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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with John Cage, 1974
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with John Cage on 1974 May 2 . The interview was conducted in the artist's home by Paul Cummings for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose. This is a rough transcription that may include typographical errors.

Interview

Paul Cummings: I think I'd really like to start at the beginning because you did paint at one point, didn't you? Very early on?

John Cage: I dropped out of college when I finished the sophomore year. The college was Pomona College.

PC: Had you drawn before that?

JC: No. I had taken piano lessons and I was, I think, like most people who go through American public education. They've all been warned against getting interested in anything seriously. The only craft they've been taught, the only thing they know how to do, is to write words.

PC: Sometimes.

JC: And I suspect actually that if you took a Gallup Poll you'd discover that virtually everybody in the country one time or another has written a poem.

PC: That's possible.

JC: Even taxicab drivers, etcetera. I think, because the one thing people learn to do is to read and write. But we are warned against learning anything else.

PC: And don't learn that too well.

JC: So since I was convinced that I would be a writer when I was in college, I was also convinced that college was of no use to a writer because they required everyone to read the same books. So I persuaded my mother and father that going to Europe would be more useful for someone who was going to write than continuing in college and they agreed. My mother was interested in writing; my father was an inventor. When I got to Europe I was struck by, first of all, Gothic architecture and a teacher who had been at Pomona College came through and asked me what I was doing. He was Jose Pijuan. Do you know his name?

PC: Right.

JC: He was engaged in making a current events list for the United Nations, or the League of Nations.

PC: Oh, that's what he was doing.

JC: Yes. He insisted that if I was going to be interested in architecture, that I should be interested in Modern architecture. So he introduced me to an architect named [Ernő] Goldfinger [1902-1987] and I worked in his studio, curiously enough, drawing Greek Gods.

PC: Modern architecture:

JC: But, while I was in Paris, I went to many exhibitions of paintings and I went to concerts of music.

PC: Had you seen much before in California as far as art was concerned?

JC: No. My knowledge of music had been limited to the 19th century, and I was just getting interested in Beethoven; I was unaware of Bach. I knew nothing about Modern painting. If anything, my interest in the arts really stayed in the 19th century. So it was in Europe, in Paris, that I saw Modern painting and heard Modern music. And I came to the conclusion that I could do either one of them. So I began doing both and for three years I both painted and wrote music.

PC: What kind of paintings did you do? Because I never saw any photographs, or anything, in fact. Do they

exist?

JC: The first things, of course, were squinting at the landscape, since one knew there was no such thing as black. And then simply painting with more or less pure pigments. It was in the spirit, but of course, not the quality, of Van Gogh.

PC: Oh, really.

JC: That sort of thing. And then the music was extremely mathematical. I unfortunately lost the earlier pieces. I discarded them at one point.

PC: Do any of those paintings exist, or drawings?

JC: One of the paintings exists somewhere; I'm not sure where it is. I gave one of the last ones I made, which became a poster, to then current interests in art. What it was; was that I would look at a landscape and instead of seeing it straight; I would see it as though it were spherical. As though it was reflected in a headlight of an automobile, you see?

PC: Oh, I see, yes.

JC: So my subjects, to make that clear, became architecture. Houses. So I would look at houses and make them in this curious roundness. Then the very last ones were when I had a painting exhibition at Scripps College. This was in California, after I returned from Europe.

PC: So that was what, '31, '32, '33, somewhere in there?

JC: Somewhere in there. I had met, through my interests in painting; I had met Galka Scheyer [art dealer and collector, 1889-1945] and also the Arensbergs [Louise and Walter, art collectors, 1879-1953 and 1878-1954 respectively]. I knew Galka much better than I knew the Arensbergs, but I saw their collections. And at the same time, I earned my living through the Depression giving lectures on Modern art and music. I went from house to house and sold ten lectures for two dollars and a half. So people would get a little ticket and I'd explain to them that I was enthusiastic about both subjects, knew nothing, but that each week I would learn everything that could be learned.

PC: And relay it to them.

JC: And relay it to them, you see. So that I would start my week, for instance, knowing that at the end of the week I would give a lecture on Schoenberg, or Picasso, or Dali or whatever. And I made as studious an examination of Modern painting and Modern music as I could in that way. When I came to the [Arnold] Schoenberg [1874-1951] lecture, which was too difficult for me to illustrate with the piano, and there were no recordings at the time, I went to Richard Buhlig [pianist, 1880-1952] and asked him if he would come and illustrate the lecture. He was the first to play the Opus 11 [Beethoven piece] in Berlin. He refused, of course, to illustrate my lecture; but he agreed to teach me the composition, because I showed him the music I was writing. And then the time came when he said he couldn't teach me anymore. He thought my work should be published. And no one, neither Galka nor the Arensbergs, or anyone else had been as enthusiastic about my painting. So I recalled what I heard the architect in Paris say: "In order to be an architect, you must devote your life to music." And I decided, well, I'm into architecture, and I didn't want to do that, and that's why I picked up music.

PC: I see.

JC: Instead of painting. So I decided at this point that I should specialize in music and I stopped painting. In the last painting, instead of using brushes, I used steel wool to apply the paint on a canvas. So the paint was extremely thin. And the image was entirely abstract. By that time through this survey of modern painting and music, my favorite painter was [Piet] Mondrian [painter, 1892-1944].

PC: Oh really? What a fantastic shift.

JC: Well, of course, I had other interests; I was fascinated by everything, but I was really devoted to Mondrian, devoted to Schoenberg in music. Then it was in '33 or '35, '35 I guess, I married Xenia Kashevaroff [artist, 1913-1995].

PC: Now where did you meet her?

JC: My mother had an arts and crafts shop which was non-profit. Mother was the club editor of *The Los Angeles Times*. She started the crafts shop in order to give craftsmen an opportunity to sell their goods.

PC: Oh, one of the Depression-kind of projects?

JC: Right. I had no job. No one could get any work. So I either did library research for my father, who was an inventor, or other people's: people who were running for governor, who wanted this data or whatever; I would do library research for them. On occasion I sat in my mother's arts and crafts shop and sold the goods and wrote music in the back of the shop. One day into the shop came Xenia, and the moment I saw her I was convinced that we were going to be married. It was love at first sight on my part, not on hers. I went up and asked her if I could help her and she said she needed no help whatsoever. Do you know Xenia?

PC: I met her.

JC: And so I retired to my desk and my music, and she looked around and finally went out. But I was convinced that she would return. Of course, in a few weeks she did. This time I had carefully prepared what I was going to say to her. That evening we had dinner and the same evening I asked her to marry me.

PC: What did she think of all this, all of a sudden?

JC: She was put off a little bit, but a year or so later she agreed. I think we were married in '35. So at first we lived in the same apartment house as my mother and father did; and I was, at the moment, studying with Schoenberg. I had meanwhile, gone off to New York to play with Henry Cowell [pianist, 1897-1965].

PC: You had met him before, Henry Cowell?

JC: No, this was -- Buhlig said my music should be published and send it to Henry Cowell. So I sent it to Henry Cowell and he said that he didn't think I had found myself. He would not publish it but he would present the music at a new music concert out in San Francisco. So I hitchhiked up to San Francisco. It was a clarinet solo, which is now published, a sonata for clarinet. The clarinetist came to the concert and turned out to have never looked at the music. This disappointed me deeply because I had made the trip without any money. So I simply played it on the piano with one finger as on a typewriter. But I had met Henry Cowell and that was very good. When I came to study with Adolph Weiss [composer, 1891-1971] here in New York, Cowell was teaching music at the New School and let me come to all of his classes. So I studied with Cowell and with Weiss in preparation for Schoenberg about a year later.

PC: How did you find Schoenberg as an instructor? As a teacher?

JC: Well, that is all detailed in my article, I think, in *A Year from Monday*, called "Mosaic." I don't think it's really proper to --

PC: No, I'm just curious.

JC: Well, he was a fantastic teacher and I worshipped him. I believed absolutely everything he said. I tremble --

PC: It's important.

JC: So anyway, after we were married, when I stopped studying with Schoenberg, it was necessary to take some steps not to live so close to my mother and father. First of all, it had become clear in my studies with Schoenberg that I had no feeling for harmony, and I became, through a friend of Galka Scheyers', interested in noises. He was Oskar von Fischinger [1900-1967], who made abstract films. I helped him make his films in order to supposedly write music for his films.

PC: What kind of work did you do on the film?

JC: His images were colors, colored cardboard. They were strung on wires which proceeded from the camera to the screen in the distance like 20, 25 feet. I had a pole with a chicken feather on one end and every time he instructed me to move the cardboards, and then to still them because he couldn't take the frame until it was not moving. His work was very boring and mine was very tedious. He went to sleep once, and he smoked cigars, and his cigar burnt up the whole film. I ran to get a pail of water and threw it over his camera, which destroyed his camera.

PC: That's what happened to your career as a film-maker.

JC: I got involved with this percussion music and this led to -- oh, the way we got on to percussion music was moving away from the apartment. Xenia was interested in crafts and in book-binding, and she did later those valises for Marcel [Duchamp] [painter, 1887-1968]. But she was always a marvelous craftsman. We went to live in a large house in Santa Monica run by Hazel Dreis [1891-1964], a very fine book binder. I mean a real book-binder, not a case maker, but a real binding. And we both bound books. Xenia did most of it. I enjoyed designing the covers and so forth. I also wrote music there. Then, in the evening all the book binders became musicians and played in my orchestra. So because it was percussion music, I think it brought the interest of modern dancers. I wrote a few pieces for this dance group at UCLA, which was nearby, and also for the athletic

department that had underwater swimmers who swam underwater ballet. That was how I discovered dipping a gong in a tub of water and making a sound that way. Because I found that the swimmers couldn't hear the music when it was above water, but could if it was both in and out. So this connection with the dancers led me to the possibility of getting employment working with dancers. I went one day to San Francisco and got actually four jobs in one day and of the four I chose to work with Bonnie Bird [dancer, 1914-1995], who was in the Martha Graham [choreographer, 1894-1991] Dance Company, and who was teaching at The Cornish School in Seattle. The Cornish School was an extraordinary school because of Nelly Cornish's [1876-1956] insistence that each person not specialize, but study all of the things that were offered.

PC: Oh really?

JC: And they also had a radio studio and a theatre and they had an art gallery. Since I knew Galka Scheyers I began organizing and saw very soon that people there didn't know the work of [Paul] Klee [painter, 1899-1940], or [Wassily] Kandinsky [painter, 1866-1944], or [Lyonel] Feininger [painter, 1871-1956], or [inaudible] and I put on four shows of those painters' work there.

PC: Oh, I see.

JC: And that aroused the interest of Morris Graves [painter, 1910-2001] and Mark Tobey [painter, 1890-1976] who were living there. I met both of them and they also were interested in my music and I naturally became interested in their painting. It was a walk with Mark Tobey from The Cornish School down to Skid Row where there was a nice Japanese restaurant -- he would stop us as we walked, Xenia and me, and point out things to see. It was that walk that opened my eyes, I think, more than anything. My love of Mondrian continued, but my eyes were opened, even to Mondrian, by Tobey, I think. To explain that last statement I'd say this: there was a show at the Matisse Gallery, not where it is now but where it used to be, with black paintings, that were largely black and white -- that was the thread going through the whole show -- and the painters were many different ones. There was a Mondrian in that show, even though it had some other colors than black and white. I happened to go to that show in the late afternoon. I noticed that the sun was setting, that the whites were not white and that the purism of the art was not pure because all of the surfaces were filled with cracks. Now I would have not noticed that if I had not been open up by Tobey.

PC: What kind of things did he say?

JC: I could say similar things now. I could say, look at this, look at that line, etcetera.

PC: The nail-hole.

JC: Look at everything. Don't close your eyes to the world around you. Look and become curious and interested in what there is to see. That's what enabled me to see that the white paintings of [Robert] Rauschenberg [1925-2008], later on, were not empty spaces.

PC: What did you see them as, the Rauschenbergs? As surfaces or textures?

JC: Inevitably, you're receptive to the environment, both in terms of the falling of light and in the falling of particles. In my article on Rauschenberg, I say that they are simply airports for particles.

PC: Tobey was playing the piano then, wasn't he?

JC: He always does. Still.

PC: He was still writing music then, wasn't he?

JC: He doesn't write much music, but he writes some.

PC: He writes little songs for children.

JC: Mostly unfinished things.

PC: How did you like living in Seattle? You spent some time there, didn't you?

JC: I liked it very much. What was important in Seattle was that so little was going on that anything that did go on was taken seriously. At that time, the gallery at the University of Washington would have a show that would last a month or six weeks and we would go and go and go and talk and talk and think about that one thing. Or if something came to the theater we would go to it and take it very seriously.

PC: What was that Cornish School like, because I've always been fascinated by the people who taught there over the years.

JC: It was a very lively place.

PC: Were the students professional people?

JC: Well, the art department was mostly geared, unfortunately, towards commercial art, and that was why when I gave the show of Klee's work, beautiful Klees, the head of the art department said that it was unfortunate he had hurried so to complete the show, because had he taken more time with his work, it would have been better.

PC: You're kidding.

JC: And he was the head of the Art Department. That was, of course, in the late 30's. Put nevertheless it showed a profound ignorance of what was happening.

PC: That's fantastic. You moved up and down the West Coast for most of the 30's, didn't you? Once you came back from France?

JC: Yes.

PC: What was the cultural life like for you? Were there exhibitions to see? Was there any culture?

JC: Well, there were a few things to see. The result was one really saw what one saw. Here in New York, unfortunately, now I see very little because there is so much to see.

PC: You did some dancing in Seattle, didn't you?

JC: I worked with Bonnie Bird and wrote the music for her, and I organized the percussion orchestra and made tours around the Northwest and to Mills College every summer. And that's where I met [Laszlo] Moholy-Nagy [painter and photographer, 1895-1946] and all those people from The School of Design in Chicago, and was invited to go to Chicago and join the faculty there.

PC: I couldn't understand how you got that invitation. You met him in California then?

JC: At Mills College. They had brilliant summer schools. The whole School of Design came plus, say, four dance companies. Four composers, one for each dance company. I was invited to compose for Marian van Tuyl [choreographer, 1907-1987] and Lou Harrison [composer, 1917-2003], for Louise Kloepper, [choreographer, 1910-1996] who was from Wisconsin, and a girl who recently died, Williamson, what was her first name? She wrote for another one, and then Jose Limon [choreographer, 1908-1972]. Anyway, Merce [Cunningham] [choreographer, 1919-2009] had gone to one of those, because I met him in Seattle. And he had been a student of Bonnie Bird, and he played in a percussion orchestra. When he went to Mills College for the first time, it was the summer they invited Martha Graham. She immediately grabbed him for her company. So he came to New York, and, I think, perhaps a year in San Francisco. That's what it was, a year in San Francisco and a year in Los Angeles, attempting to establish a center for experimental music. I wrote to every company, every university in the country and I got consistent nos from everyone, except the Psychology Department at the University of Iowa and President Reinhart at Mills College. They were both willing to do it, but neither one had the money. And it was impossible to raise the money. So rather than doing either one of those, I accepted the Moholy-Nagy invitation to Chicago. It was there that I did the music for a Columbia Workshop play.

PC: With Kenneth, Kenneth Patchen [poet, 1911-1952].

JC: With Kenneth Patchen. Xenia had inherited a small amount of money, and at the end of that year, we decided that since the fan mail for the Patchen play had been very good, we would come to New York and make our fortune. I would write music for radio and films and so forth, using sound effects, because I was still working principally with percussion. Well, it turned out that when I got here, all the fan mail that was received by CBS here was negative. So there was no possible employment. Also we were penniless, absolutely penniless. We spent the first two weeks living as guests of Peggy Guggenheim [art collector, 1898-1979] and Max Ernst [painter, 1891-1976]. We had met Max in Chicago. Then Merce wrote, it was the summer, from Bennington College where he was with Martha Graham, saying he and Jean Erdman [choreographer, 1916] were going to give a program and they needed some music. Jean offered her apartment. She's married now to Joseph Campbell [scholar, 1904-1987]. So we took the apartment, which had a piano, and I wrote *Credo in Us* in return for the rent. Then I had to write other music for dancers. I charged five dollars an hour. I wrote other music to just get something to eat.

PC: What did you do at The Institute of Design? What kind of activity did you have?

JC: I started teaching people percussion. Following more or less Buhlig's principles, but in the say of sound. They, unfortunately, at the same time had a school with no walls that went to the ceiling. So Moholy came in one day and said would you please confine your classes to theory. I had, at the time, 300 instruments. It made such

a racket that the other teachers couldn't stand it. So I took all my instruments out of the School of Design and to The University of Chicago, where I also had a job working as an accompanist for Katherine Manning.

PC: What were the instruments? All kinds of things?

JC: Yes, both conventional and unconventional, like break drums and flower pots and so on, and exotic instruments. All kinds of drums and gongs and symbols -- everything I could. I experimented a great deal to find things to make sound. In the Cornish School, which already made a piece of recordings amplified in combination with instruments -- not as loud -- because I was able to use the radio studio possibilities, and also did that in the Patchen play, using things that had been sound effects. That's what I was so excited about.

PC: So you were happy to be in New York?

JC: I instantly met all the painters who were here because of the trouble in Europe. And I met, among others, Mondrian, Max, Joseph Cornell [sculptor, 1903-1972], David Hare [sculptor, 1917-1992], etcetera; all of the people who Peggy showed as Art of This Century [gallery in New York City] later on. I, of course, was very ambitious to give a concert of percussion music in New York. Peggy wanted it to open the Art of This Century gallery, which, as you know, [Frederick] Kiesler [1890-1965] designed.

PC: Right.

JC: But I also was invited by The Museum of Modern Art to give a concert and it was to be sponsored by The League of Composers.

PC: Right.

JC: So I automatically accepted it. When Peggy found out I accepted it, she canceled her show and she also refused what she previously agreed to do. She refused to pay for the transportation of the instruments from Chicago to New York. I had no money to pay for them so it was a terrible, terrible time financially. It really was at the point where we literally didn't have a penny. There is a certain exhilaration in not having anything that doesn't exist when you have a nickel. But if you literally don't have anything, it can be quite lively.

PC: In what way?

JC: You feel free.

PC: You mean in terms of what?

JC: You feel totally free, as a necessity. If you had a nickel, you are apt to feel miserly. Particularly someone who was more or less my age. As I got more and more employment writing music for dances and even for one or two singers, one singer really, when I would see something I wanted I would do it, like I had already done with Galka Scheyer, I would buy it on the installment plan. I had bought three Galvinsky's [*sic*]. I was fascinated by those variations. The next thing I bought was a [Roberto] Matta [painter, 1911-2002] from a show at the Julien Levy Gallery, again on the installment plan. Then Julien invited me to contribute something to the show in honor of Marcel [Duchamp], and I made a chessboard, which was shown recently in Chicago, in connection with the Duchamp exhibit. It was another exhibition called "New Ideas and Forms" -- "Recent Ideas and Forms in Art", and Rue [Winterbotham] Shaw who's the president of the Arts Company [*sic* - Arts Club of Chicago] owns the chessboard.

PC: So, that's interesting. You've had an evolving collection, haven't you, over the years?

JC: Oh, those things. The Matta and the Galvinsky all stayed when Xenia and I separated; they all stayed with her, and so did the books and the bindings and everything. I think that fact of our separating and my decision for her to have the paintings -- actually she didn't take them all. I had also bought her a white painting of Tobey's which Marion Willard [art dealer, 1904-1985] did not put in the exhibition, out kept back in her office. She didn't think it should be in the show for some reason. It had absolutely no representation in it and, I think that's the beautiful one, you know? I bought that. Unfortunately, I don't have it any longer because later when I needed money I sold it back to Marion, and the very same day she sold it for twice the value. Of course, now it would be out of sight.

PC: But you have had a number of Tobey's over the years, haven't you?

JC: I have had two, now I have a third.

PC: That one over there.

JC: His work succeeds, even when I'm determined not to own things, it succeeds in making me feel possessive.

PC: He'd appreciate that.

JC: Well, he knows it.

PC: But, I mean, that's marvelous. Can we talk about the concert at The Museum of Modern Art? Because that was a very important event for you at that time, was it not?

JC: I thought it was. It was not as important as I thought. It was highly publicized and highly reviewed, even in *Life Magazine*. So I thought that my fortune would be made. I was very naive and quite ambitious, but I discovered very quickly that no matter how well known you are, it doesn't mean anything in terms of employment or willingness to further your work or do anything.

PC: It just means that more people know you.

JC: Yes, that's all it means. They don't know you for very long either. I think from all that publicity, the one letter that came to me was from some lady in Tennessee who had a rhythm band and saw some connection between what I was doing and what she was doing. Dan Meurson [*sic*] and Jean Erdman came back to New York and gave a program, and I found the work of Martha Graham, at the time, uninteresting. When it became literary, I let it go, and so forth, and I kept persuading Meurson, kept saying that he should leave Martha and do his own work and that I would help with the music. So that began from '43 on; we gave more and more concerts and finally tours across the country, giving programs. Mostly we didn't make money that way but we would make ends meet. On one of those occasions in '48, even though they paid nothing for the program except to just house us and feed us, and in the end to give us presents. We went to Black Mountain and that was of course very important from the point of view that interests you now, of painting, you know. I found my ideas were absolutely like two peas in a pod with those of Josef Albers [painter, 1888-1976].

PC: Oh really?

JC: The ideas I had were those that I describe in an article called "Forerunners of Modern Music." It was seeing the mind and the heart as a dialectic and that there should be a structure which admitted the freedom, and that's exactly what Albers believed. You know, he makes these vigorous designs and then carefully breaks the rules, so that we were seeing eye to eye. Later, when I developed my work with Johns' operations, he became actually unfriendly. Anni Albers [printmaker, 1899-1994] didn't; she would still accept and enjoy my work. I think that he wouldn't.

PC: Why wouldn't he?

JC: Because he absolutely insisted on a strict organization of things. Anyway, not at that time, but a subsequent time; I met [Willem] de Kooning [painter, 1904-1997]. It was my suggestion to Albers when he asked who in New York should teach there at Black Mountain. Besides myself, he said he's like someone who was entirely different. I suggested de Kooning. Partly because I knew he was different, because I didn't particularly like de Kooning's work. Since I didn't, and since I felt so close to Albers, I thought he would be just the right person. I think he was. I think Albers was grateful for that idea. It is amusing that both of them later connected in one way or another -- what Bill called jail [inaudible]. But then it was later when I went to Black Mountain that I met the next really important person for me in painting. That was Rauschenberg, who weaned me out of Mondrian completely. And curiously enough, Rauschenberg himself is not weaned free of Mondrian. But it was probably because he was not free of Mondrian that I was able to see his work because I could see Mondrian in it.

PC: That's fascinating, so few people have made that observation about him.

JC: His work, if you look carefully, I mean you don't even have to look carefully, it's all Mondrian.

PC: Horizontals and verticals.

JC: That's all Mondrian, that's all it is. What's marvelous is a picture of Eisenhower could very well be someone else.

PC: Oh right, right.

JC: It makes absolutely no difference. Because the thing that's going on there is this interplay of horizontals and verticals.

PC: And the panels. Why do you think he used those images, just to be perverse?

JC: No, no. He's quite aware of it. We didn't ever have to have discussions or arguments or anything because we knew even before the other one said something what he was going to say. Almost like an alter-ego.

PC: Really? That's fantastic.

JC: I think my ideas about Rauschenberg are fairly lucidly given in that text on him.

PC: Have they changed much since you wrote that?

JC: Not essentially. Our friendship is not what it was. I don't think that the community of interests is different. I object to a number of things that marred our friendship. I don't know if that's so interesting particularly because that could be altered. The friendship could reoccur. I simply don't enjoy many of the people whom he surrounds himself with because there are people who say yes to everything he says, and I don't find that climate interesting.

PC: No, you can't grow in that.

JC: No. I was absolutely in seventh heaven when I knew both Rauschenberg and Johns together. The frequent evenings that we had with Merce were unbelievably delightful and inspiring. It was when Bob [Rauschenberg] and Jasper [Johns] [artist, 1930] had lofts in the same buildings and one was on Water and one on Front. I forget which was which. Before that it was Bob on another street. I think it was Fulton.

PC: Oh, by the fish market.

JC: I'm always speaking of being open minded, but I can't, I actually tend not to open my mind unless I'm absolutely obliged to.

PC: What provokes the opening?

JC: I don't know, but I felt so delighted with Bob's work that it was impossible to see Johns' work at the beginning. That's why I wrote a [inaudible] under the name of Leo Castelli [art dealer, 1907-1999] because he was able to see it immediately, whereas I wasn't. When I would go to both studios, I was interested and devoted to Bob's work, but somehow I was put off really -- isn't that curious -- by Jasper's which now, of course, I love. But I was not able to see it at first. I think that's evidence of its great strength.

PC: To take time.

JC: It was a discovery of great importance and I think it still is. Just the other day I found a reason for being heartened to his work. I'd been talking in a recent text called "The Future of Music" about the differences between process and object.

PC: You were saying about the process and object.

JC: Yes. Though I say something like this in the text I wrote on Jasper, near the beginning, and I tend to forget it, and it was aroused again in me by a philosopher at Fairleigh Dickinson, where I spoke the other day, saying that though he agreed with me about the inclusiveness of process and the exclusiveness of object, he thought that we needed both, and that's precisely what Johns' work gives. When you see a flag or a target, you see that object at the same time that you see that it's not an object, but a process. And that's a very difficult thing to give and a very difficult thing to do or to think. Yet he does it.

PC: Fascinating how that all fits together in his work.

JC: It's just extraordinary. What is further remarkable is that his work doesn't all do the same thing so that you are continually having to live over again.

PC: Well, you discover something new in it, too.

JC: But you have to yourself change. It's not as though he's doing it for you because he doesn't make it easy. That's always the problem, at least for me. There is something relatively seductive about Bob's work.

PC: Well, I was just curious. Rauschenberg's work deals a great deal with human beings in costumes and things.

JC: It varies.

PC: But you've written music and it's been all sort of combined, and I'm curious; how much does it work together, if it does necessarily?

JC: We learned to work independently and we just bring it all together. That's what distinguishes our work.

PC: I'm just curious about how everything was put together. Is it totally separate and then comes together?

JC: Yes, it developed from my notion about rhythmic structure, rather than a tonality structure in music. This enabled me to work with dancers in such a way that neither the music nor the dance came first, but they both came at the same time because they existed in the same rhythmic structure. As Merce and I worked longer and longer, our meetings became less frequent. In other words we did not feel the obligation to be tied together. So that the meeting points became farther apart and finally became realistic. This of course is the result of much Oriental thought, or thoughts that are like Oriental thoughts. Namely that you don't have to put the body and spirit together because they are not separate. You don't have to put the music and the dance together because they are going to be experienced in the same room. Do you see?

PC: So that what you saw visually --

JC: And this is also interested in the theater too, and it's double that in Artaud which was influential in both parts.

PC: Well, did you read books on theater?

JC: Merce had read many books on dancing and theater.

PC: But have you read much or not?

JC: Well, we had all these discussions and talks.

PC: So it comes in. What about Rauschenberg, has he?

JC: He likes reading.

PC: It fascinates me though that process bringing three things together seems to work all the time. Or is that because you know each other?

JC: It doesn't always work. We're just discovering that this year. This year Merce has had the advance. Have you gone to any of them? Two or three each weekend.

PC: No, I haven't gone to any of them.

JC: And the music instead of being our music has been constantly changing and there has been a cross section of new music by younger composers. I think there have been fifteen different composers represented in these weekends, and it's been a remarkable experience. One thing that makes it difficult, the dancers, out of physical necessity, have a rhythm which is periodic because of the two legs. They are bound to have something resembling a beat. If the music also has a beat and those beats are not together, then it is both very difficult for an observer, and it's difficult for the dancers. The same kind of difference of beat can exist between the dancers because it doesn't disturb someone moving slowly, that someone is moving rapidly. But if you had a different tapping so to speak, that is necessary, that is physically necessary in the dance, and you have an additional one, a very definite one in the music, it produces an awkward, difficult situation.

PC: It's not identified.

JC: If the difficulty is interesting, in the way that we said Jasper's work is interesting, but I'm not sure. There is where you have an example of a certain close-mindedness on my part, even though I speak continually of open-mindedness. The other thing I find difficult is that light work, which is a collaboration between David Tudor [pianist, 1926-1996] and Tony Martin [light artist, 1937], and combination with the dancers here. Tony Martin's work is entirely two-dimensional; the dance by its nature is three-dimensional. To have polka dots suddenly appear on the dancers faces seems to me wrong. I can imagine three-dimensional light, but two-dimensional light in relation to the dancing is, to me, just wrong.

PC: So the dance is three-dimensional?

JC: Yes, you're definitely right.

PC: You can't have a one-dimensional dance? Unless it's from Dali.

JC: I didn't enjoy it and I thought it was extremely exhausting to look at. The one person who was more open-minded than I was about it was Louise Nevelson [sculptor, 1899-1988], which was very interesting. I found her a marvelous woman.

PC: Very fascinating. You mentioned Black Mountain. You were there a number of times, weren't you? Once or twice?

JC: I always thought I had gone two times, but I went three times. '48, '52, and '53.

PC: So how did you like that? Because that was a different kind of group and a different kind of milieu.

JC: Oh, it was marvelous because we had our meetings over the meals, which were of course very poor, but the conversations were very interesting and lively and so was work. And I was undisturbed by people because no one wanted to study with me.

PC: There were things like the Satie Festival and various things, and you know, what everybody now calls the Proto Happening.

JC: That happening was a manifesto really, but the idea that we just mentioned of the possibility of things coming together. Directly influenced by the theater and Artaud. But I don't think Artaud himself had those ideas, but what he said gave people those ideas.

PC: Yeah, I thought Artaud had quite a different, I haven't read that.

JC: At the end of a play he suggests that should be done. Doesn't bear any resemblance to a happening. But his chapter on the importance of sounds and actions, independent of texts, does. In the field of painting the next thing that is very important, and that we haven't mentioned at all, for me, is Marcel Duchamp.

PC: Yes, when do you meet? You meet him once, but then you got to know him later.

JC: Well, first with Peggy in '43. But I admired him so much, and more and more, more than Mondrian. I kept a proper distance, respectful distance even though I wrote music for his sequence in *Dreams That Money Can Buy*. I still didn't feel that that gave me the right to know him. But then when I saw, fortunately, some five or six years before he died, that he was getting quite old, I thought it would be foolish not to be with him as often as possible. So I asked him to teach me chess. That way I was often with him. I never asked him questions about his work, but that's well known.

PC: Well, had you, I don't know, how do you say it?

JC: It dawned on me that Marcel had done this 50 years, 40 years before. I saw him in Venice at Peggy Guggenheim's and I said, "Oh, Marcel, you did that long before I did." And then he smiled and said, "I must have been 50 years ahead of my time." I had never taken his work seriously, that is to say, his musical work. Whereas now, it's perfectly clear that his work in music is as serious as music is.

PC: I'm curious about the Duchamp relationship. Obviously, you did spend a lot of time with him, the chess and things. You say you didn't talk about his work? But did he talk about it? Did you talk about art ever? Or was that not one of the mutual topics?

JC: Mostly not. There remained for me and for many people, as you know -- and you can tell by reading the catalogs and so forth -- many people approach Marcel's work as though it was a puzzle to be solved, and reasons to be found for doing what he did. This attitude has never appealed to me. What appealed to me far more were the correspondences that I saw, which I've written about, between him and what I learned from Oriental philosophy. What especially fascinated me, now I see the same ideas that were in Marcel in [Henry David] Thoreau [philosopher, 1817-1862]. Those correspondences give me much more than knowing for one reason or another why he did what he did. It is particularly interesting because he denied any direct contact with Oriental thought.

PC: But don't you think there are a lot of those whose ideas float around under different disguises?

JC: Yes, I do think so, and that Europe has a lot of it built into it. In [inaudible] it came in through Islamic thought, or through [Arthur] Schopenhauer [philosopher, 1788-1860], in one place or another.

PC: But there was a great deal of interest in that thought when he was growing up in Europe, in that generation.

JC: But he said not. That was one of the few questions I did ask him. But what interested me more than anything was just being with him and noticing, in so far as I could pay attention, how he lived.

PC: In terms of --

JC: In retrospect, or what they say in Watergate, in hindsight. It's absolutely marvelous that I should have been with him, in what must have been for him an extremely dramatic time in his life. He was fully aware that he had a large work that nobody knew anything about. And that he had something really big under his sleeve. I never

knew and we refrained in the conversation like I said. He kept saying, "I simply don't understand why artists permit people to look at their work at just any distance." That struck me as being an interesting idea, which it is. But what it was was a clue to what he was actually doing.

PC: But do you think the fact that that was a clue, that some people do look at his things, as a manifestation, as games and puzzles.

JC: No, that is not a puzzle or a game. That is a principle that can be applied to something that's not a puzzle. He is saying for instance, why do you look at a tree from just any distance? There's nothing puzzling about that.

[END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE]

PC: To continue on Duchamp for a bit. Was he a good chess teacher?

JC: I was using chess as a pretext to be with him. I didn't learn, unfortunately, while he was alive to play well. I play better now, although I still don't play very well. But I play well enough now that he would be pleased, if he knew that I was playing better. So that when he would instruct me in chess, rather than thinking about it in terms of chess, I thought about it in terms of Oriental thought. Also he said, for instance, "don't just play your side of the game; play both sides." That's a brilliant remark and something people spend their lives trying to learn. Not in chess, but in anything.

PC: Right. Oh absolutely. You've been interested in Oriental thought for twenty-some years now. Has it always worked for you in the sense of providing systems and structures? What was the initial appeal?

JC: I got involved in Oriental thought out of necessity. I was very disconcerted both personally and as an artist in the middle forties. I saw no reason for writing music in a society as it was then and with the arts as they were. I saw that all the composers were writing in different ways, that almost no one among them, nor among the listeners, could understand what I was doing, in the way that I understood it. So that anything like communication as a *raison d'être* for art was not possible. I determined to find other reasons, and I found those reasons because of my personal problems at the time, which brought about the divorce from Xenia. I considered psychoanalysis, but I didn't engage in it because a particular psychologist said he'd fix me so that I could write more music, and I was already writing too much. So through circumstances, I substituted the study of Oriental thought for psychoanalysis. In other words, it was something that didn't amuse me, to grope with my -- myself. But it was something I absolutely needed.

PC: It is fascinating that you picked that. I mean there could have been various other ways or ideas.

JC: There aren't too many. What would you suggest?

PC: Well, I don't know what kind of problems there were at that point.

JC: Well, if you had a disturbance both about your work and about your daily life, what are you going to do?

PC: Well, you try a lot of things, I suppose. Right?

JC: None of the doctors can help you, our society can't help you; our education doesn't help us. It's singularly lacking in any such instruction. Furthermore, our religion doesn't help us. The Methodist Church that I was raised in spent its whole time raising money for the Foreign Missionary Society.

PC: You should have become a foreign missionary.

JC: There isn't much help for someone who is in trouble in our society. I had eliminated psychiatry as a possibility. You have Oriental thought, you have mythology. I already knew Joseph Campbell [scholar, 1904-1987] very well. The closeness of mythology to Oriental thought made me think of Oriental Philosophy as a possibility. Another possibility is astrology, curiously enough. It can be useful in such cases. Or occult thought, or the thinking, for instance, of Rudolf Steiner. But by the time you get into actual philosophy, you're practically in Oriental philosophy. So that's why I did it. It was a book of [Aldous] Huxley's [writer, 1894-1963] that led me to make this conclusion. It was a book called *The Perennial Philosophy*. In that book I saw that all thought of that nature was the same, whether it came from Europe or Asia. I found that the flavor of Zen Buddhism appealed to me more than any other. It was tastier. And at that very time D.T. Suzuki [writer, 1870-1966] came here so I was with him for three years [1949-51].

PC: That was the end of the forties?

JC: Yes, then my next thought was, when I got to know him a bit, was if he would okay my music, then I would be hunky-dory. So I asked him one day, "What have you to say about music?" And he said, "I know nothing about music." I subsequently saw an interesting book that he wrote on the arts. But what he was saying in his teachings was I will not give you any diploma. Which is the correct Zen teaching?

PC: Keep on --

JC: Yes.

PC: That's what's wrong with diplomas I think. People think that you stop. They should give out keys or something, rather than wall hangings.

JC: Then when I met through Joseph Campbell and Jean Erdman, I met Alan Watts [philosopher, 1915-1973]. I criticized to him his frequent reference -- when in his books, he thought music would explain what he was about, just like Beethoven. I explained to him that Beethoven was not doing what Zen was talking about, and that we were just beginning in our work to do that. So he came to a concert of mine and disliked it very much. He said there was no reason for him to go to such a concert listening to the sounds, you know. Christian Will said to him "Yes, but the sounds are somewhat different in a concert hall." Anyway, Watts then wrote in a text called, I forget, *Square Zen and Beat Zen* ["Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen"], or something. He wrote that I had misinterpreted Zen Buddhism. That caused me to, in the preface to *Silence*, to defend Zen against me, by saying that I would not have done what I was doing except for Zen, but that I didn't want Zen blamed for what I was doing. When I sent a copy of *Silence* to Alan Watts, his whole view had changed and he then... In other words, he was a man who had no understanding of the arts. He had a good understanding of the language, and books and you could tell that by visiting him in his home and by the pictures he had on the wall, which were 1890ish.

PC: Oh really.

JC: So anyway once I wrote *Silence*, he was in accord with my work and frequently came to my concerts.

PC: I've always been fascinated by the writings that you do and the lectures and all of the enormous amount of activity. Yet, it's done so gently it seems.

JC: I try to do, in the different things, what I can.

PC: Are they separate in a way or do you think they are all --

JC: No, they are distinctly coming together. The writing is behind the music. I don't mean to say subordinate, but lagging right behind.

PC: How much have the books affected your activities? There are now what, four, five? How have they affected things for you?

JC: They made life miserable.

PC: The telephone keeps ringing, people come with tape machines.

JC: Thoreau said that the -- Thoreau is the last one for me known to be since Duchamp, and I discovered that Thoreau was an artist. Did you know that?

PC: Yes.

JC: You did?

PC: A little bit.

JC: Has anyone remarked on the beauty of his art? I think I'm the first one to notice it because if I'm not, I want to know. I'm going to write Walter Harding [1917-1996] who is the secretary of the Thoreau Society. He knows better than anyone else. Anyway I have this lecture now called "Empty Words" which is not syntactical, and which uses projection of Thoreau's slides. I have some 600 of them made and they are astonishing in reference to Modern Art and also to Oriental Art.

PC: When did you start Thoreau?

JC: In '67.

PC: How did that appear?

JC: Well, actually, that's been recounted in a bulletin of the Society.

PC: Oh.

JC: I tell the story and I could show you the "Empty Words" but they were just taken away for publication.

PC: That's a marvelous line.

JC: But the drawings are amazing in relation to early Mondrian and this --

PC: One thing is, did you ever do the Jasper Johns before he adapted the Duchamp thing? Is that the only one?

JC: You mean the --

PC: From the Dwan [sic] --

JC: Oh, you mean from Merce's work?

PC: Right.

JC: No.

PC: He had done some other ones?

JC: Yes, he did some costumes for many of the dancers and dyed them himself. He did, second-hand; he frequently dyed them when other artists had done the work but would not themselves make the costumes. He frequently made them. He did the set and costumes with the help of Mark Lancaster [set designer, 1938] before the French Opera last November, and now he's done a great deal for Merce. The sets ascribed to Rauschenberg, Minuga and Summer Space, both of those were done by both of them.

PC: Oh really. That's interesting.

JC: The ideas were probably Bob's, but Jap [Jasper Johns] helped with the work.

PC: You had in 1958, at Stable Gallery, an exhibition of scores.

JC: That was arranged both by Bob and Jap.

PC: It was? You haven't done that since, have you?

JC: Yes, Carl Solway Gallery, in Cincinnati.

PC: Oh, in Cincinnati.

JC: They use my manuscript and make shows that occur; every now and then, when I go to some university, there is a whole show of it. The plexigrams for Marcel, and the lithographs, and then the *Mushroom Book* with Lois Long [writer, 1918-1974] and --

PC: How did the plexigrams come about?

JC: They were commissioned by a lady in Cincinnati, Alice Weston, who has a certain interest in both music and painting. She has commissioned Gunther Schuller [composer, 1925] to do work, a symphony, and it was through her and her husband that I was made composer in residence at the University of Cincinnati. Then she got the idea that though I had not done any lithographs, I could do some. She asked me to do some. Marcel had just died and I had been asked by one of the magazines here to do something for Marcel. I had just before that heard Jap say, "I don't want to say anything about Marcel," because they had asked him to say something about Marcel in the magazine too. So I called them, the plexigrams and lithographs, I called them *Not Wanting to Say Anything about Marcel*, quoting Jap without saying so. But doing that isn't saying instead of saying something about him. To subject the dictionary to chance operations and to use the Eakin [sic] to introduce this dictionary to images and to make a transition from language to imagery and numbers, and then as I say in the preface to all that, I think Marcel would have enjoyed it. He, I found a remark of his after I had done the work, that he enjoyed looking at the signs that were weathered because where letters were missing and things, that it was fun to figure out what the words were before they got weathered. The reason, in my work, that they weathered is because, is about the fact that he died. So every word is in a state of disintegration.

PC: How did you like that business of actually putting it all together?

JC: Well, I don't do that work. It was done by Calvin Sumsion. I composed it.

PC: Oh I see, because I couldn't figure out which part --

JC: I wrote it, first we worked together. Then I was able to tell him to do something, and then he would send back the work completed. Albers has used such methods, hasn't he? With his work, or he gives it to some craftsman to do those things. Many artists now, when they don't know a particular craft, learn how to tell a craftsman what to do. It began with tapestry and relics.

PC: How did you like doing the lithographs and all that?

JC: Oh, it's very exciting and it made me understand why so many artists become alcoholics, because when you put a blank sheet of paper into the press and something actually happens to the paper when it comes out, it's so exciting that you just have to have a drink. Whereas music, you can't drink, because the occasion of hearing the music is a public one, not a private one and the drinking all takes place after the concert.

PC: So the rituals are different.

JC: And it's completely different. You learn as an artist why it's pleasant to drink alone, you see, rather than with other people. That is what leads to alcoholism.

PC: Because a lot of them have that disastrous problem. One thing that's always interested me and that's the kind of visual qualities of your scores.

JC: It all comes from [inaudible].

PC: But even before?

JC: Well, they're not that interesting before, I think.

PC: I'm kind of thinking of the earlier ones I have seen. I don't think I've seen ones that early.

JC: I didn't make them in order to be beautiful either. I made them in order to notate things that couldn't be notated any other way. With magnetic tape we became aware that sound was a field rather than just the scales, major and minor. So having the conventional note only permitted you to get to those particular points and we needed to go to any point. And graphic notation developed, and made many music manuscripts interesting visually. I received this in the mail, a young musician who I don't know, but you immediately see it's interesting visually.

PC: It's like Frank Stella [artist, 1936].

JC: It's all music. It's very beautiful looking, don't you think? It's an impressive letter. I haven't read it all yet but you see it's quite marvelous, and would interest an artist. Who would send such a beautiful letter through the mail? That's one of the advantages of being well-known.

PC: Things come in the mail. I want to ask you one other thing about the books and then I want to talk about the New School classes, where there were so many people who were artists. One thing is the Richard Kostelanetz [artist and author, 1940] book which is only four years -- how old? Three years, four years, something like that.

JC: Richard said that it -- that the books were being returned to the press. Did you know that? That they are not selling.

PC: No, there are only about 200 left.

JC: Oh really?

PC: Yeah, they've all been sold.

JC: He said that it was not, that it was not selling.

PC: He's neurotic about it, I know.

JC: I think he's probably noticing a --

PC: But, no, they remained at, I think it was 200 copies because they have this new economic czar over there by a certain day, and it's erased, which is silly but --

JC: But, it's been reprinted in other countries, translated.

PC: Oh, yes, yeah. There's lots of interest in it, getting out there. Do you, have you been able to notice any

response from people because of that? Have you gotten letters?

JC: Oh yeah.

PC: Commentaries, things like that?

JC: The text I wrote, "When I Was Twelve Years Old," about Latin American problems, that is in Richard's book, aroused a great deal of interest in South America. There were people who never liked my music before and now think it's just great.

PC: Oh really, fantastic.

JC: I had a translator in Germany, Peter Schnagle [*sic*], another composer, a very good composer, his wife translated the text, I guess, but he made the preface to the German edition.

PC: That's terrific. You know one thing that's very interesting since so many people have talked about it and written about it was the classes at --

JC: In the New School.

PC: In the New School where there were classes like Hansen. What was your plan, you know, when you --

JC: My plan was to -- the first meeting was to explain to the students what I was then doing. Then the next class was to find out from them what they were doing, in other words, the class was conceived as people meeting one another. From those two classes on, there was no further teaching; it was doing work. Whoever had done any work would simply show it. Then we would all comment on it. I warned them that the only thing I would do in the way of teaching was if they were being too conservative, that I would suggest that they be more experimental.

PC: Did you have to do that in any instance?

JC: In some cases. But not people whose names we would know. The one who could always be depended upon for having done some work was Jackson Mac Low [poet, 1922-2004] whose work then was little well-known. He used the class effectively for himself and effectively for us to perform his simultaneous poetry which he was just then beginning. Alan Kaplan also used the class to make events which were also being given in galleries about that time.

PC: And Mac Low used to give poetry readings too, didn't he? Once in awhile?

JC: It may be, but his work was not easy for him to get many people to read; whereas, in this class it was possible. One thing I insisted upon in the class, I said, "Don't bring any work to the class that you can't do. If you can't do it here, don't bring it here."

PC: So performance was important.

JC: Yes, it had to be. I had learned from my teacher Adolf Weiss, who had written a lot of music that was never performed, and he became a bitter old man. I determined then that the business of composing isn't finished until the work is performed. And that's something implicit in painting. You don't leave the painting unpainted.

PC: And hopefully it gets shown. Which is the next --

JC: Well, that is one of the troubles with painting is that you yourself can see it all alone and that's one of the great things about music is that it really needs not only to be heard by people, but it needs to be performed by people other than the composer.

PC: Were you happy with the results of that class? Do you think it worked as a teaching activity for the students and for yourself?

JC: I think that it was a happy occasion in the sense that Black Mountain College was a happy college. Yesterday, I was interviewed about Black Mountain and a very bright girl interviewing me said what interested her was how it was that all those people came together, how was it that all one hundred students were interesting, you know? Though I didn't have a hundred, it was more like eight to twelve, they were all interested. That made a lively situation.

PC: Well, I think one of the things that struck me at Black Mountain was that it was a place where people who wanted to be professional went, rather than somebody who wanted to get a degree to teach. I think that the university --

JC: That was the same case at the New School, there was no question of degrees. What was her name, the lady in charge of the school then? Meyer. What was her first name? It began with, Clara Meyer. She was an inspired educational leader and when she became weak in the New School, was when the New School started going downhill. By downhill I mean giving an honorary degree to that wretched, wretched Russian poet [inaudible].

PC: Well, you know, what can you do? Have you found that your associations with the artists have been useful to you in your own work, in terms of ideas or bouncing things off of them?

JC: They are in one way or another in dialogue.

PC: You know, something happens --

JC: I think dialogues is a better word than art, rather than things like people say, they say influence. I don't think they influence one another; I think they respond to one another.

PC: So that there is more of a dialogue rather than a putting on of something.

JC: Oh yes.

PC: Have there been ways that you noticeably comment or comment on, you know, aspects of the dialogue like that? Or do you just too confused?

JC: I wrote about it in the Kostelanetz book, *The Arts and Dialogues*, isn't it? What they believe now is that the last person to speak is music and the rest had better reply. Where is it? It's dated here, in '64. And I still believe it.

"The arts are not isolated from one another but engage in dialogue. Much of the new music composing means that are indeterminate, notations that are graphic is a reply to modern painting and sculpture. Marcel Duchamp's painting on glass, which is not separate from its environment, the found object, the drops strings. However, each art can do what another cannot. It is predictable that the new music will be answered by a new painting, one which we have not yet seen."

I was recently at Cranbrook School near Detroit and I had to talk to all the various departments and it was in the sculpture department that they asked me what I thought about sculpture. Then these ideas came up and I spoke rather interestingly because of the situation and the questions that were asked. I insisted that sculpture should do something to respond to music. Also to the whole question of society and the environmental problems now. I find it horrifying that Buckminster Fuller [visionary, 1895-1983] can make it very clear that less is more and that there is an energy shortage and a metal shortage and that the sculptures can continue to use huge, heavy amounts of metal.

PC: They should try something else.

JC: I suggested that they make perishable sculptures that would be social events like compositions of music, and I pointed out that the moment happens in the city, being made like a building being constructed, that it excites, interests, and moves through the whole society, rather than just to the --

PC: How did they like that?

JC: I think they were stimulated. We went on and on thinking of possibilities. Also that relates to American Indians.

PC: How do you like lecturing to the universities? Because you seem to --

JC: I do, I do as little as possible.

PC: Because you've done a lot of it over the years.

JC: Yeah, an awful lot. I'm opposed to institutions and yet saying so I bite the mouth that feeds me. I could now live in some part of the earth, from my books and my music. So that I don't really need to be fed by those universities and I have for many years talked against them.

PC: The more you talk against them, the more they want you.

JC: Yeah.

PC: The more they want you. What did you do at Wesleyan? That institute for advanced --

JC: That never took place. I was the fellow in The Center for Advanced Studies and the fellow in The Center of Humanities, I think it was called. It was the same center, I just continued my work.

PC: What was it like to work there?

JC: I gave a few talks but essentially I just was in the community. It was not teaching but just being there, for everyone. Except, perhaps Albers, I think he really taught.

PC: I think so.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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