything, an international exhibition as a young nascent art dealer?

MR. BRUNO: Well, in terms of going to [Laughs] Mexico City, I drove from New York to Mexico City. And that was a trip I'll never forget obviously, not through mountains and deserts, through quite a landscape of southeastern, central United States, Louisiana, Mississippi. And then crossing the border, driving south.

MR. McELHINNEY: Along the coast?

MR. BRUNO: Yes. And then, of course, I was one of the youngest in the field, and people felt my enthusiasm and my commitment. And I'd always admired Diego Rivera's work. I'd seen it in 1949 in Detroit. He had passed away. But I did meet David Siqueiros. And he took a liking to me, and I certainly took a liking to him. And I was the only American invited to his daughter's wedding in Mexico City. And I was terribly impressed with Siqueiros's presence in contemporary Mexican civilization or society. He had a car and a driver, and I sat with him in the backseat. And we would go to various projects he was involved with. And when the car pulled up, you know, it was an event. The workers stopped working. They hailed Siqueiros. He was a national figure in a way no American artist has ever been in terms of American sensitivity and public awareness. And of course then there was Cuevas. And I have a portrait of Siqueiros by Cuevas when Cuevas was his student and attending a course by Siqueiros.

And I had met – well, actually I was staying in a small, inexpensive, reasonable hotel and met a couple from Nashville. And during that conversation they asked me what I was, in a sense, doing in Mexico City. And I said I was going to meet David Siqueiros and hopefully to buy one. And they couldn't believe that. Their name was Blum from Nashville. And they said, "Phillip –" This was after breakfast. "– if you can get one for yourself, we have such faith in your commitment and sensitivity, buy one for us." So I said, "Okay. Thank you." And by that time they had invited me to, on my return, to stop over in Nashville. But that's another story.

So I did meet with Siqueiros. And he was involved with these giant mosaic murals outside the Administration Building, University City, in Mexico City. And the end result of my oil on board – it was quite large, three and a half maybe by five feet – was the study of the eagle representing the

Northern Hemisphere and the condor of the Southern Hemisphere. So he said, "I want you to have it." I said, "Well, what do you want for it? I don't know if I can afford it. I'm sure not." And he mentioned a price, and I said, "David, no, I can't afford that." Then he mentioned another price which was substantially lower. And I was embarrassed, but I had to admit that I couldn't afford that.

So he said – and I'd mentioned what little I was earning – and he said, "Well, why don't you send me a check for maybe twenty-five or fifty dollars a month for maybe ten months. And it's yours. And I'll send it to you. So you'll get it when you get back. But I'm not going to use these checks other than to buy more mosaic for the mural." And subsequently I did select a very large study of the Mexican students offering the fruits of their studies to the country, which was, oh, maybe four and a half by eight feet. And that was paid for by Reva and Bobby Blum of Nashville. And it's – I saw it in Nashville, and they were very happy to show it to me once it arrived. But the story, if I can continue, about Cuevas –

MR. McELHINNEY: By all means.

MR. BRUNO: My mother lived in Mexico City for several years, and she had met a chief curator there. And I'd gone down to celebrate my 26th birthday. Anyway, around Christmastime – My mother was a legendary beauty and an extraordinary person, wrote me from Mexico – and I'm a little embarrassed to tell you this – saying that she was sending me a Christmas present of a drawing. And I said to myself, Oh, my God! *Moonlight Over Cuernevaca*. [Mr. McElhinney laughs] Now it's really embarrassing to even consider that I could receive an image like that. In any case, it arrived, and I unwrapped it. And I didn't know who Jose Luis Cuevas was. It was a seated child, black and white and gray, work on paper, of a bound child in an asylum. It was absolutely fantastic. It's still in my collection. And it led to, eventually, this Cuevas show in Paris. And within two or three months after receiving it at Christmas, I received an invitation to attend the Cuevas Exhibition at the Pan-American Union from [Jose]Gomez Sicre, who was the director and a very good friend. And I called him up, and I said, "Now you won't believe this." I told him the same story that I've just told you, James.

So I went down, and it was a very impressive show, maybe 30 Cuevas drawings. And curiously enough, almost all of them were sold except three or four. And I said to Gomez, I said, "Listen, this guy is brilliant. And I'll sell these four sight unseen over the telephone if I can make these calls from your desk." And he said, "Phillip, well go ahead." So I called four clients and explained what was happening and what I thought of this man's work. And they approved sight unseen the purchase of these remaining four Cuevas drawings which were part of the exhibition. And subsequently *Time* magazine did a story on that exhibition. And I think my name is mentioned in the story.

MR. McELHINNEY: So did you continue to work with artists from Latin America over the years?

MR. BRUNO: Well, to my own, yes, and Siqueiros. But not to the degree I did with – it was more or less on selected pieces.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes. So once the Cuevas –

MR. BRUNO: Oh, I'm sorry. Oh, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, excuse me.

MR. BRUNO: There's so much to remember. I've been trying to prepare myself for this interview. On one of my trips to Brazil, I came across – my older son was there on a Watson Memorial Fellowship – on my way back to Rio at a sort of ranch, a B&B – a watercolor of a bird. And I thought it was fantastic. I thought it equaled any of [John James] Audubon's work. And the owner said, "Oh, they're very good friends of mine. Actually there are three of them: There's Etienne Demonte, who specializes in birds. And then there is his sister – two sisters – and they are also naturalists. And if you like, I'll call them. And maybe on your way back to Rio you can visit their studio." And Clark, who was fluent in Portuguese at that time, was delighted to drive us there, and I visited the Demontes. And one thing led the other. And I tell you, I wasn't planning to spend

overnight with them. But they were so enthusiastic, and I was very impressed with the works of all three and acquired several for my collection. And mentioned that I thought I could arrange a show of their works in the States. And they were very, very excited about that. And I did. And that's another story.

But there was a Demonte Exhibition here in New York and subsequently in Washington, DC. And a catalogue both in English and in Portuguese for that show. And subsequently they invited me for an expedition into the Pantanal region of western Brazil. And it took almost two years for the details to be negotiated with the Department of Interior of Brazil. And the three Demontes with Phillip and the curator of the Pittsburgh Art Institution – not the Carnegie – was also invited. And we met and drove from the Demonte studios and home five days west from the Brazilian coast. And I saw Brazil burning. And this is about 50 years ago. It was just terrible.

MR. McELHINNEY: You're talking about the –

MR. BRUNO: The forests.

MR. McELHINNEY: The destruction, the clearing of the rainforests.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes.

MR. BRUNO: And this was a region that was very isolated. We got onto a boat down a steep bank. And there was a captain and maybe three in the crew and the five of us. And it seemed to be getting lower and lower in the water as the night progressed. And all of a sudden I started seeing water coming up through the deck. I heard prayers in Portuguese. And, my God, I started praying myself. I thought that this boat was going to go down. Anyway, it didn't. And we got to this island in the Pantanal. It was very crude – very crude installation. It was sort of an open barn with netting at the openings. And it was very cold. I remember I was really cold. And Etienne, of the three, became a close friend, said, "Listen, you know, I'll give you my shirt and jacket." And I remember assuming, you know, the prenatal position, you know, pulled up my knees up under my chin, I was so cold.

Anyway, it was a fascinating experience. It lasted almost a week. And we went – we had two armed guards because the poachers, you know, were after animals, and they couldn't care less if they shot or killed anybody. But fortunately nothing like that happened. And I did learn something about nature television documentaries – or even movie documentaries. It takes hours – hours! – in terms of editing for five minutes. We waited hours to watch birds land or leave the water surface. It was –

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, so that was the goal of the expedition, was to shoot stock for a television show or for –

MR. BRUNO: No. No, no. It was really for me to understand, further understand how the Demontes worked.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, I see.

MR. BRUNO: And it certainly did. And it solidified our relationship and my respect. I had never thought of going on a safari like that. And we had an extraordinary guide. And when we returned to Rio, the night before we all had dinner, and each of us was asked, "Who impressed you the most based on this trip?" And unbeknownst to any one of us, we wrote the same name down: the guide.

MR. McELHINNEY: Hmmm.

MR. BRUNO: He could sense the appearance of a jaguar. He could sense what was disturbing the surface of the water. He was an amazing human being. It was quite an experience. And I still have a group of Etienne's in my collection.

MR. McELHINNEY: Do you recall the guide's name?

MR. BRUNO: I wish I had it. No. But there was the source of the unknown river that we found and

that is now called the Roosevelt River.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh. Oh, so this was the same area of the Amazon Watershed that had been traveled by Teddy Roosevelt.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, it's recently explored in a couple of books in the last few years. It's interesting when you ponder the idea of artists actually going to the field when a lot of, I think, American artists at that time put a lot of faith in sort of the inviability of the Paris-New York axis of the sort of Bohemianist, you know, poet priest of high aesthetic, etc. To imagine artists going to a rainforest in order to do their work.

MR. BRUNO: No, no. The studio was the center of activity.

MR. McELHINNEY: I see. I see.

MR. BRUNO: Not for the Etienne's, of course in terms of execution. But in terms of their emotional and intellectual involvement.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right.

MR. BRUNO: It was outside the studio that triggered these images. Whereas in New York, [Willem] de Kooning didn't have to go to the Tetons to do what he was doing.

MR. McELHINNEY: No. But that was not the way artists were aware of their work, nor their connection to things like nature or society. It's a moment of kind of artistic isolation in a way, too, where the artists were –

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes, they were, unappreciated and highly herded in a sense.

MR. McELHINNEY: It seems like a lot of Brazilian artists, artists from that part of the world like [Hélio] Oiticica and others, you know, have –

MR. BRUNO: [Inaudible.]

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, have a different awareness of the role they're supposed to be playing in their society. Like you're alluding – or speaking about – you know, the Mexican muralists who were heroes of the nation. That no American artist has ever enjoyed that kind of –

MR. BRUNO: Well, there were some American artists who, of course, who were involved with society and commentary. And then you have Jack Levine and [Ben] Shahn.

MR. McELHINNEY: Sure, sure. And [Thomas Hart] Benton maybe.

MR. BRUNO: Not enough emphasis placed on the non-New York School.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right, right. Why do you suppose that is?

MR. BRUNO: Press. The new.

MR. McELHINNEY: Money.

MR. BRUNO: The new is an absolute essential to coverage. And publicity and coverage are part of, you know, a trillion-dollar industry, entertainment. The new, the newest. It's the easiest to get.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, doesn't that make art then a part of the entertainment industry?

MR. BRUNO: Well, it has subsequently become now up until very recently.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, we're not quite sure how it'll all – after the comet really hits, we're not really sure how it'll all unfold. But, yes. I mean I think that a lot of the interviews I've had with other dealers and also other artists just explore this phenomenon of sort of art as a subset of the entertainment industry. And you'd agree that that's –

MR. BRUNO: It's big business.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right.

MR. BRUNO: It's international big business. In 1950 there was really not an international art world. You had the New York art world, you had the auction. You had only Parke-Bernet; that was before Christie's and Sotheby's opened. You had the London art market. There was the Paris art market which was much less important. But then all of a sudden, you know, you have Christie's, Sotheby's, Parke-Bernet being purchased by Sotheby's. And the catalogues. I mean they're publicity programs today. I mean you can't – they're so heavy, they're so big, so elaborate, so well researched, they need a heavy, thick bookshelf.

MR. McELHINNEY: But with the Internet, too, that becomes ephemeral, completely light as a feather. I mean you can have thousands of images and acres of text, and it occupies –

MR. BRUNO: You can follow auctions as they occur.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right. Exactly.

MR. BRUNO: [Inaudible]. Absolutely. And bid –

[END OF DISC 1.]

MR. McELHINNEY: So when did you take the trip to the hinterlands of Brazil?

MR. BRUNO: That must have been –

MR. McELHINNEY: I'm trying to construct the chronology here.

MR. BRUNO: Fifty-seven, '58, maybe later.

MR. McELHINNEY: So a little after the Cuevas Exhibition.

MR. BRUNO: No, maybe even – [inaudible] more like in the fifties.

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay. So what happened after the Cuevas Exhibition closed, the exhibition, Loeb Gallery, what did you do then?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I was asked to become, through another – through a friend of Mrs. Henry Clews – to head the Clews Foundation American Exhibition Program [La Napoule Art Foundation, 1951, France]. And the exhibitions were held at the Chateau de La Napoule on the French Riviera. Mrs. Clews was from Philadelphia and married the sculptor Henry Clews. And the office here was in New York. And one of the exhibitions I organized was called "Five Masters of Line," which included Cuevas and four other artists whose works, as I remember, I borrowed from the Whitney Museum. And there was a poster for that.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who were the artists?

MR. BRUNO: I knew you'd ask me that.

MR. McELHINNEY: Sure, sure. Other than Cuevas.

MR. BRUNO: You'll have to do some research.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, Henry Clews was an interesting character and a controversial character.

MR. BRUNO: Right. Yes, yes. And that was a very controversial divorce. Mrs. Clews was from a great socially prominent family of Philadelphia. And she divorced her husband to marry Henry Clews. That was well covered in the press.

MR. McELHINNEY: Scandalous.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, it really was.

MR. McELHINNEY: I briefly knew their granddaughter in Colorado.

MR. BRUNO: Oh.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who's an architect in Colorado. And another acquaintance Sigmund Abeles, an artist, American artist; had some truck with him and Clews in La Napoule, I think later on perhaps in the sixties.

MR. BRUNO: He carved these are sort of grotesque stone sculptures.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes. Well, now the – I haven't really kept up with it. But the chateau for a long time was a venue for American artists who received NEA grants, awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, to have a residency there. One sculptor I know, Tom Doyle, stayed there. And others, other artists have stayed there. So I think it's – something's happening there now. Are you still –

MR. BRUNO: No.

MR. McELHINNEY: – engaged with it in any way?

MR. BRUNO: I haven't been back. I have a large French family, but I haven't been to the chateau in quite some time.

MR. McELHINNEY: When you were a kid, did you have siblings?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes. I had an older sister who lives in Los Angeles. She was married to a film editor and writer, screen writer, who was the film editor at one point for *Playboy Magazine*.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh!

MR. BRUNO: His name was Stanley Paley. And through him, I had sort of carte blanche for the Playboy Mansion. [Laughs]

MR. McELHINNEY: That must have been amusing.

MR. BRUNO: Well, I certainly have enjoyed my carte blanche prvilages. [They laugh.]

But more interestingly enough, from the point of view of art, I met Hugh Hefner. And while I was working with George Staempfli – and that was 29 years together, and that was an exceptional relationship. Not one argument. He could've been my father in terms of an age difference. Now, what were we talking about?

MR. McELHINNEY: Hefner.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. George knew [Salvador] Dali's jeweler, Carlos Alamanni, who had his offices in the Ritz Hotel – St. Regis [The St. Regis Hotel, New York]. So I used to go down to visit Carlos and see what new jewelry was being made. And at one point there was a discussion of showing Carlos Alamanni's Salvador Dali collection at Staempfli. Which was organized and basically most of the works were owned by Alamanni, and they were for sale. And one of them – and there was a catalog. Staempfli wrote introductions to all our catalogs for all those years. And one of the illustrations was this painting of a young virgin looking out the window, auto-sodomizing herself. Not the easiest subject to exhibit much less to sell. In any case, Hugh Hefner bought it. Carlos Alamanni was pleased.

MR. McELHINNEY: Hmmm.

MR. BRUNO: So was the gallery.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, I wonder if Hef owns any paintings by John Currin.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. [Laughs] That's another matter I do not wish to discuss.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, sexual imagery was always closely related to Surrealism. They were really the only modern artists who, you know – [André] Masson and others were –

MR. BRUNO: Well, you're talking about certain exceedingly creative artists. And John Currin's position has yet to be determined.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, if he takes care of himself and lives along enough, he may learn the verdict of history.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right now he's highly admired by a lot of people, and his work is commanding high prices. So I guess he's happy.

MR. BRUNO: I would presume so.

MR. McELHINNEY: He should be.

MR. BRUNO: And presumably his dealer's very happy.

MR. McELHINNEY: I think.

MR. BRUNO: And presumably the collectors who have bought his work.

MR. McELHINNEY: Let's hope everybody's happy. [Laughs] That's what we hope. When did you go to work for Staempfli? Or what was the nature of the relationship?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, that was a fascinating – World House [World House Gallery] was financed and initially organized by a brilliant lawyer – his name was Herbert Mayer – who cornered the copper market during the Vietnam War. And was very early in television, a pioneer in television. He sold one station for a dollar for certain tax purposes. Anyway, he was at World House, and I was the director. And Charlotte Willard – I hope this is all being recorded.

MR. McELHINNEY: I'm just having a look at the bars here on the machine because you can see it indicates the activity of the voice there. There's an electronic –

MR. BRUNO: Do you want me to speak a little louder?

MR. McELHINNEY: No, no, no. It's fine. I think it's all quite audible.

MR. BRUNO: Well –

MR. McELHINNEY: It's good.

MR. BRUNO: Two art editors were very close friends: Charlotte Willard at *Look Magazine* and Dorothy Satterlee at *Life*. And this was in 1958. It was the Brussels International Pavilion in Brussels, the World's Fair. And she was doing a story – Charlotte Willard was – on the American Contemporary artists whose works were being exhibited in Brussels. And she called me up, and she said, "Phillip, would World House be interested in organizing an exhibition based on the artists whose works are in Brussels?" And we did not exhibit that many American artists' works at World House. It was more an international emphasis, in terms of exhibitions and buying programs. And one of the artists in the show was Joan Brown. And in many cases the work was not for sale and was borrowed. But in terms of the sale situation for that show, I went out and tried to secure works by these artists that could be lent to World House and that would be for sale.

So George Staempfli represented Joan Brown. And I just crossed the street. He was at 47 East Seventy-seventh, and World House was in the Carlyle Hotel. And I spoke to him first on the phone and explained why I would like to borrow a Joan Brown. He was very receptive. He said, "By all means." We set up an appointment. And he very thoughtfully had brought out a number of Joan Brown's for me to see. And I made my selection. And I had been to the gallery since its opening, and it created a sensation in the New York art world. Well, one, it was very well financed. And the artists represented were really superb. I mean there was [Masayuki] Nagare from Japan, sculptor *Fritz Koenig* from Germany, Anthony Glebe from London, Harry Bertoia. It was quite a – Paul Delvaux, Max Bill – it was quite extraordinary.

And I was impressed for the first six months potentially, and I was very impressed with this meeting with George. And one thing led to the other, and he said, "Phillip, I need someone like you. And I think there'd be no overlap. I think you would be doing things that I prefer not to do. And hopefully

I would be doing things you might not prefer to do." And he asked me to join the gallery as the co-director.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, good.

MR. BRUNO: It lasted 29 years, and I did a great deal of traveling for the gallery: in Japan and all over Europe. And I loved it. I really did. We had [Constantin] Brancusi, and we had [Jean] Tinguely. And George had wonderful contacts with galleries in London and in France and in Germany. One suggestion that was never taken up, unfortunately – early on, I said, "George, why don't we once a year have an exhibition Denise Rene at Staempfli?" To give you an example. Because most of the galleries in Europe were very anxious to tap the emerging New York market without opening a branch. And we had all the contacts. And I thought that was a brilliant idea. And unfortunately it was never taken on.

MR. McELHINNEY: When did you join Staempfli?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, about eight months after it opened.

MR. McELHINNEY: I mean, you know, the year?

MR. BRUNO: Nineteen fifty-five, I think. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm looking – 1960.

MR. McELHINNEY: Nineteen sixty. And who did you report to at World House? What was the genesis of World House?

MR. BRUNO: Well, actually I was the director.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, okay.

MR. BRUNO: I oversaw several million dollars of art purchases. I was authorizing purchases of the – every Francis Bacon that ever appeared at auction, every [Jean] Dubuffet that appeared at auction, every Max Ernst. It was quite an event, quite a responsibility. And people were wondering – dealers were wondering – what's going on? Who was buying? I was buying every [Giorgio] Morandi. The end result was we had some extraordinary works. We bought out [Giacomo] Manzu's Studio – that's another story. And then Joe [Joseph] Hirshhorn bought most of the Manzus, from that Manzu show at World House.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who were your clients at World House?

MR. BRUNO: There's such a –

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, Hirshhorn.

MR. BRUNO: Hirshhorn, Roy Neuberger –

MR. McELHINNEY: I know a lot of dealers today, a lot of dealers today buy shares in works of art at times. But that wasn't a practice that occurred in those days?

MR. BRUNO: It may have. At Weyhe most of the works were on consignment. Mr. Weyhe and Hudson D. Walker bought the estate of a prominent artist who had died. And World House owned everything it showed. At Staempfli mostly – several works we had on consignment. There were some exceptions.

MR. McELHINNEY: But from whence came capital for all of these acquisitions. Were the collectors, the clients, in effect, the partners of the gallery, were they backers?

MR. BRUNO: No, no. No, no. Mr. Mayer made a fortune, and it was his money.

MR. McELHINNEY: I see.

MR. BRUNO: There were family partners at Staempfli. He had two brothers, brilliant. One was Edward who was a musician living in Berlin. And then a scientist, Robert. And they were involved with the initial financing of the gallery. And George himself, of course.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right, right. So why don't you tell me about the Manzu adventure?

MR. BRUNO: Well – I started working for Mr. Mayer the year before the gallery opened. And when that gallery opened, there was no other gallery like it in the United States. Frederick Kiesler was the architect. Of course he was a genius and very controversial. But of course he did Peggy Guggenheim's Art of the Century Gallery [The Art of This Century Gallery, 1942, New York]. And there are pictures of it. There was an island and a black moat that you had to cross over to get upstairs to the main gallery area. It was fantastic! Anyway, so I worked with Mr. Mayer in Greenwich at Old Mill Farm, a giant Tudor complex, in one wing. And he had already assembled a large collection of international art through the advice of several museum curators in Iceland or Sweden or Norway. And Africa, I think Morocco. And hence the name of the gallery, World House Galleries. And I don't know how old I was – I was 25, 26.

MR. McELHINNEY: This is after the Cuevas exhibition at Loeb?

MR. BRUNO: Maybe '61. Yes, yes. All of these dates we're discussing have to be confirmed. But basically we're within a few years of the event.

MR. McELHINNEY: I think what's more important to the interview is actually the content of – I mean the chronology. All of these things, you know, can be checked as facts.

MR. BRUNO: I lectured once at Cornell [Cornell University, Ithaca, NY]. Twenty-five years is not a lifetime. And now I can say, 58 years, you know –

MR. McELHINNEY: Is not a lifetime.

MR. BRUNO: – is not a lifetime.

MR. McELHINNEY: But in any case, there was this meeting. Frederick Kiesler often came to these meetings, as did Armand Bartos. And Mr. Mayer said, "I'd like your reaction to these photographs of a sculptor whose work I'm considering." And Frederick Kiesler looked at them. And I felt I was so far the youngest that I would wait until the other gentlemen spoke. He said to Mr. Mayer and to Armand Bartos and to me, "[in French]" And then Armand's was equally unenthusiastic. And I felt rather intimidated, but I thought they were superb. There were these majestic cardinals and fruit on a chair and busts of women. I said, "Mr. Mayer, I don't know who did these, but I would buy the entire contents of the studio." And basically, subsequently, on that advice, that's exactly what we did. And organized Manzu's first exhibition in Paris. And then I subsequently arranged a smaller exhibition in Washington, DC. But that was quite amazing.

MR. McELHINNEY: Where was the exhibition in Washington?

MR. BRUNO: Well, Janet Rubin ran the Obelisk Gallery in those days.

MR. McELHINNEY: Obelisk?

MR. BRUNO: I think that was the Obelisk, yes. And she has since died, and it was closed some years ago.

MR. McELHINNEY: Was that in Georgetown or in the Du Pont Circle area?

MR. BRUNO: Georgetown. And we collaborated a great deal when I was at Borgenicht, when she had the gallery there in Washington.

MR. McELHINNEY: Did you have a lot of dealings with other gallery owners around the country? I mean you spoke about work with Staempfli, Joan Brown. She also worked with –

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: – Charles Campbell in San Francisco.

MR. BRUNO: What's her name? There was a gallery in – I just visited her when I was in San Francisco last month. There was Joan Akrum whom I knew very well, was a houseguest. And she

died. If you had a list of San Francisco dealers out there, I could easily tell you which one.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, a lot of them I think have closed down, changed –

MR. BRUNO: But basically – And then we – let's see, if I'd had a list of these questions, I could have done some more research.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, the thing is, I think the nature of the conversation, the hopes are that a certain amount of spontaneity is going to jog loose information, that if we're both too practiced and too prepped, that we're going to end up with a lifeless discussion.

MR. BRUNO: Well, one dealer, a great deal of – buisness with, who shared our enthusiasm, was Claude Bernardin.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, sure.

MR. BRUNO: There's no question about that.

MR. McELHINNEY: Rue de Beaux Arts right near the school there, right?

MR. BRUNO: Right. And then there was this gallery – and Joan Akrum in Los Angeles. We did joint shows with her. And there's this – Walter Moos in Toronto.

MR. McELHINNEY: How do you spell that, Moos.

MR. BRUNO: M-O-O-S.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, Walter Moos.

MR. BRUNO: Walter Moos, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Did you deal at all with Dorothea Spire in Paris?

MR. BRUNO: I knew her.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes.

MR. BRUNO: George knew Denise Rene very well. And I knew Jim – Jim Spire I knew very well when he was in Chicago.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right. Chicago. Yes, I know the family. But it's interesting, the way that the art world's sort of become international. Some people actually have argued or have told me that their opinion was that really the New York art world, although it still remained a distinct thing in the fifties, that actually the New York art world started to go global in the thirties when [Adolf] Hitler scared everybody out of Europe, and they all came here. Is that a reasonable –?

MR. BRUNO: Yes. And, you know, in terms of Staempfli Gallery, I think that was the most international gallery in terms of the artists working in Europe, showing in New York, prior to the opening of Marlborough [Malborough Gallery, 1963, New York]. And I remember going to the Biennale [La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy] and then having this extended business trip through Europe, and meeting some of the gallery owners and many of the artists we represented. I had no idea how well known Staempfli was. I mean it was just amazing. I mean we represented Vjenceslav Richter, the Yugoslavian sculptor. [Josip] Tito was still in charge. It was just amazing. It put Staempfli Gallery in a new focus for me, getting this feedback.

MR. McELHINNEY: So working in a place like that, you must have had a sort of special perspective on the evolution of the art business from 1960 to 1989.

MR. BRUNO: Well, I made a list of the galleries that were in existence whose works or whose owners I respected in terms of the work that was being shown, and it was a much more idealistic world, much less commercial. I mean talk about idealism, I was thinking of what the gallery represented was a home for the artist, and I was responsible for making that a home with understanding and appreciation. And if there were sales, that was all to the good. In one year I remember at Borgenicht we sold one major picture of Milton [Avery]'s for $1500, and that was a

big sale. And Sally Avery was working with the *New York Times*, the *Sunday Magazine* section. And subsequently, I don't know how many years later, I saw her at a Museum of Modern Art spring garden party. And she came up to me, threw herself in my arms, and said, "Phillip! We've just sold an Avery in London for $100,000." And I said, "To a European?" And she said, "No, an American." And I said, "Where does he live?" And she said, "On Central Park South." I said, "You see? He would never buy that in New York."

MR. McELHINNEY: Isn't that funny! Well, this is why a lot of dealers who operate outside New York, they say that if you speak to, you know, the Denver dealers or the Chicago dealers or San Francisco dealers, they used to say: All of our buyers go to New York because they want the imprimatur of a New York sale.

MR. BRUNO: And the choice, too.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right, right.

MR. BRUNO: That's very valid. I mean as the work becomes more and more expensive and more difficult to find, your collector does want to see what is on the market.

MR. McELHINNEY: So you get more choices.

MR. BRUNO: But then I did so much traveling for Staempfli: San Francisco, Seattle, Des Moines. It was amazing. The most important trip in my life I took in 1949 when I was not yet 20, with my younger brother John. And he wasn't sure where he was going to college. And I was already in my freshman year at Columbia. And we drove from New York through the Middle West, South Dakota, Idaho, Montana, Washington, California, and New Mexico, visiting various universities, John being interviewed by the admissions director. And in every city I went to a museum when he might have played – went to a baseball game. And I had no idea on that trip how valuable that trip would be. That's when I first saw the Diego Rivera's at the Detroit Art Institute.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, yes, yes. Well, there is a lot of art off of this island, you know. There is a lot of art out there in the –

MR. BRUNO: We don't speak of it, those in the –

MR. McELHINNEY: No, in the United States, you know, the country across the river, that actually there is a lot of – there are quite a few wonders out there. But it's been observed by a number of people that now, or at least up until now, there's been a big push regionally to create museums or expand them.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, it's a big –

MR. BRUNO: Well, you know the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in New Mexico.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, that's a wonderful place.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes, I've been there. It's very well done. And of course you have right here, you have the Noguchi Museum [Long Island City, NY].

MR. McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. BRUNO: And you have the museums along the Hudson River, you know.

MR. McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Yes, a lot of, you know, Milwaukee [Wisconsin], Denver [Colorado] –

MR. BRUNO: Yes. Now you have the Clyfford Still Museum [Denver, CO].

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, which is interesting because he had nothing at all to do with Denver. Just simply that they came up with, you know, the money and agreed to the terms that the widow imposed upon the disposal of his work. So that's – I don't know what the timetable is for that. But

they just completed two years ago that wing designed by Daniel Libeskind. So in the sixties, as an art dealer in the 1960's, what was your relationship with artists like? How did you interact with them? How did you –?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I became very close to some.

MR. McELHINNEY: How did you conduct yourself?

MR. BRUNO: I mean not that I was adopted by Hans and Helen Muller; he exhibited with Borgenicht Gallery. But they had no children, and I sold very well his work. And I was having at least a meal a week at their studio. Leonard Baskin was a very close friend. And I must have had – I've got the gift to sell. Everyone acknowledges that. And I've enjoyed it, and I still probably would do so again. But to speak of Leonard Baskin, I commissioned a crucifixion by Leonard Baskin, which I carry in my wallet. And there's a big story behind that, an historic story. I've always been fascinated by that image, which is probably the most famous image in Western art. And the role religion has played in art and how positive it has been. And then, of course, how destructive other aspects of religion can be. And this drawing measures 26-1/4 by 20 inches. And it's signed "For Phillip, 1954."

MR. McELHINNEY: Is the original –?

MR. BRUNO: It's a fascinating life. I mean there's so many stories.

MR. McELHINNEY: Is the original hanging in your home now, in the collection?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I'll tell you. I'm glad you asked that question. When Leonard showed it to me – this was well before I was first married – I was shocked at the intensity of it. I still am, looking at this catalog. Anyway, it was hanging, Bob Kulick framed it. And I got to know the youngest bank dealer in the United States at that time – well, to simplify the story, the bank was in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, south of Pittsburgh. He became a very good client and friend. He had the largest – one of the largest – chess collections in the United States, and was just beginning to collect Contemporary art. And he came over for drinks one evening. And he said, "You know that's just a powerful, powerful drawing, Phillip. How can you live with it?" His name was [inaudible]. And I said, "Frankly, I can no longer live with it." And he said, "If you ever want to sell it, I'll buy it." And I said, "Well, if I sell it, it'll be just, you know, whatever the gallery asks for a picture of that size." I've got his name somewhere. Anyway, he bought it. And I hadn't heard from him for years. And my wife, Clare Henry, who's the art critic, and I were at an auction in Hudson. And she went downstairs. It was in a church, a deactivated church. She came up, and she said, "Phillip, between two pieces of plastic there is a drawing by Leonard Baskin signed to you." I said, "Clare, I don't believe it." Well, it was the drawing of Baskin's that I'd commissioned. Now how it got from the Uniontown, unframed; it became unmated, it became – and appeared at auction in Hudson.

MR. McELHINNEY: Hudson, New York.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Couple of hours north if here.

MR. BRUNO: We had a house just outside of Hudson in Columbiaville [New York]. So before it came up, I said, "Clare, how shall I bid on it?" And she said, "Well, where are you going to put it?" And she said, "You couldn't live with it. That's why you sold it. I can't live with it." So I said, "Well, I just can't let it go for a song." So I bid on it to protect it in terms of current price possibly. And I do regret not having bought it. Because if I had bought it, I would've given it in Bob West's memory at the seminary in Massachusetts. So I saw the person who bought it, but I wasn't actually going to identify myself as the former owner.

And then of course there was [Wolfgang and Anna] Kubach-Wilmsen, this husband and wife sculpture team.

MR. McELHINNEY: Kubach?

MR. BRUNO: Kubach-Wilmsen. I have it down here. And they specialized in these remarkable books in stone of various sizes. And occasionally a roll of paper or a newspaper. And they had an enormous success with us. And there were certain commissions of large books for libraries for outdoor installation. And in those days I attended all the fairs, you know, F.I.A.C [Paris art fair], Chicago Art Fair, the Carnegie International; that was before any of the other fairs existed. That was a major, must-see by art gallery owners and collectors. And I knew Gordon Washburn, the director, very well. And I remember driving Louise Nevelson and Martha Jackson in a Ford station wagon to Pittsburgh for the opening. Louise was a very good friend, and Martha Jackson I respected highly. In fact Clare and I were married in the Louise Nevelson Chapel [The Chaple of the Good Shepard] at St. Peter's Church [New York], on whose Arts and Architecture Committee – Board – I've served for over 20 years. And where I organized the Richard Lippold Exhibition. And also the Dale Chihuly show there. So it's – you can continue asking questions. I wish –

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, I think we've got to save a little –

[END OF DISC 2.]

MR. McELHINNEY: Would you – say anything.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, I'm glad to be back. This is my second experience with you.

MR. McELHINNEY: This is James McElhinney speaking with Phillip A. Bruno at the Offices of the Archives of American Art, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York, on the 21st of January 2009, at roughly three thirty-five in the afternoon. Welcome back.

MR. BRUNO: I'm glad to be back.

MR. McELHINNEY: Thank you. There's so much to discuss. Let's go back to Staempfli where you spent –

MR. BRUNO: Twenty-nine years.

MR. McELHINNEY: – close to three decades. And can you share some anecdotes about the artists with whom you worked, the artists whom you represented?

MR. BRUNO: Well, how I met George Staempfli involved the works of this young California painter, Joan Brown. And at World House I was involved with creating an exhibition of American artists whose works were being exhibited in the Brussels '58 Fair. And it was necessary to have a similar group of paintings that were for sale. We borrowed the original ones that were shown in Brussels. And Joan Brown was represented at that time by the Staempfli Gallery. So I called up as director of World House to speak to George Staempfli and to arrange a meeting to look at the Joan Brown paintings, to select one for the special '58 exhibition that was suggested by Charlotte Willard, then the art editor of *Look Magazine*.

And the gallery – Staempfli had opened maybe six or seven months before this call was made to quite a spectacular impression in the art world. So Staempfli was not even 50 years from the Carlyle Hotel at 47 East Seventy-seventh Street. So I met George Staempfli. And I had been one or two of his openings before but never spoke to him. And he was quite a distinguished-looking gentleman, 20 years older than I. And he had arranged, thoughtfully, to have all the Joan Brown paintings that the Staempfli Gallery had on view for me to select one for this Brussels '58 Fair.

And one thing led to the other. He was very polite, which I've always responded to. And subsequently he made a call and asked me to come by to discuss a possible situation that might be of interest, which I did. Which led to George offering me the position of co-director of the Staempfli Gallery.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who else was in the stable of the gallery at the time?

MR. BRUNO: Well, there was Harry Bertoia, his famous, legendary –

MR. McELHINNEY: Kinetics.

MR. BRUNO: No, that's George Rickey. Harry Bertoia –

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes.

MR. BRUNO: Well, that's true. Harry Bertoia did so –

MR. McELHINNEY: Sounding.

MR. BRUNO: Sounding sculptures, right, vertical. Insisting on metal rods that could be touched and activated to make sound. But I think in terms of movement I would consider George Rickey the classic example. But anyway –

MR. McELHINNEY: Or [Alexander] Calder.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, Calder, f course. So I got to know Harry Bertoia very, very well. I loved his bushes and his architectural sculptures. And went down once in the fall, once in the spring with a car to pick up small Bertoias. And another artist at Staempfli was the German Contemporary sculptor Fritz Koenig, whose studio was on a high plateau outside of Munich. And Fritz Koenig became a very, very close friends, and he was the sculptor that was commissioned to do the abstraction of that Atlas bronze in the plaza of the World Trade Center.

And of course one aspect of the opening, the crescendo of the opening of the Staempfli Gallery, was the first show that George organized of paintings by David Park, which was soon followed by recent paintings by Elmer Bischoff. Again, Joan Brown.

MR. McELHINNEY: So was the connection through her to the Bay Area, artists like Park and –

MR. BRUNO: No, George knew.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, he knew them already.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: [Richard] Diebenkorn.

MR. BRUNO: And Diebenkorn. We never represented Diebenkorn, but we were able to borrow works by Diebenkorn in conjunction with exhibitions of West Coast artists. Another fine artist whom I often visit is in Santa Barbara, was the collage artists, Bill Dole. And subsequent to my joining George, I was able to arrange a traveling Bill Dole exhibition.

MR. McELHINNEY: So were there a lot of exhibitions of the Bay Area artists? And how did that work? Was he really the first to exhibit these artists in New York?

MR. BRUNO: Yes. Well, Devon Korn had been shown before. But Staempfli Gallery became nationally known for showing West Coast artists. And of course that impact to these artists whose studios were on the West Coast having exhibitions in New York at such a well-known gallery was extraordinary. There were all kinds of fascinating events in terms of my visiting the West Coast.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, what was it like meeting with somebody like David Park?

MR. BRUNO: Well, it's interesting. I never knew him. I was in correspondence with David. But he was already ill, and he never could come to any of his exhibitions. And after his death, subsequently, with his estate arranged a works on paper show of David Park's. Elmer Bischoff I knew very well. And of course, as I mentioned, Bill Dole, Joan Brown. Actually, there was a small portrait in Joan Brown's studio of her son, maybe 18 inches by 12. Bob Kulick framed it. And I began to live with it. Then after my first son was born, I felt sort of divided between loving my real son and looking at this extraordinary image of Joan Brown's son. And I subsequently gave that Joan Brown to a university gallery.

MR. McELHINNEY: Which one?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, there have been so many gifts to so many museums, I don't recall. This goes back maybe 25 years ago, the gift.

MR. McELHINNEY: So –

MR. BRUNO: There's another artist.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, who's that?

MR. BRUNO: Well, another German artist is a husband-and-wife team. Kubach-Wilmsen. And they specialized in these extraordinary small and gigantic stone books made of various stones and precious stones, too. And people were fascinated by their execution, by their color, by their scale. And they were ideal for, let's say, a major stone book by this couple outside a library. And some were sold for that purpose.

MR. McELHINNEY: So just returning for a moment to the West Coast artists, were there any artists from Los Angeles or from the Northwest who were in the gallery as well? Was it –

MR. BRUNO: Well, Santa Barbara was probably the most north, and Los Angeles was the most south. We did have collaboration with Joan Akrum of Los Angeles. And she also became a very good friend.

MR. McELHINNEY: And how did that work out?

MR. BRUNO: Well, for one, if my memory is correct, she had an exhibition of Donati's work, Enrico Donati's work.

MR. McELHINNEY: Did you also have the exhibition here in New York?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes. We had several Donati exhibitions. We represented Enrico, whose studio was right here on Central Park South.

MR. McELHINNEY: Nice address.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. That was not only his address.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or his only address.

MR. BRUNO: No, no. There was another one at 953 Park and one in Connecticut.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who were among the collectors with whom you – for whom, with whom – you worked while you were at Staempfli?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, it's a long list of very distinguished –

MR. McELHINNEY: Who was memorable? And were there any who became –?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, well, yes. There were several of these famous collectors we were involved with advising me in my career. One certainly was Roy Neuberger, who befriended me and took an interest in my career when I was associated with the Weyhe Gallery and Bookstore. And he used to come to openings. And one friendship led to a more complex relationship, and I felt at one point sort of almost adopted. And I remember visiting Roy and his wife at their home off Fifth Avenue. And particularly in the dining room there was one major work after the other: Edward Hopper, [Rufino] Tamayo, [Lyonel] Feininger. They were just not examples; they were superb examples. And at one point I was offered to join Grace Borgenicht in starting her new gallery on Fifty-seventh Street. And I did go to Roy Neuberger and asked him his advice. And he suggested that after almost a year at the Weyhe Gallery – and it was a famous art book store – that career-wise this would be very challenging, to get really into an exclusive gallery. And at that point it was an exclusive gallery for Contemporary American art.

MR. McELHINNEY: How long were you friends with the Neubergers?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, I still consider Roy a friend. One evening I'll never forget is when Roy asked me to join him to go to Milton Avery's studio and "help" him select some paintings for his collection. And I don't know, I was 21, and that was quite an invitation and a sign of respect, I guess, for my young professionalism and taste. And Roy and I went to the Avery studio and home –

it was a floor through I think on the third floor in the West Village. And I think at that time, by the time we left, Roy and I had selected ten Averys for his collection. And there were repercussions to that purchase. Because Roy eventually assembled a large collection and kept a good many of the Averys. But did give some Averys at that time to museums, which, of course, eliminated those museums that received these Averys from buying them.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, I see. So that they might have acquired the Averys through a purchase, whereas they didn't have to.

MR. BRUNO: But aside from the artists I dealt with at the Staempfli, I do remember visiting Calder's studio in Connecticut.

MR. McELHINNEY: Roxbury, Connecticut.

MR. BRUNO: Right. And having an incredible meeting with Jackson Pollock and his wife out on the Island, an experience, I'll never, you know, forget. And that was arranged through Charlotte Willard who was then editor of Look Magazine. A visit to David Smith at Bolton Landing [New York]. Tingley also was at Staempfli. And when I met George, the entire gallery on the second floor was open for exhibitions. And when George said, you know, "Phillip, would you really like to join me?" I said, "George, I think I really would." But I said, "Where will I be? Where's my desk?" He said, "To the left where the Tingley show is." So the gallery, in terms of exhibition space for art and sculpture for all kinds, was reduced by one room. And that room was my office.

MR. McELHINNEY: Tell me a little about going to see David Smith up at Lake George. How as that? What year was that?

MR. BRUNO: Well, you know, so many of these artists were at least a generation older. I had already developed a great respect for their creativity, their individuality, and I was very humbled by being involved with their careers; and, idealistically, sensing I could be part of their success in terms of arranging to place their works in collections, selling their works, and helping them financially in their careers.

MR. McELHINNEY: No, but I was really asking more about the interaction with the man himself and –

MR. BRUNO: Well, the work –

MR. McELHINNEY: – his workspace and, you know, the environment where he was.

MR. BRUNO: Well, you know, so many of those David Smith sculptures were out of doors.

MR. McELHINNEY: Still are.

MR. BRUNO: I'm glad to know that. [Laughs] So, you know, seeing the work of an artist in a New York gallery, particularly if part of that production involves outdoor sculpture, is very different from actually seeing outdoor sculpture in an out-of-door setting. So my impression of David Smith's work was really changed by that visit to his studio up there. To commentate on his personality, you know, it was a purely David Smith experience in terms of his sculpture. And walking around his acreage and his pointing out the sculptures was an extraordinary tour.

I remember meeting [Henri] Matisse, and that was an extraordinary experience. And that's another – can I tell you that story?

MR. McELHINNEY: Sure.

MR. BRUNO: When I was 21 – And I had read a great deal and seen whatever Matisse exhibitions were available, particularly the one in the Philadelphia Museum in the early fifties. An uncle – distinguished doctor, Dr. Alexander Bruno, who lived in Paris, and I was visiting Paris when I was like 20. And I was naïve enough, really naïve, to think I could meet Matisse and inspire him to do a portrait of Phillip A. Bruno. Well, the meeting was arranged. I'd written a letter in French explaining that I'd majored in the history of painting and architecture, and I asked to meet Matisse in Paris at

his home. And I had a Brooks Brothers suit, salt-and-pepper suit, gray with sort of spotted dark and light blue, and I had a blue shirt, and carefully selected a black tie with orange and blue stripes with a [inaudible]. And naively I thought Phillip was going to inspire a portrait by Matisse.

I waited in the anteroom for about a half hour, and I saw men coming out of the apartment carrying bolts of, I gathered, bolts of silk of different colors. It was later explained that Matisse had been ordering pajamas. So here I was, 20, and Matisse was, I don't know, 50. And we had this conversation. [Laughs] And I noticed that Matisse was not reacting to this image of this well-dressed young American. Nor was he suggesting I take off my jacket or my tie – or standing or sitting anywhere. And I immodestly asked Matisse what was wrong. And he explained to me very thoughtfully and gently that the contours of a male, either dressed or undressed, never appealed to him. So that was the end of my Matisse portrait.

But I did visit Matisse Chapel, Chapel de Vence. And at that time, in the early fifties, to see it, you had to go to Mass in the very early morning. And I did. And it was one of those memorable experiences you just don't forget, regardless of your religious background. His interpretation of the images and the color of the stained glass were just terribly moving. And to help pay for this chapel, Matisse had done two lithographs, one of the head of the Virgin, and the second of the Virgin and Child, black on paper. And at that time I did acquire those two lithographs for my graphic collection.

But, you know, there were visits to [Mark] Rothko's studio. Claudio Bravo had his first show at Staempfli. It was a sellout. Absolutely a sellout that night. In fact, George would come to me and say, "I've just sold that painting." And I said, "George, I've just put a star on it. You can't sell it." It was amazing. Then Lopez Garcia was introduced to the American art-collecting world by Staempfli Gallery.

MR. McELHINNEY: He later exhibited at Marlborough.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. And so did Claudio Bravo.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right.

MR. BRUNO: And that was very injurious to the gallery. I mean these two artists, I sold most of their work. Financially it was a great loss, which is understandable. But that always happens. Certain galleries are known for introducing talent, very often not being that gifted in terms of sales. Other galleries have a reputation of being great sales sources and more capital and can deliver exposure which artists need. So there is this motion or movement from one gallery to the other. And as the artist moves up, the gallery he leaves usually suffers economically; there's no question about that. But you can't blame them.

MR. McELHINNEY: At Staempfli Gallery when you worked there, what kind of operation was it? Was there a preparator, was there a bookkeeper, was there a receptionist?

MR. BRUNO: There was basically four of us. George Staempfli and his secretary and myself and my secretary. What was really remarkable – and I say so – was the gallery's international position within a year or it opened. It was the most international gallery, I think, in New York at the time. There were galleries like Pierre Matisse [The Pierre Matisse Gallery, 1931, New York], of course, but that was mostly European; whereas Staempfli shows artists from England, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Belgium.

MR. McELHINNEY: And of the West Coast.

MR. BRUNO: And of course the West Coast. And other artists, American artists.

MR. McELHINNEY: Who were among the artists from New York who showed there?

MR. BRUNO: From the City of New York itself?

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes. Or from the local orbit. From here to Woodstock or from here to East

Hampton or from here to the Delaware Valley.

MR. BRUNO: I'll have to pass on that. Nothing comes. No name comes immediately to mind. Well, of course, Edwin Dickinson.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right.

MR. BRUNO: No, that was at World House.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, okay. Who were, apart from –

MR. BRUNO: Oh, [inaudible].

MR. McELHINNEY: – you know the Neubergers –

MR. BRUNO: Duncan Phillips.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right, from Washington.

MR. BRUNO: Someone I admired very, very much and respected enormously. And I arranged a major exhibition very early of Morandi's [Giorgio Morandi] work. And had notified Mr. Phillips of its forthcoming opening. And he arranged to visit World House, and I had arranged on the floor the entire Morandi painting collection and graphic collection. And I was really very pleased. And Mr. Phillips acquired two of those Morandi paintings. I at one time had a Morandi watercolor in my collection and a drawing.

But another experience of Mr. Phillips was one of the first group shows at the Grace Borgenicht Gallery was helped to be organized by Jimmy Ernst, Max Ernst's son. And I was asked to go to [Willem] de Kooning's studio to pick out a painting for this exhibition. I forget the theme that Jimmy picked out for it. And that was when there was very little demand for de Kooning's work, and it was south of Union Square, the studio. And I had picked a work on paper maybe 22 by 34. And it was in the show, and it wasn't sold. And I was going to buy it, I think, from I don't know, 175 or 250 net to me. And a very good friend of mine who collected Contemporary Abstract art of the period, pointed out this – in the lower left-hand section – this Indian head. And I hadn't seen this Indian head. And I felt either a painting is Abstract or semi-Abstract. But if it's Abstract, there should be nothing figurative that floats to the surface. So based on this image that was pointed out to me, I didn't buy it. And it was returned to de Kooning.

On one of my subsequent visits to the Phillips Gallery – and I always let Mr. Phillips know I was coming – I walked into his office. Behind his desk hanging on the wall was the De Kooning I did not buy. Well, I had shivers up and down my spine. I don't think I broke out in a cold sweat, but it was pretty traumatic. And I said to Mr. Phillips, "Mr. Phillips, that's not your de Kooning. That's mine." And he was very amused at that story.

MR. McELHINNEY: Interesting.

MR. BRUNO: Every time I see it reproduced in a book, it recalls that event. And another major acquisition that Mr. Phillips made while I was the director of World House was these great cliffs in Normandy that is I think the key [Claude] Monet in the Phillips Collection.

MR. McELHINNEY: It's interesting, what you're saying about the de Kooning because I know a lot of people see him as an Abstract painter. But in fact when I had a three-hour conversation with him when I was an art student and had the temerity, you know, to corner him for an afternoon, he never referred to anything as Abstract. He was always talking about the women or the landscapes or the still-lifes. He was always speaking in terms of imagery. And he never spoke in, you know, the theoretical sense. He was always just talking about making pictures. So I know what you mean. You're talking about these ink transfers off of paper that he used to use to blot the surface of the paintings at times. Or he would cut out like a collage element and attach it to the painting, and then paint over it and peel it off. There were a number of strategies that he used like that. And at times, if he left, you know, the newspaper stuck to the paint, and he came to peel it off, sometimes it would

leave some of the printer's ink in the paint surface. So I think that's what the Indian head probably was. What about, apart from the Neubergers, who were other notable collectors?

MR. BRUNO: Well, David North Krieger was a very good friend, even before Philip Johnson built his embassy home. And he acquired several works by the West Coast artists, including Elmer Bischoff and David Park. And on one of my visits to Washington, he asked me for dinner at his home. And I was very flattered, and it turned out that at the dinner was his wife, of course, and two of his children, grown. And it was a Jewish holiday. I thought at first I was, you know, intruding. But I was made very much at home. And here was this Jewish holiday. It was an important one, I gather. And in the room were Monet paintings. It was just a marvelous viewing. It was almost – I'm being facetious – a religious experience to be that intimately invited to this event and then to be surrounded by such extraordinary Monet's.

But I'm trying to remember, and I have such a list of clients and people whose careers I've been involved with. In between being the American director of the Lana [inaudible] Foundation and being asked to head the World House Galleries, I was at the Parke-Bernet pre-auction viewing looking at pictures very carefully – I was maybe 24, 25 – when a man came up to me and said, "I've never seen anyone looking so carefully at paintings." He asked me what I thought of what we were both seeing. And I told him. He said, "What are you doing for dinner, Phillip?" By that time. And I said, "Well, I'm free." And he said, "I'd like to talk to you because I collect." And one event led to the other, and I said, "Well, you know, this dinner's been very, very pleasant. If you'd like a drink, why don't you come and see what I've done very modestly." I think the gentlemen's name was Boris Leavitt from Uniontown.

Well, he came over and saw my collection. And he said, "Phillip, I will buy any two paintings you would like for your own collection." I said, "Really!?" He said, "Absolutely." I said, "Alright. I'll meet you tomorrow at ten o'clock at the Sidney Janis Gallery. And I will select a Jackson Pollock painting that I would like to own even if I don't have the wall space. And one of the great shredded de Kooning's, one of which is now in the Guggenheim [Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City]. So we met. And I selected a giant Pollock, oh, maybe four by seven feet. And a De Kooning ‘Shredded Woman'. I call them ‘shredded women' because they are there, and then they disappear almost. And I didn't have a job at that time. Boris Leavitt bought them for a combined price of $5,000. I received a check for $500 from Sydney Janis. Subsequently, the Pollock, I think, was sold for 12 million, and the De Kooning I think for 30 million. It was just amazing. And the De Kooning was on loan for years at the National Gallery [National Gallery of Art] in Washington [DC]. And I only regret that I didn't think of asking Boris Leavitt to sign a little document saying that in the event of the sale of either or both paintings, Phillip Bruno or his estate is to receive 10 percent. But then, of course, you know, you would buy a [Alberto] Giacometti at Pierre Matisse, and he'd given you a Giacometti drawing. The market was so little and fashion was not part of it. People who bought art loved what they were buying. And that's changed so much.

MR. McELHINNEY: How do you think?

MR. BRUNO: How it's changed?

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, how could you characterize that?

MR. BRUNO: It's gotten to be pure merchandise. It's limited editions used to be related to graphic works. Today limited editions are made by Chanel. Limited editions are scarves made to order.

MR. McELHINNEY: Sean John perfume.

MR. BRUNO: It's sad, but in a sense the art world is no longer an exclusive experience for the well-educated or the wealthy. It's become part of a democratic learning experience beginning in grammar school.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, do you think the kids in grammar school actually learn about art?

MR. BRUNO: Well, hopefully, if they have good teachers, they do. At least hopefully that they're

taken to museums.

MR. McELHINNEY: Here's hoping.

MR. BRUNO: Here's hoping.

MR. McELHINNEY: No, I've heard a lot of comments from other dealers whom I've interviewed regarding, you know, the fashionable art world at least being overtaken by expensive kitsch and a lot of money-driven activity, and not aesthetic appreciation, you know, the delectation of fine works of art. But rather where art was once held up as a bulwark against bad taste, now bad taste has become, you know, the norm and expensive.

MR. BRUNO: I wouldn't say no taste matters.

MR. McELHINNEY: No.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. I mean that's an exaggeration. But in terms of collectors, there was one, oh, there have been several fascinating in terms of – it was Chauncey Waddell. And Chauncey came from a very aristocratic background and made a great deal of money in investments. And when he was married, the wedding took place at the Pan-American Union, and the president at the time was there. And Chauncey Waddell created a collection – and this has such significance in terms of the extraordinary Obama [Barack Obama] event of yesterday – Chauncey Waddell created a collection of Contemporary American art, primarily of paintings, to be shown and circulated in museums in the South closed to blacks. And that was an inspired collection. And his son Dick [Richard Waddell], whom I knew quite well, opened his own gallery on West 57th Street some years later.

MR. McELHINNEY: That's an interesting question. But let's say in 1955, would an African-American be allowed into a gallery, an art gallery?

MR. BRUNO: Here in New York?

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, I think so. I mean to my knowledge there was no restriction. Several were shown at the ACA Gallery [American Contemporary Art Gallery, 1932, New York]. And they were not shown because they were black; they were shown because Al Lerner and the co-director were interested in their art. And so was Duncan Phillips. The Modern Museum (The Museum of Modern Art, MoMA, New York] and the Phillips [The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC] own half and half of this extraordinary collection by this well-known black artist whose name doesn't come to the surface.

MR. McELHINNEY: Bearden? Lawrence?

MR. BRUNO: Maybe Bearden.

MR. McELHINNEY: Romare Bearden.

MR. BRUNO: Romare Bearden, yes. He did that extraordinary cycle of the Afro-American migration north into American industrial centers after the First World War, and continuing into the twenties and thirties.

MR. McELHINNEY: So as you worked at Staempfli all of those years, how did you see the art world changing over that period of 29 years? What –

MR. BRUNO: It became much more competitive, I think less idealistic. Money played more of a role. People who had the money to buy had less time to really look at art. When I started out in the early fifties, people went to galleries, and they had time to look. Today you have art advisors, some of whom are paid an annual fee by the collector. Some other art advisors get a commission from the gallery are not paid by the collector. I preferred working with those art consultants who were paid on an annual basis so they had no specific interest in any sales they were inclined to make.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right, in a particular piece being sold. They were just retained as a

consulting resource. Well, how did these changes evidence themselves in the everyday operations of the gallery? Were you –?

MR. BRUNO: Well, the auction houses became more important and more and more competitive.

MR. BRUNO: Their catalogs became almost collector items, encyclopedic really, and very well researched. And then, of course, they arranged these dinners for these potential clients which were very well organized, very flattering. So that you had someone from Dallas coming to a dinner organized by Sotheby's, who would meet another collector from Seattle. Just that kind of national meeting to look at art prior to an auction encouraged them to buy. And they didn't have to visit galleries before. They could just come to New York. They had the catalogs in advance. They had these dinners. And the galleries began to feel this intrusion in their field. And of course when Andre Emmerich, whom I knew very well, closed his gallery and, in a sense – I don't know if it technically took place – but merged with Sotheby's, Sotheby's at one point had a gallery right on Fifty-seventh Street. And it caused a shockwave, a great deal of resentment. I mean auction houses were becoming, you know, monopolistic. And they did a very good job; there's no question about how they exhibited their works internationally to touch potential clients in Taiwan or wherever.

MR. McELHINNEY: Hong Kong, Singapore.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Recently in the papers there was an article that stated that 60 employees were laid off by Christie's – I think that's the number; I'm not sure. But what do you see happening in the future with the current economic crisis? You were there for the '87 crisis.

MR. BRUNO: Well, I just, you know, I don't think anyone can anticipate just how bankrupt the capitalistic system is today. I mean without these billions of dollars already given, some of the great names of American banking would exist anymore. I hope no galleries close. I think some will. With these promises, guaranteed promises, to collectors that Christie's and Sotheby's have made, that certainly is over. The cutting back is just beginning. It's very, very serious.

[END OF DISC 3.]

MR. BRUNO: In 1963, while co-director of the Staempfli Gallery, I had known a collector in Detroit quite well. And the Hudson Company was a great department store; it was equal to let's say Macy's but in Detroit. And I was asked to become the director and organize the J.L. Hudson Art Gallery in Detroit. And the major board of that company wanted to touch a new audience and create a new image for this department store. And they wanted to create as fine a gallery, Contemporary gallery, as could be organized. And I was very flattered. I had – took breakfast out at 30,000 feet, and lunch and dinner at 32,000 feet back for several months. And organized the first exhibition and the first two years of exhibitions for the J.L. Hudson Company. And the first exhibition was a memorial exhibition dedicated to [William R.] Dr. Valentiner, who had previously been the director of the Detroit Art Institute. And under his directorship, the museum was the first to buy a Matisse painting. And as it turns out – or as it turned out – his daughter, Dr. Valentiner's daughter who was a poet, met Harry Bertoia when they were both at this famous art school in Detroit, and they subsequently married.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, the Art Institute, there was, I think, a school associated with the museum.

MR. BRUNO: But in any case, that was sort of the last gasp – the last creative gasp – to integrate and create a new image for a major company, certainly in Detroit. And years later, that building was blown up – I mean purposely – for real estate development.

MR. McELHINNEY: Just razed.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. It was on national television.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, as I recall, there was –

MR. BRUNO: Louise Smith was another. Morton D. May. I mean it's an endless – do you want a quick story about Morton D. May?

MR. McELHINNEY: Sure.

MR. BRUNO: Well, of course, he was a great client of Curt Valentin and a great enthusiast of German Expressionism. And one of the great businessmen in department store history. I mean the May Department Store. In any case, he was very interested in clay. So was Mies van der Rohe, who was another client. But that's another story. So there was a painting at Staempfli of a sailboat executed in a mixed medium on sort of a canvas-like surface. It was quite rough, the surface. And Morton said, "Why don't you fly out and stay overnight and bring it with you?" So I flew out first class with the clay painting in a Grosso [Grosso Art Packers, Hackensack, NJ]-packed package. And that package paid first class.

So we arrived in St. Louis, and I was met at the airport by Mr. May. And subsequently over dinner he looked at it very, very carefully. And he said, "Phillip, you're going back alone." And the painting stayed in St. Louis at the May home. And he said, "As a souvenir, why don't you pick something out of my Oceanic Pre-Columbian Collection? Not too big, but not too small." [Laughs] I picked a marvelous head, polychrome head, which I still have, as a souvenir of this flight to St. Louis with the clay. Leonard Lauder I knew very well – still do – and [inaudible]. Seward Johnson, founder of Grounds for Sculpture – that's another story – in Bronze, full-scale in bronze, when he reinterpreted in his own way [Auguste] Renoir's Boating Party [Luncheon of the Boating Party, 1881].

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, he's – I think we spoke about him the last time. He's well known for these genre figures, you know, the man hailing a taxi on an urban curbside. Or schoolchildren. Often pedestrians.

MR. BRUNO: Right. Alice Kaplan was a very good one, and I enjoyed her collection very much. She bought a major Claudio Bravo from his first show, and I often enjoyed my visits to her apartment. Louise Smith, another grand lady of collecting. I'm not sure if I told you that story about Giacometti?

MR. McELHINNEY: I don't believe so.

MR. BRUNO: Well, I drove Martha Jackson and Louise Nevelson to the Carnegie International. And during the evening Louise Smith asked me if I could buy, what I could buy for my own collection. I was earning very little. I mean you don't go into the art gallery business unless you have enough capital. And if you don't, you earn your livelihood with a base salary – and in some cases not even that – plus your commissions. And I said, "Louise, if you're really sincere, and I know you are, it's the Walking Man [1960] by Giacometti. And she said, "Are you absolutely certain?" I said, "Yes, I'm absolutely certain." And she said, "Alright. I'll buy it." And we both knew the price was $26,000. You know it was almost life size. And she said, "I'm calling Pierre Matisse and leaving a message tonight." And Louise did buy that Walking Man.

And in her collection was a still life of a Georges Braque maybe three and a half wide and six feet. And over cocktails one evening, I said, "Louise, you know, I have the Jacques Villon etching of your painting." And she said, "I didn't know he had done one." And I said, "Oh, absolutely." Subsequently Louise gave that painting to the Metropolitan. And she said, "Do you think you could find an etching of my Braque? And I'll buy it." And I said, "Yes, I will, and there will be no commission involved." And I did locate the Jacques Villon etching, which she subsequently did buy and placed in her country home. And Jacques Villon's studio I did visit, too, at the time I visited Matisse. Would've been interested in that story. I still have that etching.

MR. McELHINNEY: We were speaking last time, and you told me that you had sneaked into the Barnes Foundation.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: How did that play out? Because there's a story about Sir Kenneth Clarke

being tossed out when it was learned he was an art historian.

MR. BRUNO: I sort of feel guilty about that. But I was determined to see that collection. And I think I was at Columbia living in Livingston Hall, 10-02. And I decided what the hell, do it! So I wrote as though I were a bus driver, I think. And it worked. And I did see the Barnes Collection, and I've never forgotten it.

MR. McELHINNEY: Did you have to effect a Jackie Gleason accent or something?

MR. BRUNO: [Laughs] No, I didn't drive up in a bus.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or have to wear a round cap and a –

MR. BRUNO: But I really couldn't believe it. I mean you – in a sense I'm sorry that the collection will be reinstalled in a new building downtown in Philadelphia because Barnes stamped that collection and his involvement in an extraordinary way. But these things happen. Oh, there's another collector whose name – this really brings me more up to date to Marlborough.

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay.

MR. BRUNO: His name is James Dyke. And he collects only drawings. He lives in Little Rock [Arkansas]. I never met him. But we had this correspondence, particularly about Marlborough artists who do superb drawings, drawings that are as significant as their paintings. And over the years – and I was 18 years almost at Marlborough – James Dyke acquired some superb drawings which I think eventually will be given to the Little Rock – the Arkansas Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, the Arkansas Art Center is known for its advocacy of drawing.

MR. BRUNO: Well, I knew the former director very well – I think his name is on this list – who had been the director for 25 years, and whose intuitive awareness of drawing helped build that collection. And he was an advisor to James Dyke. So I always wrote them simultaneously. And when I wrote James Dyke about my retirement, he said that not having ever seen me or having met me, he said, "Oh, Phillip, you're much too young to do that."

MR. McELHINNEY: When did you retire at Marlborough?

MR. BRUNO: Two years ago, January 18th.

MR. McELHINNEY: What had been your job there?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I was a director there.

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay.

MR. BRUNO: Organizing exhibitions.

MR. McELHINNEY: So you were director of –

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: That must have been extremely interesting because that's a gallery that has a lot of international –

MR. BRUNO: Right.

MR. McELHINNEY: – branches. And so were you the overall head of the organization, or were your just –?

MR. BRUNO: I was one of the directors.

MR. McELHINNEY: So you were the New York station chief as it were.

MR. BRUNO: Well, one of them. I mean –

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay.

MR. BRUNO: – it was quite international. But I was very careful about accepting – leaving – Staempfli to go to Marlborough. That's another story.

MR. McELHINNEY: That was in '89 when you did that?

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY; Okay.

MR. BRUNO: That working internationally for the Staempfli Gallery gave me a wonderful ground experience to work internationally with the Marlborough artists. But I had much more freedom at Staempfli. I did a great deal of what Pierre does so brilliantly at Marlborough. I did an enormous amount of traveling for Staempfli.

MR. McELHINNEY: Smaller gallery. I guess you could have – it was, I guess, the image of Marlborough is much more corporate, you know, the big –

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: – operation, international operation.

MR. BRUNO: Right.

MR. McELHINNEY: And of course before your arrival, there were all sorts of scandals that had attached themselves to the estate of Mark Rothko and how that was disposed of, etc.

MR. BRUNO: Well, that was a terrible scandal.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right.

MR. BRUNO: If that situation had occurred, I never would have joined the gallery at that time. But I did have very good advice about joining Marlborough. And I remember Pierre [Levai], who is a very gifted businessman, extraordinary negotiator, works very well with his artists and clients, during these preliminary conversations took me to lunch. And when we were discussing my joining the gallery, he said, "Well, if you do, what will George think? I mean Claudio Bravo left Marlborough – I mean left Staempfli for Marlborough." I told you Antonio Lopez Garcia left Staempfli for Marlborough. And now Phillip Bruno is leaving.

MR. McELHINNEY: Did any artists accompany you out of Staempfli to Marlborough?

MR. BRUNO: No. No, there was no question of that.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or did they come a couple of years later once you'd established yourself?

MR. BRUNO: No, because I helped George. These conversations with Pierre Levai occurred almost simultaneously when I was helping George Staempfli move Staempfli from 47 East 77 Street to West Broadway. And I stayed on with George to establish the new location. And I enjoyed those months in old SoHo. It was like being in Europe.

MR. McELHINNEY: What was the address, the street address, do you recall?

MR. BRUNO: West Broadway. It was up from OK Harris. No, but it's easy enough – it's easy to check.

MR. McELHINNEY: So it was on West Broadway.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes. On the second floor. And Paula Cooper had left and started down there. She was the first, I think. And then OK Harris.

MR. McELHINNEY: Ivan Karp.

MR. BRUNO: Ivan Karp, whom I knew very well. And then, of course, there was that famous building across from where we were with Leo Castelli and –

MR. McELHINNEY: It had a number, right, 421?

MR. BRUNO: Four twenty or something.

MR. McELHINNEY: Four twenty, yes.

MR. BRUNO: On Broadway. But that –

MR. McELHINNEY: John Weber was in there, I think, right?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I knew him that well. But there was – And Ileana [Sonnabend] was there. [inaudible] was in the same building. But it was a different SoHo.

MR. McELHINNEY: How do you mean? How would you characterize it?

MR. BRUNO: Well, when I first visited SoHo, Claudio Bravo had rented a studio there and installed temporary air-conditioning because he was going to occupy it that summer. And I think there was one restaurant. And after five-thirty in the winter it was dark. So there was nothing to do. Sort of almost threatening. And then in its heyday, it was gallery, gallery, gallery. And no shopping that takes place today like it does there.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, it's completely changed.

MR. BRUNO: I mean all the Fifth Avenue stores have branches down there. Some of the great stores from Europe have branches in SoHo. And today you go down to SoHo, and, you know, it's one shop after the other, one well-known name after the other, and any number of restaurants you can select from.

MR. McELHINNEY: So even if you were to go west over to Thompson Street, Sullivan Street, that's now packed with restaurants –

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: That whole area was just –

MR. BRUNO: Not really serving food.

MR. McELHINNEY: No. There were a couple of bars like Fanelli's which was –

MR. BRUNO: Yes, still is.

MR. McELHINNEY: Spaghetti and beer basically.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, but what an interior.

MR. McELHINNEY: Great interior. Unchanged.

MR. BRUNO: But our culture is becoming, over the decades, more and more commercial. There's no question about it. And the question of entertainment. I've been saying that for years, that the American culture has become one of entertainment. And it pays – or it did pay until recently – enormous dividends. And it's a type of culture of entertainment that we've brilliantly exported. Not much to our credit, I'm afraid.

MR. McELHINNEY: I'll get rid of the mike in a minute. The SoHo art scene in hindsight, one may say, was fueled in part by a real estate boom there. People like Leo Castelli and Ivan Karp and Louis Meisel and others got involved. A lot of people got involved in –

MR. BRUNO: Oh, sure.

MR. McELHINNEY: – speculating on, you know, the old cast-iron buildings that housed lofts and on the ground floor occasionally galleries. Were any of the galleries that you were ever involved in sort of moonlighting in other industries like entertainment? I guess what jogged my mind was you were speaking about entertainment, and there are some links between galleries and Hollywood and Broadway or, you know, the music business. And SoHo, I guess, historically it's safe to say that an aspect of that phenomenon was art dealers moonlighting in real estate. I think the same thing was hoped for in Chelsea. I don't believe it happened in exactly the way everybody hoped. But were you

involved in a gallery that –?

MR. BRUNO: No. In terms of the real estate aspects, I can't be of much information.

MR. McELHINNEY: I'm just curious.

MR. BRUNO: I mean one reason that Staempfli moved to SoHo was that we were facing a rent increase of a substantial nature where we were.

MR. McELHINNEY: Same old story. [Laughs]

MR. BRUNO: Same old story. And we looked very carefully, I remember, with George going to spaces that were available on 57th Street. And then we felt that it would be a matter of time before those rents went up.

MR. McELHINNEY: As they did.

MR. BRUNO: And they did. And that was one reason we decided to hopefully avert that by moving to SoHo, where rent increases would be not immediate or not within the foreseeable future.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, the uptown spaces were also much, much smaller and much, much more intimate. And I even observed in the last year that some well-established galleries, like Graham Gallery has moved out of their storefront –

MR. BRUNO: Oh, have they? Have you been to their new one?

MR. McELHINNEY: – on Madison Avenue. Yes, and it's in an upper story.

MR. BRUNO: Very far uptown.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, exactly. So it's a cost-saving move, I guess.

MR. BRUNO: Well, yes, and of course it's going to affect what kind of sculpture they show.

MR. McELHINNEY: Whoa! Yes.

MR. BRUNO: Because the access is just a small elevator. I mean that's –

MR. McELHINNEY: Very small.

MR. BRUNO: We didn't end up when we moved from – Staempfli moved – from the East Side down to SoHo, in a large space like Ivan Karp or Paula Cooper. It was more or less the equivalent of the same space we had on 77th Street.

MR. McELHINNEY: Marlborough's one of the only galleries, I guess, on that strip, on the 57th Street, you know, strip, with the Fuller Building [41 East 57th Street, New York] at one end and Carnegie Hall at the other, the Art Students League at the other, that really had big spaces. I guess you could say Pace[Pace Prints, 32 East 57th Street, New York], too. But really having a big, huge wide-open space with a courtyard, with an outdoor courtyard.

MR. BRUNO: A terrace, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: A terrace. And I guess that SoHo afforded much bigger – Pardon me, I'm going to sneeze.

MR. BRUNO: Go ahead. I'm glad I'm not –

MR. McELHINNEY: Excuse me. Was that all of a sudden here were these big high-ceilinged spaces with columns, cast-iron fronts, freight elevators, and loading docks. And you could exhibit Richard Serra or whoever you wanted. So that changed – would you say that that changed the way that art was – well, by changing how art was exhibited, would you say that the galleries moving into these bigger spaces led to the creation of other kinds of artwork?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I think these new spaces enabled primarily sculptors –

MR. McELHINNEY: Right.

MR. BRUNO: – to exhibit their works in New York.

MR. McELHINNEY: Indoors.

MR. BRUNO: Indoors. Where their works were still in their large studios wherever they may be working. Or were out of doors. And of course exhibiting indoors was a wonderful way of selling these "outdoor sculptures" indoors for placement out of doors again.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, because you could exhibit them all year long and in any kind of weather because it was indoors.

MR. BRUNO: Well, you could see them easily rather than going to Connecticut or New Jersey.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right, right. Or the [Gary A.] Lippincott or the [David] O. Johnson sculpture fields or the atelier. Who were among the sculptors you represented at Staempfli? Were there any?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes. There was George Rickey.

MR. McELHINNEY: Okay. Harry Bertoia.

MR. BRUNO: Harry Bertoia. Kubach-Wilmsen. Fritz Koenig. Vjenceslav Richter from Yugoslavia.

MR. McELHINNEY: And did the nature of their artwork change when you moved downtown?

MR. BRUNO: Well, I was just downtown with George I think for a period of maybe six months. And Rickey's work didn't change. I mean it was so consistent. And Kubach-Wilmsen. No, I don't think the change of space in any way affected their work.

MR. McELHINNEY: I don't know if we explored this in our last conversation. I don't recall asking the question exactly the way I'm about to. But what was the source of Staempfli's startup capital? Did he have –?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, you asked me. It was his three brothers.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, his three brothers, that's right.

MR. BRUNO: And his wife.

MR. McELHINNEY: And his wife.

MR. BRUNO: And Emily Staempfli –

MR. McELHINNEY: And was there an industry involved? Or was it just –?

MR. BRUNO: What do you mean industry?

MR. McELHINNEY: Family money. Were the Staempflis –

MR. BRUNO: Well, George's father headed a many-generation printing company.

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, a printing company. Okay.

MR. BRUNO: A famous one, art catalogs. And they printed the Swiss Railroad guide. It was a very famous name.

MR. McELHINNEY: Like high-end printing?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, very much so, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Like Routledge [Routledge Printing, New York] or –

MR. BRUNO: And the Staempfli Press in Bern was European known and printed our catalogs, Staempfli Gallery catalogs.

MR. McELHINNEY: And continue to, yes.

MR. BRUNO: And continue to. And Kathleen Hayden and George designed the catalogs together.

That was one of George's talents, too, besides drawing. We had these – legendary is too strong a word – I would say pioneering art of drawing exhibitions. And they created a great deal of interest. Very few galleries were "promoting" drawings, and Staempfli Gallery did. George could draw a glass of water half filled that look like a glass of water half filled.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or half empty as the case may be. Well, it's interesting because there's been a certain amount of conversation lately, a few years – maybe two years ago there was a whole issue of *Artnews* that explored the idea that drawing might be becoming the new painting. I mean it sounds like a very hip, trendy thing to claim. But it's interesting because it does seem like there are more works on paper in evidence. I just – for example, Steven Talasnik.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: He's an old friend of mine.

MR. BRUNO: Oh, is he.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes.

MR. BRUNO: Good for you. Good for him.

MR. McELHINNEY: And Paula Rego.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Both exhibitions were primarily graphic media on paper, not paintings. I think in the Paula Rego show there were two paintings.

MR. BRUNO: Well, of course at Marlborough – I mean they have also a very distinguished group of artists. And Neil Welliver –

MR. McELHINNEY: Of course.

MR. BRUNO: – was a very good friend. And I went into the northern central Maine forest region just along the Canadian border with Neil. And it was really sort of outback. I got special boots. And Neil had a small folding canvas strapped to his back, and we were going in the woods. And I made sure I never went beyond hearing distance. And one of the paintings at his second-to-the-last show at Marlborough before he died was a large classic sized six-by-six foot painting of a waterfall. And when I was there with Neil, he said, "That's going to be *Bruno Falls*." And that was the name that would be in the catalog. And I took great pleasure in selling that *Bruno Falls* [1986] Neil Welliver painting.

MR. McELHINNEY: So he traveled that far. Because I knew he lived in Lincolnville [Maine], which is right near Camden.

MR. BRUNO: Yes. But he had a hut.

MR. McELHINNEY: He had a hut up in the Allagash Wilderness up somewhere.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, and he was quite a character. A marvelous farm he and his wife had. So when we discussed this portal adventure for me, he said, "Now, listen, this place is so simple it's too simple for you. But across the Canadian border is a motel. And I will book you into that motel." And I had rented a car. This was a summer trip of maybe, oh, eight to ten days. Not more than two weeks, where I would visit Alan McGee north of Portland, Richard Estes, Alex Katz, and Neil Welliver. And in this case I was meeting Neil way up under the Canadian border. So every morning I would leave Canada to cross into the United States to go to this cabin. And in the evening go back to Canada and stay overnight in the motel. You could not do that today without creating some urgent situation at the border.

MR. McELHINNEY: Right. The border patrol and Homeland Security would be all over you.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: It's a wonderful story. So you didn't have to paddle in a canoe.

MR. BRUNO: [Laughs] No.

MR. McELHINNEY: Snowshoes or shoot your food or have to catch trout for dinner or breakfast or whatever. Did you like the experience?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, I did. I have a great feeling for the out-of-doors. Well, I might as well in this say something that is quite confidential. I think in all of us there's an element of idealism, whether you pray to the sun or the moon or pray to your god or someone else's god. And the beauty of nature has always moved me. And one reason I decided to learn to fly when I was, I think, 19 or 20, I was going through a difficult period. And I had just visited Milton Avery in Woodstock and was out on the Cape [Cape Cod, MA]. And there was a small airfield. Let's see what the name of that town was. Anyway, I decided to learn to fly. And George was the pilot, and I've never forgotten him.

And flying over water and the islands of, you know, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, and flying over the southern shoreline of the Cape, and seeing the sand below the water, and the sky above, it took Phillip out of Phillip. And that's an extraordinary experience. So there is this element of great awareness of what mankind has not achieved, which I think has made me sensitive to what mankind can achieve. And I speak of architects' buildings, painters' paintings, sculptors' sculptures, where you become aware of creativity in others. And I guess on my tombstone – and I'm going to be cremated – "He appreciated the creativity in others." And in this DVD that you just saw, there's this reference to love. And it reads: "I'm yours, you're mine, we're ours." And I think that's what life's all about. And I think that's certainly affected my career. And I've been very fortunate in being that sensitive to creativity.

MR. McELHINNEY: So you believe that art is a force that brings people together in the best way.

MR. BRUNO: It can.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or that's a potential.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, and it can elevate people out of themselves to a new awareness of beauty, of poetry.

MR. McELHINNEY: Without an airplane.

MR. BRUNO: [Laughter] Ah, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or with one.

MR. BRUNO: In walking distance. I hope that doesn't sound like an obituary –

MR. McELHINNEY: No. I think actually in the standard script of questions that we receive, interviewers are asked to sort of hit, you know, the bullet points in the conversation. One of the questions is: If you were to write your epitaph, what would it be? What will you want to be remembered for? And I think –

MR. BRUNO: I just said it.

MR. McELHINNEY: You eloquently unfolded that. I didn't have to pose the question, which is fine with me.

MR. BRUNO: But I have no – I'm not going tomorrow. [Laughter]

MR. McELHINNEY: No, it doesn't seem likely. It seems like you're a fit and lively gentleman.

MR. BRUNO: You know I lectured once at Cornell, and the title of the lecture was *Twenty-five Years Is a Lifetime*. And I feel I could lecture again tomorrow with the title *Fifty-eight Years Is a Lifetime*. I've spent 58 years in this field.

MR. McELHINNEY: But don't you think that many truly talented people, even though they may stay in the same realm of practice, whether it's music, writing, business, painting, drawing,

architecture, in some ways everybody has to reinvent themselves every so often just to be in the moment, you know, to be a person who's in their own time?

MR. BRUNO: Well, when you say reinventing, that sounds –

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, grow maybe. Grow, grow, grow.

MR. BRUNO: Yes, or emerge. One thing we haven't discussed is architecture.

MR. McELHINNEY: Were you involved in – I guess you were involved in architecture with, you know, the laying out – I mean apart from friendships and associations with, you must have used an architect for the SoHo gallery, yes?

MR. BRUNO: Not really.

MR. McELHINNEY: No?

MR. BRUNO: No, the space was there. Some space was divided so that George could have his small drawing studio. But I'm thinking of Frederick Kiesler and Armand Bartos, who designed World House. And that was an extraordinary architectural event in the history of 20th-century architecture. Then I worked with [Minoru] Yamasaki, who was obviously the architect of the World Trade Center. And curiously enough, with all the coverage after that disaster, his name was so seldom mentioned. It was just extraordinary. I was involved with him in terms of – I don't know if we discussed this – arranging a Yamasaki exhibition at Staempfli.

MR. McELHINNEY: No, no.

MR. BRUNO: Well, it was my idea, and George agreed because Yamasaki, I would say, was one of the few architects that I've known who've consistently tried to interest a client whose building he was designing to commission a specific work for that building. So what we did, we turned the gallery over to Yamasaki and his immediate associates who flew in. And in two and a half days installed a Yamasaki exhibition, which consisted of scale models of the completed building with scale models of the sculptures that were commissioned for the building. And then photographs of the installed sculpture. And we borrowed the largest model from the Port Authority of the World Trade Center, which was in the North Gallery. And I remember going up with a hardhat before the windows were even installed and seeing the sky outside. And I had very close associations with him. And, of course, Fritz Koenig was commissioned to do that large sculpture on the plaza of Atlas. People see it as a globe. And then Masayuki Nagare was commissioned to do the large sculpture at the east entry of the World Trade Center.

Then, you know, I worked closely with Waleski Harrison when he visited the Staempfli Gallery to view the Nagare exhibition. And at the north end of the gallery and at the south end were these giant seven- or eight-foot Bacci sculptures, which he thought were quite extraordinary, in granite, gray Swedish granite, one; and the other one, as I remember, was a red Swedish granite. And he felt they would be appropriate for the terrace of the Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center. He was able to interest a private foundation to purchase them, and they were given to the Metropolitan Opera for installation on the terrace – or balcony – and they're still there.

And then there was a discussion with Mr. Harrison about a potential lobby sculpture for the recessed alcove in the lobby beyond the Atlas in front of the International Building just opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral. And Michio Ihara was another very distinguished sculptor of Japanese background – or birth – I'm not sure which, or both, whom we represented. And the end result was that Ihara was commissioned to do these sculptures for the niches in the main lobby. They were meant to be activated by fans below so there was this fluttering element. And I presume that the fans were never installed. So that if you see them visually, there's no motion. But there's a –

MR. McELHINNEY: But there's an intention for that.

MR. BRUNO: And a light aspect to it. And then Mies van der Rohe was, of course, a legend when I first met him. And his masterpiece is right here on Park Avenue. We had a Paul Klee exhibition at

World House, and it was my pleasure to interest him in acquiring two Klees for his collection.

MR. McELHINNEY: Former colleague at the Bauhaus.

MR. BRUNO: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: What plans have you for the future?

MR. BRUNO: Oh, my gosh! That's almost embarrassing.

MR. McELHINNEY: Well, just immediately. What's the next –?

MR. BRUNO: Seeing more of you.

MR. McELHINNEY: Good.

MR. BRUNO: Getting more of my life down. And I've been asked to write a book or memoirs on my life. And I'm married to an absolutely wonderful person. Her name's Clare Henry. She's English. Married a Scot, has grown children in Glasgow. And she was art editor for *The Herald* for 20 years. And more recently has written for the *Financial Times* and other magazines. So we're inundated with museum publications and press releases. And today I'm going to a lecture at the Frick [Frick Museum, New York City] at six o'clock. So I'm seeing a lot of the art world from outside, which is quite an experience. And having more time.

I've been asked to write for a book on a triptych by Simon Dinnerstein, a Contemporary American artist whom we also represented at Staempfli. He came into the gallery totally unknown to me and showed me some photographs, and I was terribly impressed, particularly with one which was a triptych. To make a long story short, I showed the photographs to George, and he felt equally strongly. And we went out to Brooklyn and saw this extraordinary work. I've written – just finished writing – about it. And it was incomplete. And we had agreed for a show which would – the core of which would be this triptych. And Simon was very concerned about would he finish it, and could he afford to? And we agreed to select, at the completion of it, Staempfli Gallery would buy it. And we paid him an agreed-upon sum each month. And it was since acquired – and I'm glad I was involved with that – when Bill Hull, William Hull, was the director of Penn State University Art Gallery which eventually became the Palmer Art Museum [The Palmer Museum of Art, University Park, PA]. It was sent down on approval, and it is now part of that collection.

MR. McELHINNEY: Great. Well, thank you for your time and sharing all of this.

MR. BRUNO: Well, let me just give you a little – I'll do it another time. Okay. That's fine. So I don't know.

MR. McELHINNEY: Yes, I'd like you to be able to make your appointment at the Frick, and we've just –

MR. BRUNO: What time is it, five?

MR. McELHINNEY: It's after five. So for me it's been a full 90 minutes. Thank you very much.

MR. BRUNO: Well, it's been a pleasure. Are we still hooked up?

MR. McELHINNEY: I should end the interview properly by saying thank you very much, Mr. Bruno. It's been a real pleasure to speak with you.

MR. BRUNO: Well, it's been my pleasure to be here with you.

MR. McELHINNEY: Thank you.

[END OF DISC 4.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]