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Oral history interview with Heinz Warneke,
1982 November 8

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Hanz Warneke on 1982 Nov. 8. The interview was conducted by Robert F. Brown 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

HEINZ WARNEKE: And I was so interested watching the horses and watching all the animals, and then there, at Grandfather's place, there went a little train going by several times a day bringing clay to a brickyard. A couple of miles away was a brickyard, *ja*, and this clay had to be taken to the brickyard in these wagons.

ROBERT BROWN: Wagons?

MR. WARNEKE: Little engines, you know, and they have cars. I don't know you may - this way?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. WARNEKE: And they dump them, you know.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. WARNEKE: And then there are usually ten or twelve and something would fall off, you know, at such stop or so. You know, as a little boy, seven, eight years, I used to pick the wet clay up and take it home with me and make little animals.

MR. BROWN: Nice.

MR. WARNEKE: That age, and then this owner of the brickyard, my grandparents happened to know, they would be very pleased and would have taken these little things in the kiln with the bricks and there are baked. Oh, they were very - if I still had them, you know, very - cats and dogs and --

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh.

MR. WARNEKE: -- and chickens and chickens with - mother chicken with little ones.

MR. BROWN: Were any of your family interested in art?

MR. WARNEKE: No, not particularly.

MR. BROWN: What did your grandparents do? Were they - they had a farm, did they?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh, they had a farm and well, they were interested in lots of other things. My grandfather was particularly interested in horses. He always managed for his own pleasure to have for three or four years, the most perfect horse, and they would pick up the family at the railroad station and things like that.

MR. BROWN: Was your family fairly well-to-do?

MR. WARNEKE: No.

MR. BROWN: Would you say?

MR. WARNEKE: I wouldn't say. My father was a government railroad man. Well, yes, I would say middle class.

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh, and what was your father's job? What did he do?

MR. WARNEKE: Well, he ran the freight from Bremen to Köln [Cologne] almost, had that whole organization so to say. Well, the main organization, not in the case of say at that time, you know, at the war, from there on, they would know where every train was in the whole area and was in a few minutes, they would be ordered to pick up the troops and so on.

MR. BROWN: Oh, this was during the Franco-Prussian War.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Yes, he started then. And what was your mother – what was her background?

MR. WARNEKE: Her father was – you know, my mother's parents lived at that Grand – was born at the grandparents place.

MR. BROWN: Those were your mother's parents you spoke of earlier.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: So your mother was raised in the country.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes. Then --

MR. BROWN: Did you have brothers and sisters?

MR. WARNEKE: No. I had two brothers but no sister. I always --

MR. BROWN: But you had brothers.

MR. WARNEKE: Two brothers.

MR. BROWN: Were they older?

MR. WARNEKE: Younger.

MR. BROWN: Younger, so you were the eldest child.

MR. WARNEKE: I was the oldest, yes.

MR. BROWN: Now --

MR. WARNEKE: And I was the one did not have to go into the war on account of my possession as a of member Gunslereiser Birad, that means grave commission here, the National American Commission --

MR. BROWN: In this case.

MR. WARNEKE: The German word is Gunslereiser Birad you know. And I was not asked as a senate and congress position, I was not allowed – I mean, I was allowed to wear my civilian clothes.

MR. BROWN: You are talking now about World War I.

MR. WARNEKE: That was World War I, yes.

MR. BROWN: Well, maybe we should go back though to your childhood again.

MR. WARNEKE: Oh, right.

MR. BROWN: And I wanted to ask what kind of plans did your parents have for you? What sort of education also did you have?

MR. WARNEKE: None, none at all. My parents, my father always wanted us to do what we wanted, but not – somehow he did not want us to have a government career.

MR. BROWN: What did he think you should do? Did he have any --

MR. WARNEKE: No.

MR. BROWN: No particular idea?

MR. WARNEKE: None at all.

MR. BROWN: So as you went into your teenage years, what did you think you wanted to do?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes. I developed more and more with the idea what I started seven or eight years old picking up --

MR. BROWN: Making little sculptures of animals.

MR. WARNEKE: -- sculpture --

MR. BROWN: And you continue to do that.

MR. WARNEKE: -- and then I just, I started painting.

MR. BROWN: Did you have lessons from somebody?

MR. WARNEKE: Very little. The school, they did not have particularly special art teachers, but I was always excused if I got mixed up with my art and painting or so, let's say watercolor, I could sneak away for another class or so.

MR. BROWN: Oh, the teachers would let you do that.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: So they encouraged you.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, they encouraged me.

MR. BROWN: Otherwise was the school simply languages.

MR. WARNEKE: No.

MR. BROWN: And science and that sort of thing?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, not even that. It was a country school.

MR. BROWN: Oh, this was a country school, not in the city.

MR. WARNEKE: No, it was a country school.

MR. BROWN: So it was not a very demanding --

MR. WARNEKE: No.

MR. BROWN: -- school.

MR. WARNEKE: No.

MR. BROWN: But you were able to do your art so you were happy.

MR. WARNEKE: If I -- the way I started, water color, I could just be excused for a couple of hours or a whole morning.

MR. BROWN: How long were you in school and how old were you when you left the country school?

MR. WARNEKE: I was 16 I think and then --

MR. BROWN: Then what did you do?

MR. WARNEKE: I became an apprentice in a silver factory, a very well-known one, and --

MR. BROWN: What's the name of the silver factory?

MR. WARNEKE: Wilkens & Söhne.

MR. BROWN: Wilkens?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: And Söhne.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, and Sons.

MR. BROWN: Oh, and sons.

MR. WARNEKE: And there all while I learned all the technical things, nothing special. I work in one department. That was actually the art department drawing and things like that for almost a year to learn drawing and the

next year, I learned to make the sculpture, the plastic models.

MR. BROWN: This was all for a silver company.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, yes.

MR. BROWN: Now --

MR. WARNEKE: But and then, I had quite a little freedom. In the evenings I went to the art school in Bremen, to a regular art school.

MR. BROWN: And you lived pretty near Bremen.

MR. WARNEKE: I lived pretty near Bremen, yes, a half hour, a half hour in a train from Bremen, not quite.

MR. BROWN: Now could I get back to your first year at Wilkens and Sons --

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: -- you -- the drawing, what were you drawing?

MR. WARNEKE: We were --

MR. BROWN: Were you copying or --

MR. WARNEKE: No, yes, copying things, ja, a lot of say letters, a T-set or so, practicing to copy that exactly that they copy, cut a B. They copy cut B and you know.

MR. BROWN: Made into a tea set?

MR. WARNEKE: Just one second. I'm getting a little tired now. The copy cut B and make a lichthaus, they would take that transparent paper and put it on a light and then make a copy, a blueprint so to say.

MR. BROWN: Oh, a print, yes, like a blueprint.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, and then that would be sent to all over the country to be -- the people where they could buy.

MR. BROWN: Oh, I see, but you were allowed to do this right away, even in your first year?

MR. WARNEKE: On no.

MR. BROWN: The first year --

MR. WARNEKE: Practice, practice.

MR. BROWN: Practice.

MR. WARNEKE: The first year, I would not turn --

MR. BROWN: And you were working for someone else, weren't you? You were an apprentice, so you were doing everything under --

MR. WARNEKE: I work just to learn everything.

MR. BROWN: But I mean at the silver company?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: You had to do what they told you to do.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Did you have to help the other men with a lot of things? Usually an apprentice has to be a helper?

MR. WARNEKE: Well, I had to work to help the caster in plaster to learn how to make a mold or so, you know, all these things. They changed all the time, you know to be a full-knowledged man for the profession. And then I had, for a couple of months, half of a day to learn repoussé Sicilian, you know, this -- you know what I mean?

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh, yes, yes, raising the designs.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, raising designs.

MR. BROWN: Yes, yes, yes.

MR. WARNEKE: And all these things, and then part of the time I learn how to cast in silver, and learn how to cast that you could make a production.

MR. BROWN: Oh, more than one.

MR. WARNEKE: More than one, yeah, and that knowledge has been terrific.

MR. BROWN: Yes. Did you learn also traditional raising of forms with a hammer?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh yes, very, very, very, very much. I would hammer out a lot of say crisscross patterns, a breadbasket out from a piece of copper or in that case, it would be silver, but not a full silver you know, the cheaper silver.

MR. BROWN: Right, sure.

MR. WARNEKE: And make a basket or a raised or so. Oh, that was very, very important.

MR. BROWN: How long were you with the silver factory as an apprentice? Several years?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh three years.

MR. BROWN: So you were about 19 years old.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, yes.

MR. BROWN: At the same time you said you --

MR. WARNEKE: Every, every evening --

MR. BROWN: -- you went to Bremen to the art school.

MR. WARNEKE: -- to the art school, yes.

MR. BROWN: What did you learn there? Can you describe that a little bit?

MR. WARNEKE: At the art school, yeah, most of the things learned how to draw from live models.

MR. BROWN: That was something new for you certainly.

MR. WARNEKE: That was something quite, quite new, you know. There we start and we're struggling and after a couple of years, you became more successful because you got used to a well-balanced built figure.

MR. BROWN: Yes. Were some of your teachers pretty well-known?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh yes.

MR. BROWN: Do you remember the names?

MR. WARNEKE: I don't remember if I just remember the names in Bremen.

MR. BROWN: In Bremen.

MR. WARNEKE: Oh no, I don't remember them but later at the Academy I will remember.

MR. BROWN: Now what were some of the other courses you had. You had drawing from models.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, and modeling.

MR. BROWN: And modeling in plastiline or clay?

MR. WARNEKE: In plastiline, you know, figures that high [indicating].

MR. BROWN: About a foot and a half high.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, on a modeling stand, you know.

MR. BROWN: Yes, uh-huh, and did you have to learn how to do it rather quickly or were you given a lot of time?

MR. WARNEKE: Well, the modeling you would have a week or two, you see, but the drawings, maybe one a day or special days there would be five minutes sketches. We would buy a cheap roll of wallpaper or so, you know.

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

MR. WARNEKE: And every five minutes, the pose would change and they were very good to learn to be trained.

MR. BROWN: Were the teachers there all the time or --

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, they were there all the time.

MR. BROWN: It wasn't as in France where they assigned you something and --

MR. WARNEKE: No, no.

MR. BROWN: -- you saw them all though.

MR. WARNEKE: No, no, that was still, in Bremen, that was still much more foundation, you know, and in France, there you are already advanced and there comes the teacher just maybe once a week or even once a month, and some of the teachers with the big name the people want to study with, they never saw the person, Bordel [phonetic] and --

MR. BROWN: Bordel and some of those teachers.

MR. WARNEKE: Yeah, I never --

MR. BROWN: So you were at the -- you went at night to the art school. What was the name of the school?

MR. WARNEKE: The first one was the night school was in Bremen.

MR. BROWN: Yes, what was the name?

MR. WARNEKE: Kunstgewerbeschule.

MR. BROWN: That was a government school, right?

MR. WARNEKE: State.

MR. BROWN: The state, a state school.

MR. WARNEKE: The state of Bremen, yes.

MR. BROWN: Okay, and that you went to for three years.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: And did you study sculpture as well eventually at Kunstgewerbeschule?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, to -- you know the beginning of it.

MR. BROWN: The beginning of it.

MR. WARNEKE: Yeah.

MR. BROWN: Were you able to use your knowledge from the silver factory?

MR. WARNEKE: No, no.

MR. BROWN: No, you weren't casting anything.

MR. WARNEKE: That had nothing to do anymore. That was entirely private so to say.

MR. BROWN: Yeah.

MR. WARNEKE: Away from --

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh, uh-huh, were you pleased with your progress?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes. I worked terribly hard and in my spare time, I would take advantage, but I would see and make repoussé works, just little sketches for the family or so.

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh. But you made your living at the silver factory?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh, not at --

MR. BROWN: Oh that was merely an apprenticeship too, that's right.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, that --

MR. BROWN: You weren't paid.

MR. WARNEKE: We were not paid, oh no, no, my God. That was a very great --

MR. BROWN: Honor.

MR. WARNEKE: -- yes, to get that position, but you could be paid if you would be just one man and special, just making, working from drawings, making silver trays, or spoons or so.

MR. BROWN: Yes, but you didn't want to do that.

MR. WARNEKE: Oh, no, no, no. Oh no.

MR. BROWN: So did you have to interrupt your schooling in 1914, or did you come over, did you travel or do anything else?

MR. WARNEKE: No, no.

MR. BROWN: Before World War I?

MR. WARNEKE: No. I was taken from the school in Berlin and went straight --

MR. BROWN: Oh, you went to Berlin.

MR. WARNEKE: Oh after, yes.

MR. BROWN: After the Kunstgewerbeschule in Bremen, you went --

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, I went to get an exam, what I told you before. Yes, I told you that I had an exam. They put me in the wrong class.

MR. BROWN: Oh yes.

MR. WARNEKE: And I had gone through that until World War I, and then in World War I, I got my position through a government competition.

MR. BROWN: Now how long were you in Berlin before the war? A couple of years?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh. You are saying something about as a small boy seeing the wild boar.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, and that -- I have followed that until now. That has been my important idea, never to start something where I am not one hundred percent sure that I can prove it, that I have seen it. Now for instance, I have a statue carved in wood of wild ducks. In that case, I stepped in a duck nest and the mother went away first, and then a second, coming back with a definite call, collecting the little ones, spreading their wings. I had a chance to watch the way she did spread the wings as a cover and pushed the little ones -- oh no, it was the bigger feather.

MR. BROWN: Oh, her outer feathers.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: So you observed that closely.

MR. WARNEKE: That has been my training and but I have been working for.

MR. BROWN: Has been this observation in nature.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: It's been very vivid since your --

MR. WARNEKE: And now that is why I was today told you about the beaver had started, the day before yesterday.

MR. BROWN: Oh, right here?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes. Oh, the beaver started the day before yesterday to build close to our dam in two days and the funniest part was they have solved lots of my problems because where I could not decide right away which trees I should cut or have cut, and waited for weeks and weeks, and they decided by clipping them down and build a dam. That is unbelievable. In three cases, we couldn't decide, we would ask the family what trees they would like to keep, you know, and the beavers took them all.

MR. BROWN: They took care of that.

MR. WARNEKE: Yeah.

MR. BROWN: You then have been interested in loving animals since you were very small

MR. WARNEKE: Oh yes, and then like the skunk cabbage, I stepped on a skunk cabbage and couldn't figure out because we do not have them over there, and --

MR. BROWN: In Europe.

MR. WARNEKE: And here the time I was working at the Witney place modeling the racehorse, they - the stable boys had been chasing a polecat we call them over there.

MR. BROWN: Yeah.

MR. WARNEKE: Polecats.

MR. BROWN: Yeah.

MR. WARNEKE: And I asked the manager what are polecats? And they said you will know when the boys come back and the polecat had sprayed them and I knew what a skunk cabbage was.

MR. BROWN: Yes, yes. [Laughter.]

MR. WARNEKE: And then walking in reverse, certainly, that smell reminds me of years before these. I look down and saw that big green plant, powerful against the new little plants coming out and particularly the old leaves, fern and maple leaves and acorns being just pushed aside.

MR. BROWN: This growth.

MR. WARNEKE: And the acorns being pushed aside by a powerful green plant, the nuts would fall out of the shell, you know. And that, I have drawn that always, you know, watching the duck or geese coming in, being disturbed about some of the others and not following the leader, and the fish, for instance, I have two statues --

MR. BROWN: What?

MR. WARNEKE: I sort of - I just brought a - here, take this one.

MR. BROWN: Yes, yes.

MR. WARNEKE: I just brought them in.

MR. BROWN: Yes, I see.

MR. WARNEKE: They are spawning fish and can be in certain cases only one fish for an hour and a half because if the female doesn't get the male over the nest, you know, then it takes longer and longer.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. WARNEKE: And until then, they are just one because the female is just covering them where she wants

them to get them closer to the nest, and the same way, caressing them. I don't know. Have you ever seen that? Have you seen that one? That fish?

MR. BROWN: This one here [indicating]?

MR. WARNEKE: Yeah.

MR. BROWN: Yeah.

MR. WARNEKE: Well, it's just one from top to bottom, you know. Well, that I would like to --

MR. BROWN: Did you begin, when you were in Bremen at the night art school, Kunstgewerbeschule, we should get back to that, did you get a chance to draw animals then? No?

MR. WARNEKE: No.

MR. BROWN: But when you went --

MR. WARNEKE: No, not to --

MR. BROWN: Now to Berlin. Did you --

MR. WARNEKE: After, after --

MR. BROWN: Okay. I wanted to ask --

MR. WARNEKE: I go to the farm and then I would draw the heavy work horses. They were something entirely different than the fancy horses my grandfather had. They were the elegant ones. And I would --

MR. BROWN: And the work horse was very different.

MR. WARNEKE: Working horses where we have our Anheuser-Busch horses -- the Percherons.

MR. BROWN: Yeah, yeah. What type did you draw up there? What were they? Just heavy --

MR. WARNEKE: Every -- the work horses were the heavy type and the other ones were just more or less --

MR. BROWN: Well, did you take an examination to go to Berlin?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh yes, for two weeks.

MR. BROWN: That was a competition.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, it was a competition.

MR. BROWN: And you won.

MR. WARNEKE: From 18, I was one of 18 in that class.

MR. BROWN: And you were about 19 when you went to Berlin, about 19 years old.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes or a little over 18, yes.

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh. And why did you want to go to Berlin? Was that the best arts school?

MR. WARNEKE: It was one of the best ones.

MR. BROWN: Did you want to study with somebody particularly?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Who was that?

MR. WARNEKE: Well, they -- the first things, you have to go step by step. You have to graduate to the masters so to say, and there are specialists in wood-carving and in metal.

MR. BROWN: This was at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Berlin.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, yes, yes. You have to specialize to get to that class. There you start first with life-sized

modeling in clay from the model.

MR. BROWN: From a human model?

MR. WARNEKE: From a - and then - yes, from a human model - and then you have to follow monthly competitions so to say, the professors give a motive that you have to solve and then after three years or so, you just work for a whole year in a special class, all what they do is just wood-carving or stone-carving, nothing else anymore. No more competitions.

MR. BROWN: What did you think you wanted to do when you went to Berlin?

MR. WARNEKE: Well, I wanted to get first knowledge of all the techniques. Well, I had already the metal knowledge.

MR. BROWN: Oh, you did, from Bremen.

MR. WARNEKE: From Bremen, casting you know.

MR. BROWN: Sure.

MR. WARNEKE: And you know, repoussé work and then I started then - well, I did some more painting too, naturally art history, and then I got into designing and that was more the [inaudible]. Now the step from entirely professional to find out what you want, you know, follow all different kinds of requests, let us say, for building a competition or so, to see how you can solve it.

Now for instance, I had that advantage, I had learned to be an architect. You see, we had to study as a professional sculpture, you have to study just for one year as an architect, so to say.

MR. BROWN: Do you?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Who did you study - this was in Berlin?

MR. WARNEKE: In Berlin.

MR. BROWN: And this was what, about 1914?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Yes. What sort of thing did you study? Classical architecture or modern?

MR. WARNEKE: Both, both, both.

MR. BROWN: Both. Do you remember some of your teachers? Who was your teacher in architecture? Was it a well-known person or --

MR. WARNEKE: Yes. There were two or three in the department. I --

MR. BROWN: Were your sculpture teachers pretty well-known sculptors?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, Vakala [phonetic], he was Munich and so many of the --

MR. BROWN: He was from Munich?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Who came to Berlin to teach?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes - so many like, I don't know Kreis and studied with these people.

MR. BROWN: Did you enjoy going to school there?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, I did enjoy it, because what I think I over-did it a little because I was too conscientious.

MR. BROWN: What do you mean, you got worn out or --

MR. WARNEKE: A little, yes. I was a little - I became a little nervous until I wanted competition to become a member of a monument commission and then I relaxed because for four years I had to be there and didn't have

enough to do.

MR. BROWN: On the monument commission.

MR. WARNEKE: Or every couple of months there was a whole area of so many miles being re-organized by a commission, and that was entirely international because every person had done his duty, fought for his country. There were no difference.

MR. BROWN: But this was an international group?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: I mean the organization for which you worked was international, it wasn't simply German.

MR. WARNEKE: No. That was a German, that was a German organization.

MR. BROWN: Oh, it was a German organization.

MR. WARNEKE: But they had for every country a special part in the main 50-kilometer monument section or so. You see, there was one monument in the middle, and then all the different sections around - Turkish, Bulgarian, Russian there, and they were marked with their different nationalities' emblem. The Turkish, they had painted oak stales - all painted you know --

MR. BROWN: Painted oak, what were they? Stalus?

MR. WARNEKE: I don't know. Stales, that was the Romanian names, just big straight up and very fancy painted in the Turkish painting.

MR. BROWN: Yeah. Well, who did that? You did this?

MR. WARNEKE: No, every country had its own special artist. You see, that was the whole secret. They all fought for their country if they cleared a field, and the second, the identities that are Turkish, the Turkish people came and tended to that and put the --

MR. BROWN: You are talking about prisoners of war or what?

MR. WARNEKE: Dead people, dead people.

MR. BROWN: The dead people were buried there.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Who did the art work? A prisoner?

MR. WARNEKE: Prisoners of wars, yes, and then the other one were Russian, they put their man with a double-cross, you know.

MR. BROWN: Yes, the orthodox crosses.

MR. WARNEKE: It doesn't matter at all, they all had fought for their country. There was no jealousy or --

MR. BROWN: What was your job?

MR. WARNEKE: I was one of the managers, what see that these things were executed right because the names had to be all carved in oak or so, and then we had to take these things for instance, back to foundries to have them cast for the main - main monuments or so, you know.

MR. BROWN: Did you find this work depressing?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes because you could not - you could not use your own ideas, there were these rules.

MR. BROWN: Uh-huh.

MR. WARNEKE: And it just the way if you work for a cathedral or so, in many cases, you cannot use your idea because they are the religion.

MR. BROWN: So did you do any carving yourself?

MR. WARNEKE: Not much, no.

MR. WARNEKE: Not much, you were four years – what were you? Four years with the monument commission?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, and that was – I would say a – well, I would call it loafing. You had to be there and duties are to say from 10 to 5, and --

MR. BROWN: Were you mainly in Berlin or were you all around --

MR. WARNEKE: No, I --

MR. BROWN: You were down in the battle cemeteries.

MR. WARNEKE: I was Rumania, Bulgaria, and this --

MR. BROWN: Oh, you were actually in Eastern Europe.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, yes.

MR. BROWN: Did you enjoy that travel?

MR. WARNEKE: Travel, I enjoyed that travel and I enjoyed to make lots of drawings of all the old buildings. Unfortunately they were all lost on the way back because I was with the commission and the troops already, the German troops had left and the commission and the last heavy Red Cross people were still there and the Red Cross train, and then the last railroad car of Rumania with all the ammunition and so on protecting the last train, that was the last train, and it took almost a month to get home because we had to go through all these passes and the trains – they were held up by bandits, not actually in most cases, enemy soldiers, but bandits, they would roll boulders down on the front and the back and they didn't realize that there are 50 powerful military things there, you know, a group of infantry or artillery you know, could handle everything.

MR. BROWN: And so --

MR. WARNEKE: But it took us months to get back home.

MR. BROWN: To get – yes.

MR. WARNEKE: And then we came home and everything had to be – had changed. The German had to be turned out and the workers were in a partly-communistic idea for a while.

MR. BROWN: Did you come back to where? To Bremen or to Berlin?

MR. WARNEKE: I came back smaller. Our train landed at a smaller station where they were all Red Cross, we are all treated.

MR. BROWN: You went back home or you went back to Berlin?

MR. WARNEKE: I went back to Berlin. I went back to Berlin and finished my school, you know.

MR. BROWN: Oh, you did. You didn't – right away.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, right away.

MR. BROWN: Right after the war.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, and I had my own studio. I got my master's studio, you know, and took already commissions.

MR. BROWN: Is this for wood-carving now or for metal?

MR. WARNEKE: For metal. You know, by that time, you were a professional self, artist who had to make his own decision. Maybe once a year they – a group of professors, they have a talk with you going things over.

MR. BROWN: Who are some of these professors you worked with now that you were a master student? Do you remember the names of some of them?

MR. WARNEKE: Geese was in metal, Harvercamp in figure work, and Vakala in wood-carving and Blotchfeld in natural work. You know, we would take – dig under the ground, so to say, and to pull up little plants and see what would develop and follow a little root –

[End of recording.]

MR. BROWN: Yes, you were talking about a monument in Bucharest.

MR. WARNEKE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: And this was back in the war.

MR. WARNEKE: And just before the dedication, the gypsies had taken carloads or their gypsy wagons full of the monument's wood, the Turkish wood and - of the art just as firewood, and that had to be replaced, so to say, and --

MR. BROWN: So you had to run-around.

MR. WARNEKE: We had talked and talked, what to do to postpone the whole thing, and finally I talked it over with a technical things in military rank, you know, architects and things like that, and I just point blank said all right, if you want to get things done, you cannot do on a technical military command, soldier to soldier, now, they have to be willing to work hard and if you promise that they, all the people work at these ideas, after this all done, to give them their furlough, what they have earned, overtime or so.

They should not feel eight days or whatever the soldiers is expected to, all right, if you promise that, and it worked. They were all --

MR. BROWN: They worked extra hard.

MR. WARNEKE: They worked all hard, and they would have a barrel of wine there you know, something against the rule, military rule and so and everyone would paint or carve you know, and it would get so out --

MR. BROWN: Did these people - were most of these people who did the carving and the decoration, did they have art school training or were they --

MR. WARNEKE: Some of them, no.

MR. BROWN: Not much? Did you teach them anything?

MR. WARNEKE: They were specialists. All what they had to do was carving, lettering and so on.

MR. BROWN: Did they get some schooling in that or would somebody have taught them?

MR. WARNEKE: No, they were technical things.

MR. BROWN: Okay.

MR. WARNEKE: But I would help them with short-cuts and things like that. That was a very rewarding things, you know, not just being five hours or eight hours there.

MR. BROWN: Yeah, but in general.

MR. WARNEKE: In general, I called that time wasted.

MR. BROWN: But when you got to Berlin as a master student, that was a good time.

MR. WARNEKE: Oh, that was - that was a good time, I mean.

MR. BROWN: And you were more or less --

MR. WARNEKE: Absolutely my own boss, and was I expected to have work for exhibitions and the fact is, I had lots of things, so my work is more of things all over rewarding.

MR. BROWN: What kind of work were you doing then? This would be 1919 or so.

MR. WARNEKE: Animals and so if you look through --

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. WARNEKE: -- this catalogue --

MR. BROWN: And where were they exhibited? At certain galleries?

MR. WARNEKE: Yes, at certain galleries in Berlin and all over.

MR. BROWN: Did you get to know some of the gallery dealers?

MR. WARNEKE: Oh yes.

MR. BROWN: Can you remember some of them?

MR. WARNEKE: [Karl] Buchholtz.

MR. BROWN: Who later came here.

MR. WARNEKE: Came here, yes, and then some of them fly in from Stuessel [phonetic] more or less, some of the society galleries what we have here, and people had still a little money left, or had recovered a little month, but I can find out more names.

MR. BROWN: Okay.

[END OF RECORDING.]

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