

CONSTANCE "CONNIE" W. GLENN ORAL HISTORY, SESSION #2

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HUFFA FROBES-CROSS: My name is Huffa Frobess-Cross. I'm the project manager of the Tom Wesselmann digital catalogue raisonné and corpus at the Wildenstein Plattner Institute. And I am here with Jeffrey Sturges, who is the director of exhibitions at the Estate of Tom Wesselmann, and Connie Glenn, who we will be talking to today, continuing our interview from our previous session. Um, and I think what I'd like to start with today -- I'm not sure if you had a chance to see it yet, Connie, was the article that you had recommended from Mario Amaya on your collection in Kansas City, with the -- which actually had photos, also, of the collection installed. And so, after consulting that, I know we've talked a bit -- quite a bit -- about your collection. But I thought it was a unique opportunity to be able to actually see where, for example, the Wesselmann works that you owned were in your house. You can actually see them very well-displayed in this article. So, I wondered if you could -- do you have the article by any chance? Or do you --

CONNIE GLENN: Do you want me to go get it?

HFC: [car horn] I mean, if you have it. I also sent it to you digitally. But if it's easier for you to physically --

CG: I can just go pick up the book, if you like.

HFC: Sure, then we can look at it together. Yeah.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

HFC: Okay, great, so yeah. On the first -- there's the first illustration in this, which actually has *GAN* [*Great American*

Nude] #29, which we talked about last time. Yeah, and I wondered if you could just kind of talk about how this work -- how you ended up placing this work, you know, in your home. I see here it's pictured above your fireplace. How it sort of sat within everything else that was in that environment in your house and why you chose to put it there.

CG: Notice the antique bank on the mantel and its particular placement.

HFC: Oh, yeah. [laughs]

CG: [laughs] Is that not funny?

HFC: I did not notice that. Yeah, it's -- it's very strategically placed.

CG: None of that -- nothing in that living room is not strategic. I loved the article, because Mario just nailed us with no trouble at all. We collected everything, and that room is the perfect sort of statement about collecting everything from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furniture to furniture destined for a Mission-style house, to -- we collected oriental rugs. In the dining room, we actually had the rug that was created for the house, because it was huge. It was twenty-some feet long. But in and on the table to the left of the fireplace are the Renaissance bronzes that we were collecting at the time working with Ted Coe at the Nelson Gallery. And we collected kitsch, which Mario loved and which I loved.

I have never at any point in my life not been collecting something. And it's a process that is really -- I think

collecting is about education. And I think how well you collect and how interestingly you collect has to do with how much information you can absorb while you're doing it. And generally, when I have all the information, I'm through. I'd go on to the next collection. And that's what Mario pointed out; he pointed out at the end of the article that we were kind of all over the map with all of these collections, and he would expect when he came back to see us the next time to find an entirely different house. Which he -- which did happen. I loved Mario and I loved this article and it's the best article that's ever been written about us or the collection. And it remained true forever, which is why I wanted you to see it.

[sighs] Why did I put her over the fireplace? I don't really know that. The walls in that room, if you were to see it -- they're broken up on either side of the fireplace by doors that lead onto an enormous screen porch that we used a lot. And the opposite wall is the wall that -- it has a little bit to do with size. The opposite wall has to have floor-to-ceiling. And -- turn the page for two pages, and there's a small picture of Jack and me with the Wesselmann *Tondo*?¹ That's the opposite wall. And those things all had to have floor-to-ceiling. And this was in an era when most people who lived in nice houses put their furniture against the wall. [laughs] This was the beginning of -- in attractive houses, you pull all your furniture out from the wall so you can have tall things. Um, but you would -- at this point in time -- I mean, I was trained as an interior decorator. And at this point in time in a typical house, you would have seen a sofa on one wall and two chairs on the

¹ At the time of the interview with Amaya, Glenn had seven Wesselmanns displayed in her Kansas City home, including *Still Life #34* (1963) and *Great American Nude #29* (1962).

opposite wall and a coffee table in the middle. Which is what we were running from at high speed. Does that explain why it's over the fireplace? [laughs]

HFC: Yeah, I mean, just -- I think so, yeah, to some degree. I guess the thing that I was also interested in is that you had talked about all of these -- as you're saying now, all of these different discrete kind of pursuits that you had had in collecting and they all kind of come together in your house. And they come together particularly, as you've said, in this image -- I notice also the pillows, right? The Schlitz and the Campbell's Soup --

CG: I had those made.

HFC: You had those made.

CG: Yeah.

HFC: Yeah.

CG: Jack's business had fabrication ability, because of -- several different types of fabrication. Not only bowling shirts. But they had a screen-door manufacturing plant. They could do almost any kind of fabrication. So, when the Green Street Dragons, the bowling -- Ivan [Karp]'s bowling club -- wanted shirts, Jack had shirts made for all the members of the club. And then, Andy [Warhol] wasn't a member of the club but he wanted a shirt, so he made another one for Andy. And there are all kinds of issues of fabrication that involved Tom. Jack worked on the fabrication of the -- [sigh] the radio on the shelf with the apples or oranges, whatever, on the side. Tom had

initially chosen a bouquet for one of those wall images, wall units. And he wanted to flock the flowers. And Jack found somebody to flock the flowers for him. [laughs] Tom got the flowers and didn't like the flocking, so they didn't end up being flocked flowers, but there was always something. You'll die laughing, but most people didn't have access to a miniature tape recorder at that time. And Tom was making -- uh, I didn't know it until Christmas, but Tom was making a miniature of the shelf image with a radio in it for me, and Jack got a pocket tape recorder, a pocket audio -- or what do you call those things? A small size listening device. Very small. And Tom -- and it was to go -- it was, in fact, put in that particular item, and I presume is still there. [laughs] But Tom remarked at the time that he wouldn't dare show it to George Segal, because George would make him give it to him.

HFC: [laughs] Interesting. Yeah, I had no idea that -- that Jack's business was as involved in -- Jack Glenn's business -- was as involved in making items for Tom's work early on. That's really interesting. Yeah, I didn't realize that. So, were they -- were those -- the tape recorder, that was for one of the works that actually had sound integrated?

CG: Yes, it's -- Jeffrey, how can I identify the four-inch square -- um, small -- let me, let me look and see --

JEFFREY STURGES: There's a little -- Connie, there's a *Little Still Life* in one of the photos -- in one of the pictures of your house. Is that the *Little Still Life* you're talking about?

CG: I'm looking up the information.

JS: It's a black and white --

CS: *Little Still Life #27*, 1964, five-and-a-half by five-and-a-half by three-and-a-half, including flowers. Construction, polymer paint varnished with Liquitex, Sony radio. Purchased by --

JS: So, I think that is the one that's in the photograph in the magazine, right? The black and white one.

CG: Yes.

JS: Amazing.

CG: Um, let's see if I go to the black-and-white photograph, if it's there. [flipping pages]

HFC: Yeah, oh, it's 226, page 226, right?

JS: Yeah.

CG: Oh, yeah. That's it, yeah. Yeah, the -- two of the three things in that -- those are the Mission things that we collected. And we collected, like, store -- Mission store items. We had a wine rack. Well, it wasn't a wine rack. We had a thing with -- it had been a ribbon rack, when it was invented in the nineteenth century. We used it for a wine rack, and this is one of the other pieces from the store fixtures that were Mission.

And we brought my favorite ones to California. And of course, couldn't -- [laughs] we were not in a Mission house, and we didn't have room for them. And I was -- we were in the process

of hiring an architect and building a house. And so, I had garage sales every time I moved, because I changed my living environment by time or period every time we moved, which was generally about every three to five years. I mean, I'm living in my 46th or 47th house now. And so, when we changed from Mission to super contemporary, I had a garage sale. My garage sales were famous in Laguna Beach. And my best friend in Laguna bought most of the Mission things, including that cabinet and the wine rack. And they all burned in the Laguna fire. So, they're all gone.

JS: Hey, Connie, could you talk a little bit about those -- those -- that Schlitz and those pillows that you had made. Because there's -- I mean, in terms of what you're collecting, I understand what you were saying about this idea of it's like you're educating yourself. So, you educate yourself about the Mission furniture, the Renaissance sculpture, different kinds of paintings. But what does it mean when you make something that's like an ersatz Warhol and put it on the couch? Like, what is that? How do you sort of see that --

CG: It's about --

JS: -- it's like -- yeah?

CG: Well, it's about -- and this is really, really important to me. It's about Pop Art as a lifestyle. Um, people --

JS: So it's the idea that you can participate.

CG: Yeah, it's the participating. It's -- it's almost like you're sharing a secret language. Ivan Karp used to say that there were, at that time, 250 people seriously collecting art.

And so, of those 250 people, you knew a whole lot of them. And quite a number of them lived in Kansas City, where I lived, so we had had an outrageous Pop Art party that ended up in the *New Yorker*.

JS: [laughs]

CG: Um, but it -- and we had an Al Hansen Happening on the -- in the marble-walled entry to the Nelson Gallery. Due to one of our friends who was participating, Molly McGreevy, being able to talk her father, who was a trustee of the Nelson Gallery, into allowing us to do detrimental things to the great entry of the Gallery. And so, we had a Happening there. And it was -- people came and stayed in my house, and my house was a Happening. I mean, Al Hansen --

JS: Wow.

CG: -- cut up -- he made collages of Hershey bars. He was very famous for that. He was a founder of Happenings, like Allan Kaprow, but he stayed in my guest room and cut up Hershey bars and wrappers in my guest bed, and I found pieces of Hershey wrappers in my guest bed thereafter. [laughter] And I can remember, at one time, Al Hansen and Malcolm Morley and Wayne and Betty Jean Thiebaud and -- [pauses] probably Paul Waldman, Diane Waldman's husband, an artist. They were all in the house at the same time. And I would squeeze my children into one place and squeeze two or three other people into another place. It was not a big house, but it -- it absorbed people nicely. And we could do -- we could participate. Your notion of participation is very good. I would not have been interested in collecting French Impressionist painting. The people involved were as

important to me as the images they created. And I don't -- when I write about it, I always call it the Pop Art lifestyle.

JS: Right.

CG: Um, but it was among a small group of people a hugely participatory thing. I mean, think about the Bianchini Gallery grocery store exhibition [*The American Supermarket*] in 1964, which unfortunately, I did not see, but I recreated it in my gallery. But the mere idea that all these people would -- Dorothy was Dorothy Herzka at the time, not Dorothy Lichtenstein -- she met Roy [Lichtenstein] in the course of creating that exhibition. And Paul Bianchini was always running back and forth between New York and Paris, and Ben Birillo was very active in the gallery when Paul was in Paris, and Dorothy was active in the gallery. And all of these -- Ben Birillo had a lot of the things that were in that show fabricated for that show, and yet they -- one of the women who was involved was the gal who made fake meat for refrigerators for advertising purposes. She wasn't even involved in Pop Art. They just needed some meat to put in the refrigerator. So she is listed as one of the artists. Ah, but again, these are all about events.

JS: Yeah.

HFC: Right. And there is something really interesting about what you're saying. It reminds me of our previous conversation when you talked about the advice that you got, I think it was from John Weber, not to buy [car horn] you know, Abstract Expressionism, or not to already buy established artists, right? This idea that participating in Pop Art was possible as a collector at the time in a way that being a collector of

something else would not be. Being not just an owner of objects but part of a social world, right? I mean, that --

CG: Even at that point in time, we couldn't have afforded the Abstract Expressionist things. You will notice in one of the pictures -- let's see, where's the dining room. We finally did buy a small de Kooning. Just 'cause we couldn't resist it, but it was -- let's see, where is the picture the end of -- maybe it's not in these pictures. Yeah, I guess it's not in these pictures. But we did buy a very small, about eight or nine inches square, de Kooning that hung in our dining room. Just because we [laughs] just loved it. But it wasn't part of the main scene.

Um, the interesting thing about Pop Art and that house was it had an infinite quality to absorb stuff. If you type the address into your computer, you can see a current picture of it from the real estate agent from Zillow. And it's two -- it's about three quarters of a block long. And it had, I think, seven bedrooms and sort of an equal number of bathrooms. It had huge playrooms. It had -- I was afraid to go down in the basement. It was so creepy. It had a coal furnace with a chute where coal was once delivered. It was half electric and half gas, because when the house was built, they didn't think electricity was here to stay. We had the gas fixtures all turned off. But you could just keep bringing things into that house and it absorbed them in the most wonderful way. And it was also a great house to party in.

I have not [laughs] -- I have not lived in a house that I loved as much as I love that one to this day. When my kids pass through Kansas City, they always drive by, um, and wave. I thought that my son Christopher, who was born six months before

we left that house, had never seen the inside. And we made an -- um, when we sold it, we sold it just to the first friend on the list. It never made it to a real estate agent. There were a lot of old friends who wanted the house.

And I thought Christopher had never seen the inside of the house. He had a Pop Art bedroom, and -- I was really, really interested in design, simultaneously, and that was my background. And so, he had a total Marimekko -- design research. Design research began in Boston and ended up with a fabulous store in New York, including Marimekko, and so he -- I wanted him to see [laughs] his design research Marimekko bedroom. And we made an appointment with the real estate agent to go see, 'cause it was for sale, and this is about, I guess, seven or eight years ago. And we got there, and entering the steps to take us up to see the house, the real estate agent broke her ankle, and we never got to see the house. She fell on the steps.

HFC: Oh, no.

CG: [laughs] Well, I -- Christopher thinks he has seen it. I'm not sure whether he has seen it or whether he's seen a lot of pictures.

JS: The one other thing I --

CG: But the house played a really big role in the collecting.

JS: The one thing I noticed about, you know, the sort of eclectic way you were -- that you collected and brought all these objects together is so close to what you see in

Wesselmann's painting, in terms of bringing old things and new things together and mixing different kinds of styles. Did you --

CG: Well, that's a great observation. Maybe that's why I liked them so much.

JS: Well, that's what I was wondering. And even looking at that *Great American Nude* on the -- you know, above the fireplace, and you see the mantel with those objects placed just in front of the painting. You can sort of see them as almost like a transition right in -- like, between the world of the painting and the world of your living room. It just seems so seamless. And I was wondering if you got inspiration from the kinds of juxtapositions that Tom was making, or you noticed those juxtapositions as something very sympathetic to your taste?

CG: Mm. It wasn't thought out. It happened. I think, clearly, [pauses] because my real background, before art history and before collecting and before anything else, was design. And you can see my interest in design in virtually everything in that house.

JS: Yeah.

CG: And I had had several jobs before we ever began collecting. As an adult, I had had several jobs in design. I taught design in a small college in Texas, where Jack was in the Air Force. And I, as I said before, I worked with an architect who was building a development with a college friend. He and I designed a house a few months after Jack and I were married, and the house was built in the three years when we were gone in Texas and in Europe. And it was what would now be called mid-century

modern, [laughs] of course, and I have one child who is deeply devoted to mid-century modern still. [laughs] But the fact that, you know, I would build a house when I was 23 was sort of weird. But design meant everything to me and still does. And I think that's what you're seeing a reflection of in not just the art in the house, but everything else in the house.

HFC: Yeah, yeah, I definitely -- I see --

CG: And in the fact that every time I've ever moved, among all those hundreds and thousands of moves, is I have changed styles completely. Because I wanted to explore the combination of other things. I did one outrageous three-story condo in contemporary design from Spain. The house that we had designed and built on the water, I did in a combination of the newest of contemporary furniture available in Los Angeles combined with Chinese antiques and Chinese rugs. So, that's -- working with design has been my entire life.

HFC: And --

CG: And it was really miserable when Pop Art was over. [laughter] Well, we started collecting photography. There was nothing being made -- it was the [hole?], the gap between Pop Art and conceptual art, um, that artists were having a very hard time filling. And we couldn't fill it either. I had always hoped, because we loved Ivan and Marilyn Karp, and I had always hoped Ivan's gallery would be a continuation of things that we loved, and we didn't like photorealism. So, that was really hard.

HFC: That's interesting, and it's -- I actually -- in just a moment, I think we should move on to another section. But one thing that occurred to me there is like, Wesselmann, for example, was obviously producing during that kind of interstitial period. Um, and so were other Pop artists, even though Pop Art itself was kind of dispersing. Did you continue to be interested in their work or Wesselmann's work during that --

CG: Oh no, yes, always.

HFC: Yeah.

CG: I have been interested in -- oh, what is it, the seven -- I did a bunch of research that defined who the original Pop artists were by taking the 12 -- you've read this -- by taking the 12 original shows, and seeing who appeared the most times and weeding that down to seven people. And I have loved and followed most all of them. And the only ones left -- I don't include Lucas Samaras as a Pop artist, but we always loved Lucas's work. And I wrote about it and showed it several times, and I still talk to Lucas on the phone fairly regularly. And the only ones of that original group of people that I loved and communicated with left are Lucas and Claes Oldenberg. Let's see, is there anybody else? Oh, Wayne Thiebaud.

HFC: Right, of course.

CG: Well, Wayne Thiebaud is not part of the New York Pop Art circle, but he was and is a very big part of our lives. We have been together in person, traveling together, friends, visiting since 1966.

HFC: Oh, wow.

JS: Amazing.

CG: [laughs] This was -- last year was Wayne's 100th birthday. But this November 15th, he will be 101.

JS: Wow.

CG: And I went down yesterday and looked at his current exhibition at the Laguna Beach Art Museum, at the Laguna Art Museum.

HFC: Well, I want -- yeah, so that very broadly brings me to, I think, that the next really big thing that I'd like to talk about, which is something we just touched on -- kind of how you started on this project, but not much about the project itself, which was the big 1974 *Early Years* exhibition of Wesselmann's work.

CG: I wanted to talk to you about that, because I went back and looked at all the correspondence related to it, and I discovered some stuff about it that I had either totally forgotten or didn't think --

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

CG: I discovered something that I had not actually been aware of by reading all of the 1970, '71, correspondence. Well, there is 1 thing we missed in the '60s, and that was the commissioning of the *Foot, Seascape Foot*. And I wanted you to know when we

talked about the '60s that the Nelson Gallery had a print club. And Jack talked to Tom about commissioning a print for it, 'cause Jack was chairman of the Guild of the Friends of Art at the time, which would have been analogous to the print club. And he talked to Tom about commissioning. They had previously commissioned very uncontemporary things, [laughs] and Jack and I both wanted the print club to do some really interesting and exploratory things.

So, we talked to Tom about commissioning a print for the print club, and the print club okayed that. And Tom wanted to do another vacuform. We had already long since purchased the vacuform nude, um, *Great American Nude #74*, which we purchased in 1965. But Tom was still involved in vacuforming, and he wanted to try a vacuform multiple. And the print club had never commissioned a multiple, but that was really fine with everyone. [laughs] So, Tom designed and had fabricated 101 of the feet. The edition was -- of all of the prints for the print club was always 101, because the 101 print was for the museum. And I looked up yesterday how much it was -- I had told somebody I thought it was sold for, at the time, for \$125. It wasn't; it was sold for \$28.50. And I believe that the reason my acquisitions book shows \$28.50 is because Tom allowed it to be sold either framed or unframed, and the frame was a really cheesy copy of the classic Kulicke frame. Welded aluminum, the original frame, and this was a cheesy copy of it. So, I think the extra \$3.50 was for the Kulicke frame. I think the print was probably \$25 if you bought it unframed.

And the thing that set me to looking into the *Foot* was I was scrolling something on the internet and I found one for sale from a dealer -- seemed quite knowledgeable -- dealer in

Florida. And so, I emailed. It's always, you know, priced by question, and so I emailed him and asked him how much the *Foot* was. Ours was not sold. It ended up quote, unquote, missing, and I do not know what happened to it, but it's gone. The one in Florida was not our number; our number was one. And um, so, I thought, Well, maybe I can just buy myself another *Foot*. So, [laughs] I asked him how much the *Foot* was, and he said it was \$17,500. So, I wrote him back and said, not really within my budget. [laughs] But I think that it's an interesting story about the *Foot*, and to think that you -- you could have had one for \$25 is -- it'd be interesting to know how much \$25 is in today's money.

HFC: Yeah, I wonder. I guess I would assume -- \$100, \$100-ish dollars, right? Something in that range, maybe?

CG: I think it's [somewhere?] between \$100 and \$150, I think, not positive. You can -- we can do it on the computer and ask what it -- we were eventually priced out of our collecting. So, that was the '60s story that I didn't want you to miss, was the *Foot*. Back to 1970.

We [pauses] -- had gone twice to California on vacation and taken our girls before Christopher was born. And stayed in Laguna Beach and fell in love with Laguna Beach. And when Jack decided that he didn't want to be vice president of King Louie any more, he wanted to own an art gallery. The first decision was whether the gallery was going to be in New York or California. Because there was a significant art scene in California at the time, largely due to Gemini -- because the critical artists were visiting Gemini. A lot of them at the

time. Roy Lichtenstein spent a couple of months every winter when it got cold at Gemini.

And so, that -- there was significant art going on in California. Not like New York, but we didn't think we maybe wanted to raise children in New York City. I had watched how difficult it was for Claire and Jenny, and only Jenny was born at that time, and for Ivan and Marilyn, who had small children in SoHo. And it struck me as being a really difficult way to raise children. And I don't know whether that's why we decided -- and everybody in my family was in love with Laguna Beach, as you know -- have a why -- [laughs] you come from that, too.

HFC: Absolutely.

CG: And there was a business that was associated with King Louie, in -- I think it was in Anaheim -- which gave Jack a kind of fall-back position if moving to Laguna Beach didn't work. Um, so, we finally chose Laguna and -- he chose Corona del Mar for the gallery and I don't remember why. Maybe it was because there was simply a good space available. It's now a rug store, but it still has Jack Glenn Gallery etched in the glass [laughs] of the entry, because it's too expensive to replace the door. But we went to Laguna, rented a house, and went to Laguna for Christmas, 1969. Went home and packed up the house in Kansas City and were in Laguna by January 1970.

And I had enrolled in -- I have to sort of clarify the education situation, which I messed up before -- but I had enrolled in UCI, University of California at Irvine, to take a class to be given by Alan Solomon, whom I was crazy about but had never met. I really loved his writing, and I -- I thought generally he was

the best English American writer on Pop Art. And I had such huge admiration for what he had done at the Guggenheim, and so I was really thrilled to be able to take a class by him.

And so, we had to be in Laguna Beach for the time school started. And I was not out of school [at] any given time over about 17 years. Part-time always, because I was raising kids. And the only time I was ever out of school for more than a few months was when -- the three years Jack was in the Air Force. I was out of school two of those years, I think. And I wasn't -- I left my Master of Fine Arts degree all but thesis at the University of Missouri. And found when I came to California that there was no MA or MFA. I was enrolled in a terminal degree in Kansas City, and I don't understand why they were giving art historians BFAs, or MFAs. Either one. And I was enrolled in an MFA program.

And when I got to California, I found that there wasn't a graduate program in art history at UCI. There were only two in Southern California at the time in my area, and one was at USC, where it was too long a drive for me to commute, and the other one was in -- at Cal State Long Beach. So, I ultimately enrolled in the graduate program at Cal State Long Beach. It was a matter of what was available to me. But the brief enrollment in UCI didn't transpire, because while everybody went home over Christmas that year and we went home and packed up our house, Alan Solomon died. And the class was never given.

They signed Frank Stella to teach at UCI, and when it became time for him to teach, he refused to sign the state loyalty oath. And so, he couldn't teach, and Barbara Rose, to whom he was married at the time, came and taught a couple of Frank's

classes. And I -- and the ones that I went to informally were held in her office, because they apparently couldn't give her a classroom, and people sat around on the floor with the dogs. It was very '70s. [laughs] People sat around on the floor with all their dogs, some were --

JS: Sorry, Connie, what was the subject? What would -- it's hard to imagine a subject that Frank Stella and Barbara Rose could teach.

CG: Barbara Rose was doing a lot of writing on contemporary art at the time. She was just teaching contemporary art. And --

JS: But Frank Stella was going to teach it first? Wow.

CG: And I have no idea what they asked Frank to teach. They probably simply asked him to come lecture.

JS: Right.

CG: But he had to be hired, and he would not sign the California loyalty oath for the state of California. So, to replace Frank, they brought -- Barbara flew out, as I remember, like, once a month, and gave what would have been Frank's class. [laughs] Yeah. And the one or two that I went to were in her office. And Barbara Rose and I, boy, were not on the same page at that time. She denigrated the Jack Glenn Gallery in her lectures, which I found pretty offensive.

HFC: Really? She actually --

CG: Yes.

HFC: -- specifically spoke about the Jack Glenn Gallery?

CG: Oh, yeah. Well, there wasn't any other contemporary art around [laughs] in the general area.

HFC: What was her -- what was her issue with the Jack Glenn Gallery?

CG: The work at the Jack Glenn Gallery in the early 1970s was extremely eclectic. It lived on what was called the back room, if you're familiar with that phrase. Oldies and goodies for sale at high prices that would fund the gallery. And the young artists -- he showed all of the guys -- this is when he had his first show for Bruce, Jeffrey. All of the guys who were studying at UCI, he gave -- they all worked in the gallery and he gave them all shows. And the faculty at UCI was in the art department. No art history. But the faculty in the art department was very impressive, including Bob Irwin and Tony DeLap. Practically everybody who was anybody taught a class at UCI, and, oh -- [sighs] the other probably most famous person from that time and era. Um, oh. The guy who locked himself -- the guy who wanted Jack to kill him and who locked himself in his locker.

HFC: That sounds like Chris Burden -- was that --

CG: Chris Burden. [laughter] Thank you. Chris Burden was the sort of senior bad actor of that group. He asked Jack to shoot him, and Jack declined, and he -- so he hired somebody else to shoot him.

HFC: But Jack was his preferred shooter?

CG: Jack was his preferred shooter. Jack was having no part of that. He worked -- he not only worked at -- Chris not only worked in the gallery, he worked transporting stuff for Jack between the house. We had a rented house in Emerald Bay at the time, and Emerald Bay was a gated private development in Laguna Beach -- still is -- and Chris would come and go with a truck between the two houses. And when we moved out of Emerald Bay into Irvine Cove, into a house that we bought, the guard gate accosted [laughs] Chris at the departure gate and said good riddance to bad rubbish. [laughs] Chris caused trouble wherever he went. I adored Bruce. I found Chris very difficult. But there were a lot of -- there were seven or eight young artists who came out of that class in UCI who went on to have distinguished careers, including Bruce.

HFC: Just so -- for anyone listening to this --

CG: There is a catalog of the history of UCI done by the Laguna Art Museum if you want to look at all of those people and who they were and where they went. And some of them you would now know, and some of them like Chris are gone, and -- it's hard for me to remember that they were 20 -- that they were 20 years old then, and I think Bruce just turned -- 70?

HFC: Sounds right. I just want -- just for our listeners, this is Bruce Richards, is the -- the artist Bruce Richards, yeah. But yeah, I mean, it does sound like an incredibly fertile scene at UCI at that exact moment. But then, so you had that moment where you were a part of that and around the Jack Glenn Gallery.

Although, as I understand from our last interview, you didn't have a lot of direct participation in the gallery? You kept a distance from it? Is that right? Did I understand --

CG: I participated in the events.

HFC: In the events.

CG: [laughs] I didn't hire the artists and I didn't choose the exhibitions. Although we both chose the early Wesselmann exhibition that was in the gallery, which caused a real fracas in Laguna.

HFC: Yeah, can you talk a little bit about that, that exhibition?

CG: Um, well, let me go backwards just a minute, because that was a little further into the Jack Glenn Gallery. But you asked me why Barbara Rose would denigrate the gallery, and she -- um, the content of the gallery at that time was expensive Pop Art in the back room, the young group of artists from UCI, and to some degree, new abstraction, which was largely, at that time, called color field painting. And Barbara Rose hated color field painting. And she denigrated the gallery for having been active in color field painting. Neither of us were deeply involved in color field painting -- and to this day. [laughs] Particularly '70s color field painting, I'm talking about Dan Christensen, um, let's see, who else -- people I see on the internet all the time. In California, Ron Davis, which may not mean anything to you.

But it was -- there were things that we liked and things that we found interesting and things that needed exposure, but nothing that ever became a part of our life the way Pop Art did. What became the most interesting and [acting?] part of our personal lives, and eventually, also, Jack in the gallery, because I really encouraged him to become deeply involved in the gallery, and it was photography. And photography is still probably my second greatest love after Pop Art. We collected a lot of photography, in the many hundreds and hundreds of images, beginning with typical school of Ansel Adams and on to conceptual photography like Robert Cumming. And I like fashion photography and still do. I'm sitting in my living room the other day, thinking, Thank goodness I still have the Helmut Newton. [laughs] I was really interested in fashion photography. I collected movie photography. People weren't looking much at the hired photographers of the studios in Hollywood, and they were making some very interesting photographs, both old, beginning in the 1930s, to contemporary. And I bought the estate of one of the 1930s photographers, whose name was [Max Munn Autrey?], and I gave it to the Laguna Art Museum so that my students studying museum studies could go down and make an exhibition of it.

HFC: Mm, wow.

CG: His name was Max Munn Autrey, and he was an interesting photographer. There were several Hollywood photographers that --

HFC: It's interesting --

CG: One named [unclear?] -- hm?

HFC: I was just saying that it's interesting you mentioned that, 'cause it seems like you would have been collecting it right around the time that John Baldessari was collecting for his own collage work.

CG: Oh, yeah.

HFC: Yeah.

CG: Oh, we had the funniest -- was it John Baldessari or was it -- no, it was [pauses] Jonathan Borofsky. We had a really strange conceptual experience with Jonathan Borofsky, and it was simultaneous with our interest in John Baldessari as well. I loved John Baldessari from the time we met him in the '70s. But um, Jack began getting boxes of numbered sheets of paper at the gallery, and they would be delivered in, you know, boxes about as big as my computer screen, this big, with several thousand pieces of paper in them. Each piece of paper with a single number on it. And numerous of these boxes arrived at the gallery with no identification of any sort and nobody could find anybody who would claim them. And we asked around among all of our art friends and all of the artists we knew. Finally, it got to be too many boxes of blank paper with a number in the corner so Jack just threw them all out. And of course, it was John Borofsky's original conceptual project. And it all went in the trash. [laughs] He -- for three years, he sat and thought about conceptual art, and while doing so, numbered pieces of paper to keep himself busy. And he boxed up the numbered pieces of paper and sent them to the Jack Glenn Gallery, but didn't tell anybody. So, we [laughs -- that's what happened to Jonathan Borofsky's original art. Long gone in the trash.

HFC: Which somehow, seems maybe perfect for -- you know, right?
A kind of appropriate conceptual end for that work.

CG: Yeah, why not. But yes, that is also the timeframe in which
John Baldessari was doing -- think how some of John Baldessari's
early things relate back to Tom Wesselmann's work.

HFC: Yeah.

CG: The coincidence and the combination of photography and
painting of common images and conceptual ideas. All in -- it
seems -- I don't know that anybody's ever suggested it. But it
feels like some of the same things were going on in the mind of
John Baldessari at the time.

HFC: Yeah, that's a really interesting point, with very
different perspectives on painting, right?

CG: Oh, yeah.

HFC: Right. [laughs]

CG: Very different. I doubt Tom would have liked John
Baldessari's work. Don't you?

HFC: Yeah, I think not.

CG: But I still think some of the same issues are involved.

HFC: No, I agree, I think that's -- I mean, because in a way,
you could say that that where Wesselmann's work is trying to
push the limits of what can continue to function as painting

while fundamentally making it be painting, Baldessari is trying to kind of undo all of the rubric --

CG: Undo painting. [laughs]

HFC: -- exactly, undo painting entirely. So they are -- but using very similar methods in certain ways. Yeah.

CG: Yeah, that's funny. So, you asked me about Tom's show. The gallery opened in -- on the seventh of May, 1970. And I was already nervous about not being in school because I -- I didn't like not being in school. I had to have a research project, and I discovered in the letters between Tom and me and Paul Bianchini that that project was not originally intended as an exhibition. It was originally intended as a Paul Bianchini book with the New York Graphic Society. Paul Bianchini had his own imprint with the New York Graphic Society, and he had done two books that I -- Diane Waldman was a friend of mine. Paul Waldman used to stay -- was teaching at Davis, and he would stay with us every time. He would drive through the country in his Porsche and his whippet or greyhound, little greyhound, who used to pee on my bed. [laughs] But I knew Paul and Diane that way, and Diane had done two beautiful, beautiful drawing books. I really admire -- always have admired, still do, Diane's work. As well as Paul's. Both of them are special. And the two books that Diane had done at the time that were Paul Bianchini books for the New York Graphic Society were a compilation of Lichtenstein drawings and one of Ellsworth Kelly drawings. Gorgeous books, just everything I wanted.

So, I wanted one of those books for Tom. And I approached Paul Bianchini about making a drawing book for Tom. And there's a

year's worth of correspondence sitting beside me with Paul Bianchini about, how can we do this, and how do you fund it. And the gist of the correspondence with him was he was interested in doing a book of Wesselmann drawings, but it was up to the funder of Paul Bianchini books, which was the New York Graphic Society. So, to be labeled -- I notice in rare book literature, these are all still referred to as "Paul Bianchini books." Published by, you know, various and assorted people that the New York Graphic Society apparently chose. It was estimated at the time that the book would cost thirty or forty thousand dollars. And for him to okay a book of drawings for Tom to go forward, he would have to have their sponsorship.

And the letters are dated 1970 -- April 1971 to December 1971. And what they finally -- and Paul was in Paris part of the time and in New York part of the time, and it was -- oh, gosh I don't know what it would have been like if we'd had email then.

[laughs] It was tortured correspondence. We would -- I would wait for a letter to go to Paris and something to come back. And then, he missed letters in the gallery, and we would go into the gallery to talk to him, and he would be in Paris. But finally, the gist of doing a book of drawings for Tom -- he had not been able to get permission from the New York Graphic Society. And he would keep it on his list of "wish we could do this" and see if they ever came through.

Meanwhile, [laughs] as Stephen Colbert says -- meanwhile I started teaching part-time in the art department at Cal State Long Beach. There was -- the professor who was in charge of contemporary art was on sabbatical, and I taught his classes in contemporary art beginning in 1971. There was a gallery that was run by rotation -- at Cal State Long Beach, there was an

exhibition gallery not for students but for other work that was run by a rotating series of professors. And there were three at a time, and they would show whatever those professors were interested in and could gather together.

And one of the professors was named Gene Cooper, who still is right here and lives in Laguna Beach. And he insisted that he was -- he got acquainted with us through the Jack Glenn Gallery and came to everything at the Jack Glenn Gallery, and I introduced him to Tom, and I introduced him to Wayne Thiebaud. And he had visions of -- he and the chairman of the art department at the time, Tom Ferreira -- had visions of the gallery at the university becoming a viable contemporary art gallery or a museum. And he insisted that I, instead of teaching part-time, that I would do this. And [laughs] I insisted for about a year -- the year of 1971 -- that I would not do this, because I had a six-month-old baby and I wanted to spend some time on the beach. But I ultimately decided that it was a good thing to do. I wasn't interested in being a salesperson in the Jack Glenn Gallery, and I didn't like being out of school. And teaching was just as good to me as being in class.

And I did finish my master's degree there and did take classes, or -- when you transfer a -- my MFA, which they did not offer to art historians at Cal State Long Beach, was finished all but thesis when I got to Cal State Long Beach. And classically, throughout the country, only six units of a graduate degree transfer. So, I basically had to start over with my master's degree. [laughs] So, that's why I always say I have two master's degrees, because I had finished the one in Kansas City except for the thesis, and I had to begin the one in California. And I got credit -- got sort of automatic credit for some of -- for

six units, and then, I sort of tested out of a few more units. And they waived the requirement for a few other units [laughs] until I finally was finished.

But I did have to have a thesis. And since I had spent all of 1971 trying to track down every one of Tom Wesselmann's drawings, I decided that I now had a place to exhibit them. When I decided to go ahead and become director of the galleries that they wanted me to be director of. So, instead of a book, I now needed a thesis and I now had a place to exhibit the drawings. So, the drawings -- the exhibition of the drawings became my thesis. I taught an invented class that I invented -- you have to -- the state of California had no classification for museum director or a gallery director. So, all of those of us, like Melinda Wertz, who was so responsible for much of the wonderful things that went on at UCI -- you had to teach something that was in a classification that the state of California had. So, I made up the museum studies classification and decided to teach museum studies, which they could classify. So, it became the first museum studies program in the West. There were others that I admired, particularly one at Yale. But there were others that I admired on the East Coast and that I patterned the program after.

But therefore, the thesis was how to make an exhibition as exemplified by the -- and the catalogue was the inner part of the thesis. So, the thesis is the how to make an exhibition part, with the catalogue in the middle and the essay for the catalogue as content. It's a very strange thesis, [laughs] but they let it fly. They had a program at the time where if what you wanted to major in and get your graduate degree in did not exist, you could invent it if your committee would allow it. You

could invent your subject, and if the committee allowed it, you -- and the university then stamped it, you could do it. And that's what happened. So, I already had found -- Tom and I had a long correspondence in 1971 about what is a drawing, which is pretty interesting.

HFC: That is --

CG: Because we went round and round about what is a drawing. Um, and I --

HFC: Can you talk a little bit about what that debate -- what that conversation was about? Like, what qualified as drawings?

CG: Yeah, yeah, it's fun. We started out thinking that drawings were black and white. And that -- well, I was gonna read one of the letters, but you have the letters. Well, you don't have all of them, but I will see that you have all them. But basically, first, I said I wanted to do -- I told Tom that I wanted to do a catalogue raisonné of the drawings. And he asked -- he said he'd never heard of a raisonné and he wanted to know what a raisonné was. And so, I told him, "Well, we have to find everything that you consider a drawing. But before we find everything that you consider a drawing, we have to define what a drawing is."

So, I gave him, like, three choices: is a drawing something in black and white on paper or some other surface? Is a drawing a study or a pastel in color -- or is it a color drawing, not a study. Or is it a study for a forthcoming painting? I gave him three categories basically, and he didn't want any studies to be classified as drawings. We sort of initially settled on black and white on any surface. I said, first, "Black and white on

paper or canvas." And then, he said, Well, he had drawn on a lot of other surfaces. So, he said, "Let's say black and white on any surface." And then, he said, "Well, there are things that aren't studies for paintings that are in pencil or pastel that could also be considered drawings. So, let's think about that, too."

So, at that time, with that definition, I sent a letter to the major art magazine -- they were in the habit of that if somebody was doing a catalogue raisonné, they would publish it and ask for responses for who owned what work. And I got a lot of responses. But I sent a letter to ARTnews and Artforum and Art International, a couple of other places, asking them to publish my request for people who own drawings. And I didn't define the drawings as Tom and I had defined them, because I wanted to see what might show up. And I got a fair number of responses. Some people sent pictures. I'd love to show you one of the pictures. Jan van der Marck sent an eight by ten black and white picture of his drawing. Jan van der Marck was the director in Seattle at the time and was an old friend. So. But people sent pictures and people sent lists and one person, who sent a rather significant list on stationery with a -- icon at the top that said "stop" was what it looked like. Does that mean anything to you? Have you seen anything in Tom's letters that --

HFC: With an icon --

CG: I'll get that out, because he seemed to know where a lot of things were.

HFC: I'd be very curious to see it. It doesn't ring a bell offhand but --

CG: Yeah, it's in a pile of letters. I'll find it and see that you get a -- that you get -- you can have all of these letters, because I have numerous copies. One set can go to the archives and one set can go to you.

HFC: That is amazing.

CG: But I ended up -- the 1971 research -- with 50 drawings. These are the 50 drawings. I mean, this is the list of the 50 drawings. And it -- oh, it's really interesting. If you don't have this list -- surely you have this in correspondence with Tom.

HFC: I don't think so. I mean, not -- I can't see what you're holding up because the picture is not great, but I don't think we have --

CG: I will hold it up more carefully. This is the handwritten copy of the 50 drawings. And I've got several copies of it. And it later got printed out, and -- um, but basically, it ranges from 1964 -- well, the fiftieth one is *Drawing Study for Large Nude*, so we did end up with studies. But there were -- at least we had found a corpus of 50 things that could be considered for a drawings exhibition. I don't think that we ever resolved -- the way the drawing thing got resolved was sort of a step back to what he was most interested in at the time, and that was saving the lap works, the lap size works. So, we pretty much gave -- after getting all this information about the location of every drawing we could ever find, we pretty much decided that we couldn't wrap our arms around the issue of doing a catalogue raisonné of drawings because we hadn't been very successful at

defining a drawing and they were excruciatingly hard to find and I didn't have any help. I was just one person with -- who didn't type [laughs] and still don't. But we could -- we found that we could control finding the lap works. And they were reasonably easy to turn up through the records first, of the Green Gallery, and then, the more difficult records of the Sidney Janis Gallery.

JS: Sorry Connie, can I -- I just want to interrupt for a second, and it was about the drawings, and it seems like the focus of the project shifted from the drawings to those early collage works. But did you work with Tom's records of all the drawings that he had produced during that first decade when you were trying to search for them? I mean, were you aware of the records that he had and his recording system of the drawings?

CG: Yes. Yeah.

JS: Did he talk to you about the way he recorded them, and -- any records he had of who he had sold to and he shared all that with you?

CG: He wasn't -- I found a letter yesterday that said, "I didn't keep track of that," and I said -- oh, I thought, That's not Tom. Tom kept track of everything. But I think in trying to figure out why he was saying, you know, I didn't keep track of that, I suspect our effort to find the drawings must have set him on a much more serious track to keep every piece of paper.

JS: Yeah.

CG: I mean, you know that he was already writing his life history on the back of paintings.

JS: Yeah.

CG: I mean, he would write everything he could think of on the back of a constructed work, from everything -- every medium, every date, every -- I mean, they were ten lines long on the backs of constructed works. So, he was already obsessed with the history of information, but up until we tried to locate all those drawings, I don't think he had taken where they were seriously. I think what you have -- it was subsequent to what we did.

JS: I think you're right, and it does seem that the conversations you were having with him made him really think very clearly about this terminology. Like, the difference between drawing and study. Even, like, this -- you know, in some of the cases things are titled "Drawing for" or "Drawing from." Like, there's very precise language that he's using to try to make it clear to the viewer what this thing is that they're looking at.

CG: That's afterwards.

JS: Yeah, yeah.

CG: He wasn't -- he didn't save the information. His only record when we started on this was the -- what he called the sales slips from the Green Gallery. He had no other documentation. So, you're saying, did he discuss his documentation of all that stuff with me? He didn't have any. He

had the sales slips from the Green Gallery, and then the -- we went from there, from everything that Dick Bellamy gave us, to Sidney Janis. The Janis records were more difficult for me and for Tom because they kept two different sets of records, and they didn't agree with each other. And it wasn't Conrad Janis's biggest problem at the moment. So, we basically -- that's one of the reasons that we gave up, because the information -- once you got to Janis, the information was pretty much inaccessible.

JS: Wow.

CG: Um, and I think that since we had promised a *raisonné* and it was pretty clear that the Janis records weren't going to provide that information, and I had what little I had gathered from the ads in the various magazines but certainly didn't provide all of it. So, I didn't have it, Janis didn't have it, and Tom didn't have it. So, it was almost a necessary cop-out. [laughs] It's like, we -- we can't call this a *raisonné*. And Tom was deeply interested in connecting his own history to the. Image that's on the cover of that catalogue.

HFC: *Collage #1*, right? Yeah, yeah.

CG: Yeah, and those were well-recorded for the most part. We did find some. And we -- it was -- I have this sort of compulsion to finish things, and it was something that was possible to finish, to account for those works. Because when he started -- when he became really, really, deeply involved with the room-scale works, he quit making those lap-size works. And of course, the first apartment on Bleecker Street, I never saw; 157 was the one I saw. The second one. And in 157, there -- I did see large works. Tom told me that the first one on Bleecker

Street was so small, it was like an eight by ten room, and that there wasn't any room for large works in it.

157 was a long, narrow space where he had large works in one end of it. First time I saw it, the lifesize Volkswagen was propped up against one wall. And there was a sort of closed-off bathroom space and kitchen space in the middle and a bedroom in the far end. Almost all of the SoHo lofts were walk-ups like that. No elevators, illegal occupancy, and long, narrow spaces. Roy Lichtenstein's first loft was exactly the same -- long, skinny space. Ivan's was. Everyone I -- all the Green Street Dragons, [laughs] the bowling team, their lofts were like that.

JS: Connie, can I ask you another question -- because you brought up about Tom trying to connect his history to the work that was on the catalogue, which is that *Portrait Collage #1*. And that's a story that he tells over and over again. I mean, it's in the [Slim] Stealingworth book. He tells it in interviews. And it sounds to me that what you're saying is that the sort of making of that story comes about through the exhibition that you're making with him. In other words, that idea to try to connect his history and say, this is a beginning point, is something that maybe became clear to him in working on this exhibition. Do you recall conversations like that in terms of building up or sort of -- not fabricating, but sort of clarifying that story?

CG: Um, [pauses] -- because I -- you asked me if I knew Judy [Teischberg?], and I never met Judy. I'm sure that Monica [Serra] must have met Julie -- Judy. But I didn't. But he was -- when we talked about that early work, he was very connected to the process, to the models, and how uncomfortable he was with

trying to go to works beyond his -- the lap size. And because I didn't have the opportunity to see the fabrication of any of those lap-size works, I think in explaining them to me, he was probably explaining them to himself.

JS: Yeah, makes a lot of sense.

CG: And he had distinct -- as he looked back over them, and he still had himself quite a few of them at the time. And every time one would come on the market, he would buy it back. Until the day he died, he was buying back those little works. He was deeply devoted to those works. I think he always -- I'm sure he thought of them as the bridge between the kid who couldn't and the kid who could. And the fact that people came to admire those little works and want them and buy them, I think, was a shock to him. Because what he was doing when he made them -- he had no idea of ever selling them. He was exploring the process and exploring collage, and particularly exploring the tradition that pretty much began with Rauschenberg of including junk. I mean, he would pick up stuff on the street, you know, pick up a leaf and make it into a face. And I think he never saw in them initially a future other than the kind of exploration he was doing. He was not at all sure of himself in any way at the time he was making those collages. He was not sure of himself or sure of his art. I don't think he was sure of anything, except he loved Claire. [laughs] Everybody loved Claire. She is so special. [pauses] I don't know, does that answer -- your thought?

JS: It does. Yes, it does.

HFC: Yeah, absolutely and I was just -- I mean, I guess the other thing to build on what you were saying, Jeffrey -- it's interesting that then I think at the time, as you're saying, he was really unsure. But then, retroactively, they become part of the origin story of the work that he's much --

CG: Oh, of course, yeah. Well, and the fact that retroactively, they were things that people coveted, I think, was quite a surprise to him. And made that time that he was so uncomfortable with -- end up becoming a really good time for him. It's kind of like when a museum won't show your work, write a book about it that satisfies you. [laughter] Same situation. And of course, now, the -- I wish -- Tom almost saw the first retrospective. He proceeded in the planning of the big retrospective in Europe. He and Claire planned it together and he died right before it opened. But he remained throughout his entire life greatly offended by the fact that no major New York museum would give him a retrospective. They were all afraid of it. I don't think that that would be the situation -- well, it's obviously not the situation now. I wish he had lived to see all the beautiful shows --

HFC: Yeah.

CG: -- that exist now.

HFC: Yeah, I was interested to -- I mean, we can go back to other things about some of the other exhibitions, but you brought up something that I did want to ask you about, which was the reception of his work over the years and, you know, at the sort of initial Pop moment. One of the things, you know, I thought was interesting was going back and looking at some of

the people kind of reacting to his work early on. There's this quote that I know I've shared with you, Jeffrey, but from Leo Castelli, who had a really negative reaction to Wesselmann, when he said, "You know, Wesselmann, I really never found attractive. Personally, I don't -- well, he's perhaps in the first rank of early Pop artists. He appeared like everybody else. But I don't know, I never took to him as I did for instance, Oldenburg, who I've always liked and still do." I was interested, like, what do you make of that reaction, and is that reaction something that you encountered elsewhere? I mean, it's very interesting, particularly coming from someone like Leo Castelli. Yeah.

CG: Course, by the time Leo Castelli, it probably was after the Green Gallery closed and Tom was with Sidney Janis. Do you have any -- you know any date on that quote?

HFC: It's 1969. So yeah, it would be after, after the gallery closed.

CG: Yeah, so that's after the Green Gallery. I mean, Dick Bellamy and Henry Geldzahler and a lot of the people who made studio visits on Saturday mornings, which was the history at that time, loved the work. Tom once said he couldn't paint because de Kooning had done all of his work already. Um, but the bigger influence to me in all of his work, his entire career, was Matisse. And there is a kind of what I would call awkwardness in both -- I was looking yesterday at -- there's an exhibition that I would like to see right now, a recreation of every work pictured in the Red Studio. I can't remember, it's a museum exhibition and it's up right now, and I would just kill to see it, because they brought together all the works that were on the wall in the painting the Red Studio. And you'll find

Matisse referred to in all of Tom's work. And there is -- and I was looking at the Red Studio and thinking how awkward some of that imagery is and how strange the depiction of three-dimensional space is, and or how strange the depiction of perspective is. And I think that there's a lot of that same awkwardness in Tom's work.

And Leo Castelli's taste ran to graphic depictions, except for Oldenburg. But the part of Oldenburg that I like is not the Leo Castelli part. I like the Oldenburg store. We owned work from the store. I love the store; I thought it was magical. And if I could go back and buy things I didn't buy then, I -- we bought a couple of things from the store. And we also had the wedding cake and -- but I thought this -- and the store, a lot of the things in the store were then moved to the Green Gallery, and there was an exhibition in the Green Gallery that included much of what was in the store. But those things were either ugly or magic. And I think Leo Castelli's taste extended so much to the particular, the graphic, the understandably pictorial. You know, he turned Andy Warhol down too. And Andy Warhol's original cartoons that he turned down were much messier than Roy's, and he had already accepted Roy, and I think he just simply had a different kind of taste. And my taste for Oldenburg does not coincide with Leo's. It's the very early work that is so meaningful to me. Once they became monuments, I was less interested in them.

HFC: That makes a lot of sense. And I can see how in that -- in that way, Wesselmann really stands out from someone like Lichtenstein. Does not embrace --

CG: And I don't think awkwardness is a bad word to use. That's why I referred to it in Matisse, too, because I see so much of it in Tom's work. But awkwardness was not a characteristic of the things that Leo Castelli liked. [laughs] That explains the quote.

HFC: Yeah, no absolutely. And then, of course, the other aspect of the reception of Wesselmann that I think is also in the mix in what you're talking about is the reaction to him as embodying a male gaze or embodying a patriarchal gaze. And I actually have a quote from you in the *Beyond Pop* catalogue where you had said that never at any time did I feel the need to apologize for the male gaze Wesselmann was said to favor by dissenting feminists.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

HFC: Can you just talk a bit about your perspective on the issue of the male gaze in Wesselmann, because you actually -- just to finish your quote, because I thought it was really important, the way you ended it -- 'cause you also said, "It was precisely the art, hardly the subject matter, we all championed." And that that was the reason you never at any time felt the need to apologize for the male gaze Wesselmann was said to favor. Could you just elaborate a bit on that idea?

CG: Um, I [pauses] -- I don't know beyond -- I never at any time was involved in that particular feminist program. I wasn't interested in it; I didn't believe in it; I didn't -- it just wasn't a part of anything that concerned me. And I know that it concerned some people who have been important to art history and some people who have been important to exhibitions. But I couldn't deal with an issue that I felt was essentially

irrelevant to the art. I thought the idea of judging the art by someone else's perception of -- I guess the worst outcome of all of this has been #MeToo. [laughs] But I was completely uninterested in the idea of judging art in terms of that particular feminist viewpoint. So, I couldn't have written an essay about the nudes that centered on that, and if that's what the catalogue needed, then it needed something other than me.

HFC: But I think what -- to add to that though, I think one of the interesting things that actually also paralleled a quote that I really thought was interesting of yours in the *Early Years* catalogue where you said that Wesselmann's work is an art of formal considerations clothed in popular forms. Is that in both cases, what I hear from you is an argument that his work is about formal issues.

CG: Oh yeah, yes, of course. I don't think most people understand that Pop Art is about formal issues. I think the subject matter was so all-consuming that the discussion of formal issues pretty much got shoved out the back door. And it -- the subject matter seemed to me to be a reflection of post-World War II, flourishing of our life and our economy. And the subject matter was everyday life, to me, and I didn't see why it shouldn't be a part of art. It wasn't alarming to me in any way, [laughs] but it alarmed a lot of people. And people didn't want soup cans and commercial images and billboards. They found a lot of people and -- you understand that the people buying art and spending serious money on art were the generation, my parents. Uh, who had their history in the Depression. I was born in the middle of the Depression.

And everything about -- I always said when I went to Europe when Jack was in the Air Force, right after we were married. I was 21 when we were married, and 22 or 23 when we went to Europe. And I did not realize that the center of art had been shifted to New York. I went to Paris hoping to see contemporary art, and my college -- my original college education ended with Picasso. So, I think that the response to Pop Art came from the big collectors, like the [Scholls?], who were able to assimilate contemporary images into their brains as art. I don't think it was any trouble for my generation. Does that make any sense at all?

JS: It does, and and I think you -- you had talked early on about your interest in design and also your training in design. And it does seem like, you know, you just mentioned all the -- that Tom's interest in formal issues and the focus on that, or that being the sort of driving force in terms of him making work, that's the place where the two of you really aligned.

CG: Tom was hugely interested in the formal issues. He talked a lot to me about the flatness of the canvas. And his phrase was it's stretched as tightly as it could be stretched from edge to edge. Visually, not actually, [laughs] but -- well yes, actually too. But visually stretched from edge to edge. And then, we went on from talking about stretched from edge to edge versus extending from the canvas into the viewer space. Which was very typical of a lot of Pop Art. And remember my telling you that I -- the reason I preferred *Great American Nude #24* to #26, which was the Mayer nude --

JS: Um, yeah, because it had a better design

CG: -- was because -- while our image was falling off the canvas into viewer space and the Mayer image was contained within the canvas. And that made all the difference in the world to me. But when you go back and think about all of Tom's contemporaries, not only were they deeply involved in the flatness of the canvas, but they were deeply involved in using the viewer space.

HFC: Yeah, that makes a lot of -- that makes a lot of sense. I mean, I actually think that's a really interesting thing. Jeffrey and I have talked about it; I don't know if it's come up in our discussions before, but Tom's relationship to the viewer space, I find really fascinating, right? Because with the *Still Lives*, right? Especially the three-dimensional ones.

CG: Yeah.

HFC: You know, they have -- they are three-dimensional, and yet there were all these other artists of a similar period who were making environments, and he was so firmly not making environments, right.

CG: Not making environments, right. [laughs] He was really affixed to the idea of the flatness of the canvas, the flatness of the space. And I don't -- he obviously began to -- after the heart of Pop Art, he began to think a lot more about occupying the viewer's space, because again, he began to make a lot of three-dimensional works. That -- patently three-dimensional, rather than optically three-dimensional. [laughs]

HFC: Right, and yet, trying to in some way still make them function as something to be looked at rather than something to walk into.

CG: Oh yeah. Something you didn't walk around behind. No, no typical sculpture.

HFC: Exactly, yeah. Yeah, so it's a really interesting thing that he's interested in that tension but he never breaks fully to the other side where it would become a sculpture, become an environment, become an object in space, rather than something that you look at that moves toward --

CG: I think he gave that a try with the -- oh, what do you call the images that are all stacked on the floor, some in front of, some behind each other.

JS: Oh, the *Standing Still Lives*. Yes.

CG: Yeah, the *Standing Still Lives*. That was the closest he ever came to -- but you couldn't go behind those either.

HFC: Right, definitely can't -- then you're looking at the --

CG: Then you're looking at the back of the picture.

HFC: So, I know we're -- we're running short on time. So, there are two things that I wanted to get in before we finish up. And one is -- we didn't talk about your -- the *Intimate Images* show, but this sort of connects with that. Is that you have actually, you know, you've been following -- you followed his career through his entire life, and I was interested in what you saw as significant paradigm shifts. Like, the moments that would stand out to you as fundamental shifts in his approach throughout his career.

CG: The most significant shift is the abstract paintings at the time of his death. I mean, those were shocking and so beautiful. And everything he ever would have wanted from de Kooning.

[laughs] Where -- after he said de Kooning has made all my art. To go back. I said, "How can you do that, when you defined your entire career as non-abstract?" He said, "Well, I couldn't throw away those beautiful pieces that were laying on the floor."

[laughter] But nothing was more significant than that. You can divide it up into -- between the classic Pop Art and his -- the last abstract works, which I thought were staggeringly beautiful. And such a shock to me, because I had just completed an exhibition of the studies of the *Sunset Nudes*, and I was wild about the *Sunset Nudes*. My least -- the things I connected with the least of his work were the wall drawings, the three-dimensional wall drawings. And I have no idea why. They just didn't stir me in the same way that, like, the *Sunset Nudes* did. Probably because the material that I love the most is most closely related to Matisse. I don't know, I haven't given that any thought. But --

JS: But you seem to really like the handmade things though, right.

CG: Yes, I like the handmade things, that's perfectly clear. That's an interesting thing about which of the artists -- I like prints. I like works on paper a lot, and I like prints a lot. And which among the early Pop artists whom I was close to were actually elegant printmakers, and Tom was not an elegant printmaker. [pauses] Roy was an elegant printmaker. Well, the finest of the printmakers of an entire generation is Wayne Thiebaud. Most would give their life for a Thiebaud etching.

[laughs] I was at the Laguna Art Museum looking at Thiebaud etchings yesterday, and they are just exquisite. There isn't a one -- Wayne made a couple of prints with Gemini in Los Angeles, and they kept -- Sidney kept asking Wayne to come back. But Wayne didn't want to make anything but etchings. And which confined him to Kathan Brown's studio in San Francisco. And the etchings that have come from that studio are phenomenal.

And ultimately, we -- Gemini did put in an etching studio, and a lot of -- I think Roy used the etching studio. I would have to go back and see who -- who of the Pop Art -- because virtually all of -- except Andy Warhol. I think they made one Warhol as a -- it was a fundraiser, a presidential fundraiser. But Warhol was not a resident printmaker at Gemini. But most of the Pop artists, excluding Tom, had been printmakers at Gemini at one time. And I never felt that Tom was as present in his prints as he was in his other art. I don't know, Jeffrey?

JS: Yeah, I mean, I think that, you know, that that kind of printmaking, like that kind of etching, that kind of process, was not something that he really got involved with. I mean, he worked with printmakers, especially sort of mid-career and on, but I think the printmaker really did a lot of the work. I mean, obviously he was involved with all the decision making and the design and everything, but it's not quite the same as the artist actually doing an etching plate, right? And I don't -- and Tom didn't do anything like that.

CG: Roy did a lot of woodcuts that were very physical. And maybe that's why I don't think of Tom as a printmaker, was because there was never any indication of anything really -- any real

physical involvement in his prints. I love the images, but they're just as good in a book to me. [laughs]

JS: Right. Yeah, yeah, no, I think you're right. I mean, the focus of his energy was on the original work.

CG: Yeah, that's -- I am surprised that he never wrote about the work significantly again himself after the Slim Stealingworth project. Because he wrote quite well.

JS: Right, that he doesn't sum -- I mean, because that book really sums everything up.

CG: You mean you think that that book summed everything up and he didn't feel the need to --

JS: No, no, he sums everything up up to that point, but he doesn't come back again later in the 2000s and do, like, you know, a follow-up to talk about that history from 1980 on.

CG: Why do you suppose? I mean, I know that the Slim Stealingworth project was a reaction to his inability to have a major exhibition in New York. That's what caused that project, and Claire was a constant companion on that project. But had he simply given up the idea of finding a way to put his word into the issue? Or did he not want to write about the art again? Or -- what do you think happened? Because it continued to be a problem.

JS: Right. Yeah, I mean, there are short essays about either, you know, one issue or a group of works. I mean, he did write sort of short catalogue essays for the abstract work and then

also for the other work, and he recorded his thoughts in diaries and things like that. But there's no sort of formalized summation the way there is in the Stealingworth book. And it would be sort of amazing to see that. I think again, just like the printmaking, the focus ends up just being on the paintings.

CG: You said there's an essay about the abstract work?

JS: Sorry?

CG: You said there's an essay about the abstract work at the very end?

JS: Ah, he wrote something for one of the Janis catalogues describing the process, so they're very short.

CG: Oh, no, I'm talking about 2004.

HFC: That discussion actually leads me, because unfortunately, we're gonna have to wrap up, but leads me to the one thing I really wanted to ask, which is sort of how you see Wesselmann's legacy, how you see his impact continuing into today and continuing onto artists working today. Or, you know, or even his impact on artists. You know, kind of throughout his career like where you see his work kind of having a legacy.

CG: You should ask that of a 25-year-old art historian.

[pauses] I find it almost impossible to describe what people of another generation are finding in work that I found something in. I don't think that -- I truly meant, I don't think I'm a good person to answer that question. Because what I found in Tom's work is, I would imagine, a hundred percent different than

what a young person or a young collector or a young historian might find in that work today. I assume that they find a huge interest in composition. I would assume that they would find an interest in media. I mean, in -- the whole history of collage is a topic of interest to almost everyone today, and Tom is a deep part of the history of collage. So, I would think that that would be something else that they would respond to.

The only other person who would have a significant influence in street materials and collage in the same timeframe would be Rauschenberg. And I think that most young people respond to Rauschenberg as one of the most significant artists of the twentieth century, along with Jasper Johns, who I see has a new exhibition coming. I don't personally respond to Jasper Johns's work, and I don't -- I've never known why. Because I was deeply involved in Rauschenberg's work and loved Bob, and I think a lot of my issues came from how I felt about the people, as well as how I felt about the work. They were so inextricably [laughs] in -- to combine, so that asking me at this late date to separate them is very difficult. And Johns just isn't a person who responds to people. So, maybe that's what -- maybe that's why I'm not deeply involved in that.

What would other young people think we have new in our environment because of Tom's work, or -- I think part of it is the legitimacy of graphic design. We have learned -- all the generations since mine have learned to involve ourselves deeply in graphic design and architecture. I'm as interested in architecture as I am in any other art form. And I'm still very interested in graphic design. And those, in the Pop Art day, were stepchildren. And I think those inclinations among people who make art nowadays -- there is no hierarchy that would keep

graphic design or any of its relatives in collage in a lower part of the hierarchy. I mean, it -- painting -- in the time of Abstract Expressionism, painting was the height of the hierarchy. And if Pop Art has left us with anything that's influenced every generation since then, it's a revision of that hierarchy.

HFC: Yeah, that makes -- that makes a lot of sense. And I think that Wesselmann's work is a particularly interesting contribution to that, because he was so invested in the history of art. Yeah.

CG: Oh, yeah. Does that get you where you want to go?

HFC: Yeah, absolutely. I was just -- I mean, it was -- it truly had no goal in mind. I just wanted to know what you thought about that question. So, absolutely.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

HFC: Thank you so much, Connie, for doing this second round. This was wonderful, as was the first one, and I learned so much. So, yeah, I'm really looking forward to continuing to talk to you about Wesselmann, but yeah, thank you again for doing another one with us.

CG: I love doing it. It makes me look back at my own records and own thoughts and see what happened 50 years ago.

[END OF AUDIO FILE]