



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Ludwig Sander,
1969 February 4-12

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Ludwig Sander on February 4-12, 1969. The interview was conducted by Paul Cummings for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

PAUL CUMMINGS: February 4. Paul Cummings talking to Ludwig Sander. You were just talking about your mother and her music.

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't think that fits in with anything that preceded it. You know, you asked me about my family influence and what my education was and so forth, our family life. That's pretty hard to put down. Usually in biographies somehow or other it's systematized or romanticized into a story and it's really not of any value. At least I didn't think so at the time, but as I look back I see that my contemporaries, who were also natives of New York, started much later to live in New York. In other words, they ate and slept in their neighborhoods and didn't get around. I had the good fortune to move around in the city. At an age I can't remember, I used to be taken to the Metropolitan to get me the hell out of the way.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You were born in New York?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. But, you see, you stuck pretty much to your neighborhood until you got to an age where you moved around. Children weren't taken around to places when I was a kid, you know. The schools didn't organize anything. It was practically just reading, writing and arithmetic, you know. We had no art in the schools, or anything about art. We just did our school work. Maybe we know more about grammar. And we don't have to take our shoes off to count to twenty. But I had the good fortune to - as I say, my mother was going to be a musician. My father was a musician. They had great musical interests. So very early in life I was taken around to concerts and to the opera merely because I had to go. In other words, we had a subscription for two seats at the Metropolitan every Thursday night, so somebody in the family had to go and use them. If my father had heard it for the fifth time I would go with my mother. Or if my mother had heard it for the twelfth time I would go with my father or with an older brother or someone, because those two seats had to be taken. Well, I don't mean hearing the music. That's unimportant. It was that we got around.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. And saw the whole environment.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. I knew the inside of the Metropolitan Opera House and the restaurants around it more than half a century ago. And I could say the same of Carnegie Hall and the small concert halls. Even the German Theatre on Fifteenth Street and Irving Place. I was taken there because my mother wanted to go and hear German plays and see German acting companies, and I had to go along. Or somebody in the family.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did they have such an interest in --?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I think it's just normal in some families. My family were city people pretty far back. A great many people who came here were not city people or they were sort of immigrants of necessity. Which is something else. You know what I mean? I don't mean as a class thing. I mean that's just the way it happened. I had no control over my birth or who my grandparents were or what they did or what my great-grandparents did.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Was your family here a long time?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, in a mixed way. My mother's family was here quite a while. Late eighteenth century. Branches of it. My grandfather came over in the revolutionary period of 1849. Whether he came in 1848, 1849 or 1850 or 1851 I don't know. But he scrambled when the Civil War came. And his wife, my grandmother, was also from a German family that had gone to France and was also there for quite a while. Although she was born in Germany. When she was a small girl she was shipped off to relatives in Paris and was brought up there. Whether that was economic necessity, or whether they thought it would be good for her, or whether her parents died young I don't really know. Although I think I recall my mother lived for quite a while. The whole family dispersed anyway in that period. Her brother went to New Caledonia. And I think one went to South America. For some reason or other none of them in that family came here. They probably dispersed for the reason that maybe there was no dough, or maybe the death of the grandfather, or something like that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But both sides of your family then are German? Or German background?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, no, in my mother's family there's a good French mixture because of this constant

traveling back and forth. We have pictures of some of them upstairs, a little painting of, I guess, my mother's great-aunt or something, who was a great benefactress from Paris, the one who always sent for the kids for some reason or other - hadn't any children of her own, and was well off, so she --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Could help everybody.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What part of New York did you live in then - did you grow up in?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, the suburbs a good deal.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Was it in New York City or Brooklyn?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I went to school here.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You went to school in Manhattan?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you remember the schools?

LUDWIG SANDER: I think that's very unimportant.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, what amounted to a high school was a little school up on Park Avenue at 38th Street, 39th Street, which was a secondary school. And even there at the age of fourteen and fifteen we used to cut school and go to matinees over at the legitimate theatre. There was something called Gray's Drugstore that had a ticket agency in the basement on Times Square. In those days theatres didn't fill up and you could go there and for from fifty cents to a dollar and a half you could get fairly good balcony seats, or the worst ones; at least you got a seat. It seemed to be a normal thing. As I look back now I don't know how the devil they controlled the school but there was always a batch of kids missing on Wednesday afternoons. On Saturdays we'd go too.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But there were no movies then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, there were loads of movies.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, sure. But everybody looked down on movies in those days. They weren't very good. See, I'm speaking about the early twenties. We've had movies as long as I can remember. They pre-date me. Of course to make up for the bad movie they had five to seven acts of vaudeville - according to how bad the movie was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: I think that's what it was called.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's right. Was this a public school that you went to?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. No. We lived in the suburbs, and my mother had a million cousins here. And they all lived somewhere a few doors off Central Park West in the Seventies and Eighties. They were sort of old-fashioned people. They had their "at home" days, whatever it was. Then all the cousins would gather on Thursday afternoons. I know there was one set of cousins, I can't remember whether they were widows or all maiden ladies, but they had their "at home" on Thursday afternoons. And my mother took me. And somebody in the family, somebody's maid, or somebody's something or other would take me out to Central Park, which was a few doors away, or over to the Metropolitan Museum if the weather was bad, or to the Museum of Natural History. Where I was scared to death. I remember the mummies and things like that. The animals. Children get around the city today. They're taken by bus load or the schools take them. But as I look back I see the great advantage I had. As I look back too, the fact that my father subscribed to all sorts of European magazines --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really. What kind?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, one I remember clearly was the Manchester Guardian. You know, they had a weekly or something for export. With a yellow cover. And several German magazines. So the German expressionists and the Jugendstil which is the equivalent, the contemporaries of French Art Noveau - except there wasn't much

painting in Art Nouveau. There was a lot of painting in the German Jugendstil. If you see them as decoration side by side you can't tell which is French and which is German. But in the painting you can. It was a bigger painting movement. Art Nouveau is a sculpture thing. In Germany they had a magazine of their own called Jugend, which used to come to the house. And I was surprised, you know, my familiarity - I was in Germany in 1927 - in Europe - I traveled a bit more than just in Germany. When I got there in 1931 my eyes were wide open. I was a little older. But I was amazed at the painters I knew. I was familiar with ... that is I could still recollect the paintings that appeared in these magazines. For instance, there was a Monet you know that was such a part and parcel of my life of some sailboats with tall masts in the Seine, I think at Argenteuil or some place like that, that those forms, to me, meant painting. I didn't realize that I had such an introduction to it, the impression it made on me. And another thing in retrospect that hits me too, speaking of my earlier life, the routine business of what we did in school or whether I played baseball or not and that sort of nonsense. There was a square in Staten Island, it's very much like Washington Square, but smaller. There's business all around it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: On Staten Island?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. I have a painting of it upstairs that I did in 1927. I'll show it to you. When I was a little bit of a kid there were a couple of artists that used to sit out there and paint all the time.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you get to Staten Island?

LUDWIG SANDER: I didn't get there. My father did. That was another thing. But that's not important. I could just as well have been in Flushing in those days. People moved in those days from Manhattan to Brooklyn. I still remember farms in Brooklyn. And I still remember farms in the Bronx.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But there were the two painters there.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, there were loads. There was quite a colony there. And this one guy I used to follow around when I was age six or seven, you know, because all the kids were sent to the park then. And I knew his name, you know. I used to talk to him. I think my family knew him. Or he knew me. And I used to talk to him. And he painted these town or village scenes. He was an impressionist painter.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you remember what his name was?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes, that's just it. And he smoked a little cigar that came in a box of ten like a cigarette box except it was wood. And when he had an empty one he would rip them open and tack them onto his easel legs and within them he'd do the same landscape over in miniature.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really. Oh, on the bottom of the box.

LUDWIG SANDER: See, they were completely framed in. And he used to give those to the ladies. Yes, the bottom and the top both. And there used to be a plague of those around. Well, I was sitting in the Dome in Paris in the spring of 1931 talking to a South African painter of a European family, I think he was German if I recall. And we were talking about our earliest influence. And I was telling him the story of this fellow. He said, "Hey, what was his name?" I said it was Charlie Bazing. He said, "I just asked you that because there he goes now. It sounded so familiar." And there he was walking across the street past the - what is the one across the way from the Dome? - it's still there. It's one all the older painters went to. We never went into it. And he gave me his address. And I thought well this man I've got to look up, it will be very interesting. He lived right nearby. I still remember that building - 72 Rue Montparnasse. It was a studio building. And I went to see him. And the concierge said, "Ah, he's just gone to North Africa. He'll be back in two weeks. And a week or ten days later I read in the Paris Herald that he'd been kicked by a camel or bitten by a camel and died of blood poisoning in North Africa. So I never got to see him. I don't suppose anybody remembers his name except the old ladies who were kind of cute in those days that he gave those little pictures to. I remember my father was always going to buy some of those pictures from him but never got around to it. Not the little ones - the paintings.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: You know, he lived, as people did in those day, in a rooming house - there were no small apartments - where they were fed.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you speak German at home then?

LUDWIG SANDER: No.

PAUL CUMMINGS: English?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. I had to learn German. Oh, I knew a few words. In my very earliest days German was spoken more around the house - the maids and so forth. And when I was two years old my mother took us to

Germany and plunked us with relatives. She went and got some kind of cure with baths. And she dumped us with first my father's maiden sisters and then another time with her own crowd. But, you know, they didn't teach German during the first World War. They cut it out. And even dachshunds had a pretty sorry life. When I was first in high school they hadn't started teaching German yet. And just because my brother who was a little older than myself was in the French class I didn't want to be in the same class with him, so I took Spanish. Then they started teaching German again. Which I immediately switched to. And I found out that I knew absolutely nothing about it. Nothing!

PAUL CUMMINGS: Start from one.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I knew what a knife and fork and a cup were called. But I didn't know the gender. Vaguely I knew it maybe - I don't know. I knew words. But I knew that many French words too because my mother had quite a few French friends, the ladies she played cards with and bowled with, and so there was a lot of French chatter going on, too. So I knew a few words in that, which I haven't improved on since.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It sounds like you had a household full of lots and lots of people coming and going.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. It was fairly active. In the matter of language I had three years of it in high school and college German. And then I went to Germany in 1927 and found out how little I knew.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What did you do at college. You went to - what? - N.Y.U.?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I was only there a semester. I entered in 1925 I think, the class of 1929. And I quit. First of all I was very disappointed in the level of college.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: I think some kids are now. Especially if you got there from a good school. Or maybe I just expected too much.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What was the school you had gone to then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it was just a little -- Anyway, I don't think that it was such a good school. Except that probably with small classes and the type of unstereotyped teacher --

PAUL CUMMINGS: More individual instruction.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. You got more out of it. Or maybe it was just that the other students were probably at the same educational level, that we moved more quickly, or that we dealt with things or we spoke about things that probably in a more mixed up group you wouldn't find anything. I don't know what it is. It's hard to analyze. I think it was fairly common in those days that a lot of kids when they got to college were disappointed at the level of the other students. And don't forget we had romantic notions of it from things we'd read and heard. My brother who was a little older had been at Brown and he happened to be with a fairly intelligent group and from his talk I gathered, you know, that that was the usual thing in college. So I chucked it and I went to art school. And went to night school at Columbia. Took architecture courses. I hadn't made up my mind yet, you know. At that age I wasn't even looking around. You know, it's a strange thing, speaking of all this activity, I never recall once either my father or mother discussing with me, or overhearing them discuss what I was going to be when I grew up.

PAUL CUMMINGS: They just let you grow.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I don't know what it was. I remember once his nixing something. I know in a lot of other families I hear people talk that their parents had planned for them to be this or that. And I don't recall any such discussion with me.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You were given a great deal of freedom then.

LUDWIG SANDER: Maybe they just didn't care and it never occurred to them. I don't suppose they were outstanding people in any way. They were just products of their time and place. Maybe they were too lazy. Maybe they didn't want the responsibility of saying you ought to go into this or that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, but they saw that you went to good schools and that kind of thing.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I think that was just a matter that they could afford it. Now one thing: my father didn't want me to go to a coeducational school. My oldest brother did and I think some sort of nonsense went on with the girls which with his victorian outlook, you know, didn't quite fit in. And then he died when I was eighteen. So he was out of the picture from there on. And my mother had her own things to think about.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

LUDWIG SANDER: I had two older brothers.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did they have any interest in the arts or any interest in --

LUDWIG SANDER: No. Well, my brother who is closest to me in age at one time thought he would write. And he was really a terrific reader. And I guess between the two of us - he built up the major part of the library, especially the belles lettres, the novels were his. The reference books were mine. And the art books and things like that on architecture.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you had quite an early interest then in architecture and visual things.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. One summer when I was in high school I worked for an architect. I think it was my last year. I went out on the job and saw that the contract was followed as to material and so forth, and did sketches of details to bring to them, and things like that. That was just one summer, two months.

PAUL CUMMINGS: A summer job?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And I really didn't know what I was going to be. See, it never entered my mind.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, what kinds of books and things did you read?

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't know where to start.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, what general areas?

LUDWIG SANDER: In fact, you know, my memory is so poor for those things. I saw a movie announced the other night on TV, which I hardly ever turn on, and I watched it. It was "The Last Train to Munich," a wartime picture, English movie. And I sat through this whole thing seeing it for the first time. And when it got to about the end I remembered scenes out of it. I had seen the movie but I could not remember the early parts. But when it got towards the end I said, God, I've seen this before. It was familiar to me. But I could not recollect having seen that movie. And I must have if I remembered having seen these scenes toward the end of it. So my memory for that would be misleading and piecemeal. I know that when this postwar interest in Kafka came along I had already read a good deal of Kafka. Ask me titles I don't remember. That's true of a great many other things too that have a second coming, you know. I had read them some years before the war. I don't know whether it was the Twenties or the Thirties.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you read fiction and art books and all kinds of --

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. But my brother had the literary interest. Much more than I did.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you ever get interested in being involved with music?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. Not at all. Not at all. In fact, I took piano lessons and couldn't wait until I could get the hell out from under it. Well, it was the teacher too. He was a nice old German. He used to dance behind me and play the fiddle when I tried to play. My practice was interfered with by my mother who thought she could give me criticism when I was just learning scales, you know. And the whole thing was a bloody nuisance. Anyway, I wanted to play the cello. But she said you have to play the piano first. She just made those rules. Because we happened to have a piano I guess. And a cello is an expensive instrument. You know, sometimes you want to do oddball things, comparatively oddball things, because you're sure you can't do the regular thing. It's like - you know, there's this whole flock of sort of - I have nothing against middle-aged ladies who go around to art schools, you know, and think painting is so frustrating, they think they can go into the print department and do lithographs or something that has cuisine in it where they'll get away with it. I suppose if I didn't do well at the piano ... I always had a very early yen to play the cello. And I can almost point to when it started. I think it must have been the year 1913 or something like that. It was just before the war. My mother had had an operation. It was in the winter or something like that. Anyway, she was sent off to Atlantic City for a couple of months and I was taken along. And all those resorts had concerts, you know. She went to all of them. There were even afternoon concerts. And I always remember sitting there watching the cellist and listening to that sound come through to me. I think I was more tuned to the - I think a lot of primitives and children are very much taken in by anything in the bass clef.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: You know, you listen to the tuba and you hear, you know, the cello sounds so full. To me a violin, the complications and the finesse of a violin was too subtle for me at that age. And I think that's quite true. Look at how many people turn up the bass on their radios and phonographs.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, that's interesting.

LUDWIG SANDER: I have an idea that it's not as complicated. It's simpler and easier to follow. Anyway, I never got the cello.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you had a very, very busy life didn't you, traveling back and forth and being involved with the family?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, no, I wouldn't say I was much involved with the family. It sounds that way because you asked me about it and I told you. No, I think my life was more involved with my friends and my contemporaries - kids, you know. There are none of them around anymore. They're all either dead or retired. From grammar school days I don't know anybody. Possibly I know some from high school from around that age. I have heard about them. You know, considering being in a combat zone I was a pretty old soldier in the war. And I found that, that a lot of my high school contemporaries were too. And they did all sorts of things. Like one of them ran a rescue - one of these rescue torpedo boats in the Pacific, you know, to pick up fliers. Just because he was a good yachtsman in civilian life. And often an older soldier had more guts - or rather just as much fear but knew how to handle it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. This was World War II of course?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. In World War I I was a boy scout.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. You were a boy scout.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Used to sell Liberty Bonds.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you like being a boy scout?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, that was fun in those days. It was new. And it meant boy scout then; it didn't mean what it does now. Of course we had camps to go to in the summer. And every week we had a lot of fun. My troop was more for having parties and playing basketball and we didn't run around, you know, starting fires with Indian devices. No, we were way beyond that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But did you go away in the summers when you were in high school and things like that?

LUDWIG SANDER: Sometimes. Sometimes not. I can't even remember. I don't remember being away but I can't remember ... No, I remember lots of summers we just went swimming locally because everybody else did and it was more fun. You know, they weren't under control.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The freedom business.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, what decided you to go to Europe then in the late twenties?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I was twenty-one. I couldn't have gone much on my own before that. Although I almost did earlier. My brother went in 1924, for example. He's just a year and half older than I am. And I was having too much fun in the summers. You know, by then I had discovered girls. So I was twenty-one when I went. I had my 22nd birthday on board the steamer. I remember deciding rather suddenly. And I was going to go to art school then. And didn't. Because I was so torn between what I wanted to do and what some older cousins of mine thought I ought to do.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Were you in Europe a long time on that first trip?

LUDWIG SANDER: I think it was about four months. And I don't think I would have come home except I was getting letters from all my friends about all the social doings. Social doings means girls. And I thought I was missing all sorts of things.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So you came back?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, I'll tell you why - I'll tell you one thing. You know, everybody looks for one reason. Journalistically, you know, you have to sweep everything aside and look for the one reason why somebody did something.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, there are lots of reasons. That's right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, you see you can't waste time. I know how it is when you look up somebody in the

Dictionary of American Biography and you find out he did this because - you know the causal business in history. That's all before Freud and before biography got to be really an American Art. I recall this now, see, since you asked me. I would never have thought of it - Archipenko had come to America. And you may not know it but he was some punkins in those days. He was the Picasso of sculpture. And he opened a school at 57th Street. The building has just been torn down, the south side about the middle of the block between 5th and 6th.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: And, you know, I met artists in Germany. I can't even remember their names. They may have eventually amounted to something; they may have just disappeared into the mill somewhere during the Hitler regime, or just piddled along as provincial artists which is quite possible in Germany. And as I sat talking to these artist they said, oh, Jesus, with Archipenko in America what the hell are you doing here. So that was another thing that helped me decide. And I was at loose ends over there, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But you seemed to be meeting artists.

LUDWIG SANDER: I was mostly living with relatives or distant relatives, you know, that had children roughly my own age or something like that. And I was having a good time that way. You know in my eyes everything was new. Everything I saw interested me. The tiniest thing. The smell of the streets. Each cafe was a new experience just sitting in it. Every bookstall, every museum was a new thing. You know, the color of the sky, everything was just -- there wasn't a move I could make that didn't delight me.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was very stimulating.

LUDWIG SANDER: It was, yes. I can't say that today because that only happens to you once. You may remember the stimulation when you see those things but you don't have the same stimulation.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. It's different feeling.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, indeed. So I came back. And I guess I went over to Archipenko. At the same time I was at the league doing something else - I can't remember, painting some way or other. And in 1928, the following summer, I went to Woodstock. I went then every summer. My summers then were six months long, if not longer. I think the Woodstock influence was a bit retarded there compared to my ideas. I just thought - well - I was off on the wrong track. But in 1928 I did run into a guy there [Thurn] who had been a Hofmann student, who had a class. I wasn't in his class but we lived in the same little hotel. Then when I came down in the fall I went right over to see Vytlačil who was fresh from Munich and was teaching at the League. And I didn't go into his class. You know, it's an age when you're so damn cocky there's nobody going to teach you anything, but it's nice to know them. I certainly looked up to him as a guy who knew everything. But I think I would have dared him to teach me anything, you know. And when I went again to Europe in 1931 I looked him up immediately. In fact, I sublet his studio when he went to Capri in the Spring. He used to have a class in Capri.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hofmann had classes there too, didn't he?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I think he had one there or something like that in the twenties; maybe two. I think they went to several places. I can't say it was a regular thing he had done.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Every summer it would be a different place.

LUDWIG SANDER: He had the South of France thing for a few summers. And Vytlačil was the guy really who introduced him to America or introduced America to him. And I think by 1930 he was out in Berkeley for the summer.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, it was in the early thirties.

LUDWIG SANDER: 1930 I'm sure of it now. Because when I got to Munich in the fall of 1931 he was not back yet from Berkeley or wherever he taught in California. He didn't stay at Berkeley. And there was a student there who had been a student of his in Berkeley the summer before. So that definitely puts him in Berkeley in 1930, if not 1929.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But had you gone to Munich to study with him then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I went to Munich just to go to Munich. It was somewhere in the back of my mind because I'd heard so much about it from Vytlačil, you know. And, oh, I just went over to look at the school and I kind of felt comfortable in Munich and I decided to stay. Not for a long time. I stayed for two semesters. Which I think is pretty good because most of the earlier ones who were there before me keep staying and staying and staying trying to solve the problem of art. And I guess at the end of the second semester I went down to Italy. Vytlačil had discovered Positano then. A very primitive village then; very primitive. And it was very cheap to live there. I

paid something like four dollars a month for my house, if not less. And, you know, you had somebody come in and do the cleaning and cooking and so forth for four dollars a month. The most expensive item there was cigarettes. Well, there wasn't much there, you know. It was cheap because there wasn't much. There was nothing there. The town was about seventy-five percent in ruins. There were whole areas in ruins where nobody lived.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Whole areas, yes. Several of them. "La citta morte" one part was called. Because nobody lived there on the hillside. Just maybe some poor beggar with goats or something. Of course most of them were poor beggars. Anybody that was employed there got about two fifty a month. Fishermen. And of course there were some older people there who had brought money back from America in 1906 and 1910 and they were living off that little. Or their children here were sending them really nothing that they could live off. They owned the property, you know, or owned the two rooms that they lived in. The houses were not so separate. It was almost like a pueblo built up the hill; one attached onto the other. And living was cheap and pleasant and wonderful. If it hadn't been for some outside influences I wouldn't have left there in the fall.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, how were the Hofmann classes? Did you study with him in Munich?

LUDWIG SANDER: They were very small. And they had nothing to do with what happened here. I'll tell you why. Almost everybody in the class knew either German or French. And he could express himself fully. And when I listened to the classes here where he struggled through - he could only use the English words he knew. So the whole thing took on a different complexion. You see the whole subtlety of it was gone. You know, these people talk about push pull. That's so much nonsense. It's such an over-simplification of what he had in mind.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But he was painting quite a different way.

LUDWIG SANDER: He wasn't painting at all. We weren't painting.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. The whole class in the morning - we always had a model who posed a whole week. And we drew on charcoal paper, you know, the charcoal side. And we drew on that same drawing until we practically had holes in it. Although we used very good paper and so we didn't have holes in it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But you just worked and worked over --

LUDWIG SANDER: We worked and worked on that one pose for a whole week, and analyzed it and reconstructed. It was all a matter of erasing and erasing and erasing and drawing in again.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Was this sort of classical drawing --?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. No, it wasn't. Not at all. To put it simply it was a matter of considering the paper a flat two-dimensional surface and our expression was two-dimensional with some grasp of the third dimension on it. In other words, an expression of three dimensions in terms of two dimensions. Does that mean anything to you?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, slightly. But how did he try and do this?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I can't give you a whole year's experience in a few moments and I shouldn't even attempt it. Well, we invented terms, let me say. Those who could. He invented it for them on paper sometimes. He went around and worked on them. And -I don't know - there were seven or ten or twelve in the whole school, which was just one room. And with the exception of a few complete incompetents I'd say it was a pretty intelligent group.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Were there other Americans there besides you?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Other Americans. There were five Turks.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Wow!

LUDWIG SANDER: In fact the monitor was a Turk. And there was a Romanian girl. And there were Germans. The Americans came and went. You know, they didn't stick very long. Because word had already gotten around that if you studied with Hofmann you'd get a good job teaching somewhere. So they came for a couple of weeks and then left again.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's interesting there was a mythology started that early for him.

LUDWIG SANDER: In 1928 in Woodstock there was a strong mythology because - not only because this fellow Thurn was teaching there - but some other people who came there - not the Woodstock crowd by any means - knew about him. And they had this false impression. Somebody mentioned it to me the other day again that he could teach you all the secrets of Matisse and Picasso. That was not true at all. In fact I was in Florida just a few weeks ago. And there's a school down there. And some ex-student of his comes down there and tells them that he will give them the secrets of Picasso and Matisse - or used to go down - I don't know if he still does - that he learned from Hofmann. We worked from the model. And certainly it was not classical. The figure and the entire background of the room got to be quite - I think from the point of view of those days - quite disjointed, broken up, and may have had even somewhat of an early Cubist look unless you looked a little harder. In the afternoon there was no studio. In the afternoon I went upstairs and painted on my own. I tried to work out the problems of still life. Because when you work that hard in the morning at one solid thing - I don't think art schools are run that way anymore - people go to universities where they get two hours a week. We had five mornings a week, we had two afternoons a week. There was a model in for sketching which was open to anybody in town. A lot of the artists used to come in, you know, take advantage of the model. We'd spend our afternoons, you know, going to the museums or just getting the hell out. We'd get on a trolley car and go out into the country. Or, as I say, sometimes I worked in that other studio upstairs. There weren't many who did that. That release in the afternoon was very important.

PAUL CUMMINGS: From the concentration of the morning.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, you had dinner at noon. Everybody lived in a pension where you had all three meals. And at one o'clock everybody had dinner, not a little lunch. And a little nap or something after eating. Well, you went to bed early in Munich, and got up early too. Everybody I knew was dead serious, fully committed - they didn't have that word then - but that's what they were. And that's all we ever talked about. We went to concerts a good deal. They were so plentiful and cheap, and within walking distance. Munich had two full symphony orchestras. And the opera house. And the smaller baroque thing which Mozart was given. And a good theatre. We didn't have a lot of plays to go to but there was a lot of chamber music, which we didn't have here then. We had very little chamber music here, and it was hard to come by, you didn't know when it was played or where it was. There everything was within walking distance of where we lived. Munich was then a city of I think 400,000. Today it's a city of a million and a half. And Munich had a lot of retired people, retired college professors, retired Army officers, retired people from the upper higher civil service, you know, like cabinet members and so forth. World War I, pre-World War I cabinet members, and generals who lent sort of a tone which led to a gentle, pleasant, intellectual like. I lived a block from the university. In the next block was the Academy. In the next block was the school. We used to have to pass the Academy. They had a special building for painting animals, all glassed in. And we'd see them in there painting chickens and cows.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's fantastic. Did you get involved with those painters ever?

LUDWIG SANDER: The academic ones?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, no. They had a plentiful supply of so-called modern painters. I've even forgotten what the name of the organization was that had shows - the Free something or other. I helped get a cow through a gate one. The cow wouldn't go through and I helped lean against it. And finally a girl I knew came along who was in the school. She's dead and gone now, poor thing. Very pretty. She was from California and she spent her summers on a ranch or something. We couldn't get the cow through the gate. So she just twisted its tail and it went through.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Was there much mixing between these two groups of students?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, no, We didn't even know the others existed. They went to different cafes than we did. I daresay they couldn't afford to go to them, you know. The Hans Hofmann students, the Americans, had some money from the States. I don't think there were any very, very, very, very hard up students. You know, the German kids couldn't afford to go to cafes. When they went to concerts in the dead of winter they'd run down without hats and coats on because hat checking was obligatory according to the German fire laws; not only obligatory but you had to pay for it; it wasn't a tip. There was a stub attached to your opera or concert ticket that was for the hat check. Of course they were very intelligent about the fire laws, you know, so they wouldn't panic and trip over a mass of coats and things like that. In fact, a bigger theatre would have many check rooms in different sections. But it was carried because you paid for it. And these kids would save that what amounted to three or four cents in American money, to avoid the hat check. Most German students were very, very poor. It's unbelievable what they lived on. And in that way we were sort of a money elite. Not that we had much money. But it was so much more than they had. We could sit in cafes every night, which we often did.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Were there other Americans there that you remember when you were there?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I wonder why Hofmann became such an image here?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, nobody was teaching anything here as far as I was concerned. Teaching, teaching, teaching. Let me say this: - about the rest there can be arguments - he was the great drawing teacher of the first half of the twentieth century. Drawing. And in those days drawing meant a hell of a lot more than it does now. Now it's sort of considered a minor part. You do it when you don't feel too well. Or you do it on a piece of paper or something like that. But that was a major -that was the painting, you know. The rest was a color problem. Because it was a break from tonal painting that was tremendous.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's interesting. No one I've talked to has stressed the fact that he really did --

LUDWIG SANDER: If they studied with him here in America they wouldn't know him.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I see. He changed that much?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Big classes. No communication, mistranslations. And I think he got tired. And he saw nothing could be done. He changed his own outlook on painting too, you know. He was not an abstract painter when I studied with him.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, then he was sort of half and half.

LUDWIG SANDER: No! He was not half and half.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Later.

LUDWIG SANDER: Much later. Much later. In the forties he was still doing still lifes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Beautiful things. Terrific paintings that looked - oh - you know, a checkered tablecloth with a wine bottle and fruit on the table. Fairly late forties. He didn't paint at all in Munich. He just had those two little old portraits around in his own home. And I was one of the few who used to go there because I did translations for him, you know, statements and pamphlets and so forth.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So you got to know him as a person as well as a teacher then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. You know I understand from Vytlačil and Carl Holty -well, I guess the only two around still who stayed in the art world who had come from those times, but in their day, in the middle twenties, they'd go out and sit together in the beer places. Of course Hofmann was then a hell of a lot younger than I am now, but he'd had a bit of success by then, had recognition here in America as a teacher, not as an artist. Nobody got recognition here as an artist in those days. A handful of academic painters and a couple of other isolated instances of recognition here and there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's interesting, I've gotten the feeling in talking to people that all those years, sort of pre-World War II, the big quest was for teachers.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, you couldn't sell a painting even if you were good. The galleries weren't attuned to it, there was nobody interested in pictures. It was a desert. You know if you sold a picture it was for fifty dollars or something like that. It was a real desert. That's why everybody went to Europe. I think anybody who went to Europe after the war it was just for a romantic recapturing of earlier years. There was nothing going on. But in those earlier days that's where you had to go. Paris was the scene. Berlin was the scene.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you go to Berlin?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. But, you know, just the feel of it rubbed off on you. It was the life that made the scene. It wasn't just the artists being there. The whole life was attuned to it. Sure, after the war, you know, it was a matter of GI students and a broken-up France. They tried to kill off the older generation of artists. And they were older, you know. The men who were part of the artistic life, the cafe life were older and successful and were too old to go out every night and sit in cafes. Like I am now. I don't feel like sitting around bars where artists go. Not that I made that decision. I just can't get myself out at night to go there. And I see no reason for it. I'm not any longer lonely, like when you're younger and not connected and that kind of thing. And when I work all day, at night I try to catch up with correspondence or something like that. If I go to Max's it's to eat. I go about four times a year. I think it's a pretty good restaurant. The food is pretty good there. I hear about other places where artists go. In fact I was uptown at somebody's house for drinks last week. And they said, "Oh, let's go up to Elaine's." And I said, "What's Elaine's?" "You don't know what Elaine's is! It's the scene." Well now, is it? I don't

know. What do you know about it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's uptown. It's very literary. You know, all the writers go there.

LUDWIG SANDER: They come uptown to go there? Or they live uptown?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, a lot of them live around that area.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I went there with some young artists. Had dinner. It was pretty good. Certainly when I was a young artist the prices would have been forbidding.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Even when I was a middleaged artist the prices would have been forbidding. You could always eat at the Cedar for a dollar and a quarter.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's right.

LUDWIG SANDER: And could have a good dinner at times when they just happened to have a good cook. For the price I don't think the food at the Cedar was bad. It was just at times. I mean the old Cedar.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't know what goes on there now. Because all you run into is plainclothes cops and N.Y.U. students.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. It's not what it was. So, let's see, you studied with Hofmann - when?

LUDWIG SANDER: In 9131 - 1932, the fall semester of 1931 and the spring semester of 1932.

PAUL CUMMINGS: And then from there you went to Positano in Italy?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How long were you there?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, until the fall.

PAUL CUMMINGS: All through the summer?

LUDWIG SANDER: Spring, summer and fall. In the meantime my money was cut off. There was a financial disaster.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So you had to come back? And that was in the thirties? This was the Depression.

LUDWIG SANDER: I was the fall of 1932, late fall of 1932 that I came home. I had time to go up to Venice and look at what was left of the Biennale of 1932. And I spent a little time in Paris, and then came home. I had a studio on Third Street. Where the Law School is now. It was a good studio too. North light, you know. In those days there were still studios. You didn't need a loft.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Studio buildings, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: With a big north light, you know, in the roof. A balcony for storage. Bedbugs.

PAUL CUMMINGS: All the other delights.

LUDWIG SANDER: There was a poetry business in the cellar. Eli Segal ran a poetry thing in the cellar.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes. That's where he was.

LUDWIG SANDER: And there were two buildings on the Third Street side which - you see, there was a complex of buildings in that block where the Law School is. There were these nice buildings, red brick, three or four story things on the Washington Square Side and the old rabbit warrens on the Third Street side which had the El running past the second or third story windows according to how high the building was. They were entered from Washington Square. You went through the hallways through a yard in the back, a big yard or garden, as some people called it, and went into those buildings; you had a Washington Square address. But you had the same old bedbug-gy flats. Some of them were fixed up pretty well of course. But there were two buildings on the Third Street side that you entered on Third Street. They had been nice private houses at one time when that was

Amity Street. And they all belonged by lease, long lease to the Strunsky family. I think they belonged to Columbia University then, had been given to them by the Eno family or something. It was a bequest. And Strunsky had a long lease on them. And he gave me that place pretty cheaply. It was the time they had trouble collecting rents I think in 1932. And those two buildings had names. One was called Desire Under the El, and the other one was called Strunsky's Love Stables. And by now all this has passed so long I don't know which one I was in.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Terrific. So what did you do? You lived there and you painted?

LUDWIG SANDER: And painted, yes. And painted like a fool. There's nothing left of it. That's part of the destroyed period. Yes, it just happened that those got damaged so badly. I brought back a lot of pictures from Italy, you know, a slew of them. I painted like mad there. And lots of drawings. I still have some of the drawings. And some of the paintings are somewhere. Some of them were rescued from that disaster. When my mother's house was sold they were put into a garage and eventually rain came in on them, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. All the problems.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. All those things. I had whole portfolios of drawings. I felt particularly attached to my drawings. They were a sodden mass, the drawings. Some of the drawings of the period I still have. I went to Woodstock that summer of 1933. And I have drawings from then.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you get involved in Woodstock?

LUDWIG SANDER: How did I get involved in Woodstock? Well, it was the only - I was studying with a couple of guys ... remember the old studio building at 57th and Sixth Avenue?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, somewhere, through some influence, I can't remember what, I was shoved into the class of one Michel Jacobs who was supposed to know all about color. He had written several books on color theory. He had written a book on Jan Hambidges's idea of Dynamic Symmetry. Do you know anything about that?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Because I don't think he knew - well, he may have known for those days. And then George Elmer Brown who was the academic National Academy painter who was in the same building. And he took all the classes. So I studied with him. And at the same time I was going to the League.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who did you study with at the League?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, Jesus! I think my first class there was at night with Boardman Robinson. And then I moved down into the cellar to do sculpture with Edward McCarten. But he was not an academic sculptor. You might even call him more of a classical sculptor because he came out of Houdon. He skipped back a century and a half. He came right out of Houdon. And there was a certain chaste, classical, Jesuit notion when he did speak.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's interesting.

LUDWIG SANDER: You know there were various stages of all that. I think that was the time when I was with him in the morning and George Elmer Brown in the afternoon and I went to Columbia at night.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You had a full day. Trotting back and forth.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Oh, I could take it. When I was in high school I went to night school to architecture courses, learning architectural drawing. It didn't bother me one bit. At that age you can do an awful lot. And especially if you're motivated, which I was. The word "motivated" didn't exist then. But I was motivated. I don't know what you could have called it. If there was a midnight class I would have gone to it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But it's interesting that you studied sculpture and yet you haven't made sculpture very much.

LUDWIG SANDER: No. No. No, at that age I was interested in everything.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So how long did that continue - the classes?

LUDWIG SANDER: Not too long. You know you learn a little and you think you know it all. And that's all right too. Because you do learn as much from your colleagues - contemporary and older - as you do in school, or did in school, or you thought you did. Everything was a revelation. That was the important thing. Nobody taught you how to paint, how to get the paint off the brush onto the canvas, which in the beginning is extremely difficult. I

think mostly because we used cheap brushes and cheap paint then. I remember in the very beginning I had a heck of a job to get the stuff off the brush and onto the canvas.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Were there any artists that you were particularly interested in at that point?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. No. No. I'm afraid I'm a very poor hero-worshipper. Always was. It was a period when all the myths were being exploded. It was the years when biography was rewritten, the rise of the art of biography and you didn't believe a thing anymore. You didn't believe anything. Oh, I had interests, you know. Later I had interests in artists but they were very remote, you know. You know in the beginning you sort of followed everybody by saying they're terrific, and you know damn well you don't know - whether you were standing in front of a Matisse or a Rubens, - you really didn't know what made those pictures work, nor did you realize why they were good except somebody told you; or you read it. And only later when I got more knowledge and was more sophisticated and older, just even a little older, I began to settle down to things that interested me. That was Vermeer and Poussin, and a few others. And another thing, I also discovered somewhat later what interested me in that there was a strong dependence on vertical and horizontal and the deviation from it more important. Like the masts in that Monet of the sailboats.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What was your own painting like?

LUDWIG SANDER: It changed every few months.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Every time you got a new idea.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I'll tell you. You see there was a book came out in the late twenties that I think influenced I don't know how many people. I think the guy is still alive in England, an art critic, Valensky. And he laid down a set of rules which as a kid you feel his authority has the right to govern you by. And it was that every picture had to be a new creation; that is, being derivative was one of the great sins, and being self-derivative was a secondary one that you had to look out for. So every picture had to be a new creation. There's no relationship. Of course, I've long since changed my mind about that. If you have a notion it may not be the first painting on that notion, or the third, or the seventeenth, that is the solution to it. It may be the first. It may be the fifth. It may be the twentieth. And each version of that notion speaks differently and is a different picture and a different idea. You know it depends on how finely you can divide things, whether you take a gross look at it or whether you take a finer look. Like these things around here. Like those two. To me they're miles and years apart. They are, too. Somebody might come along and say don't be painting the same picture over and over. But it's not so. Each one speaks differently. Each one is a different solution. In those days you went around and changed the landscape every time. You'd paint the village square from the left side where the church is. Then you'd paint the same village square from the right side where the inn is or where the statue is, or something like that. And that was more or less because it was really required of you. But then I got over that motion. I could stay at the same landscape if I did a landscape and paint ten different things from it looking in the same direction. Looking, not changing my point of view, or changing my camp stool or rock that I sat on.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How about this fellow Michel Jacobs and his color.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. R.I.P. Well, all he was, you know, was extending the Newtonian theory. In fact he had his own paints made which you bought from him. He didn't make anything on them. I don't mean he was a paint peddler. They had the names from the spectrum, you know, regardless of what they were made of they weren't called alizarin crimson or - let me see, what are the names of the colors? - ultramarine blue or something like that. They were: yellow; yellow-green; green; blue-green; blue; blue-violet; violet; violet-red; red; red-orange; orange; orange-yellow; yellow; and back to yellow-green. God knows what they were made of. The idea was to work from the spectrum. It was the pointillist theory is what it was. And he just couldn't work out the problem himself in his own painting too well. Probably being too much of a mechanical cook, you know, in the working of it too aesthetically. And, oh, I got so frustrated by that. You see he went to Woodstock for the summer and put on a class there. And I was free to go up with him ahead of time and help him build the racks in his studio and so forth. And I left him after a few weeks. In fact I was seduced away by another guy, another teacher who I stayed with two weeks.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who was that?

LUDWIG SANDER: He's dead and gone, Cecil Chichester. He was pretty good. He'd been a part-time commercial artist. He did the early Packard or Rolls-Royce ads. I can't remember which. With landscape to match. And then I was on my own the rest of the summer. I remember we used to have to pass each other on the street and I felt terrible about it. Anyway that's how I got to Woodstock.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, did you go to Woodstock year after year?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, 1928, 1929, 1930. In 1931-1932 I was in Europe. I was back again in 1933, 1934. Then I

began to dwindle off; 1935, 1936 I was going up there less, not the whole summer. And it got to be just a couple of weekends.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Most of the rest of the time you spent in New York in the studio.

LUDWIG SANDER: I can't remember where the hell I was to tell you the truth. I don't know - I was up at Martha's Vineyard several summers and fall. You know in those years you probably didn't paint sometimes for two or three months. You know you had to lose interest. Nothing ever happened. Your painting just did nothing. And I was no exception. It was everybody. You just bolted around in some sort of a stupor about it. Those were the Depression years then and you didn't know what to do. People had little jobs here and there like in the post office. Those are years which I probably don't remember so well because I suppressed probably --

PAUL CUMMINGS: The problems.

LUDWIG SANDER: The ideas. Like some of the years of my childhood I suppress I'm sure.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What galleries were open then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Galleries had nothing to do with the art scene. They sold pictures. Oh, sure, there were lots of galleries. There was Valentine, which was a very good one - Dudensing. There was Frank Rehn, which was probably the most active gallery of living painters then; on Fifth Avenue.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How about the Downtown Gallery?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, the Downtown, sure. It was very active. It was down on 13th Street. Very active. Oh, there were many others. It was confusing because there were not strict lines drawn then. Those were the days too of the Reinhardt and Goldschmidt Galleries in the Hecksher Building when it was new. In fact, that's where the Modern Museum opened. They were in the Hecksher Building in the first years. That's where I saw Matisse when he was here.

PAUL CUMMINGS: At the museum?

LUDWIG SANDER: In the Hecksher Building, yes. I can't remember whether it was in the Reinhardt Gallery or in the Museum. Because the Reinhardt Gallery was pretty big. It seems to me they brought the Carnegie there one year after it was over.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Or a good part of it. I know they brought it to the Brooklyn Museum once. I went over to see it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's right, yes. A couple of times they've done that. Moved the show.

LUDWIG SANDER: Whether they had the whole show or not, because a lot of pictures were sold in those days. A lot of big shows. It's beginning to happen again. You know you go to some show in a museum and the idea of selling something out of it was just sort of ...

PAUL CUMMINGS: It didn't happen.

LUDWIG SANDER: But I sold three or four pictures out of the Corcoran two years ago. And I had a show out in Dayton of all places and I'd been told two pictures were sold. Two came back badly damaged and two were supposed to have been sold - two and a lithograph or something. I don't know whether the Dayton Museum bought them or they sold them. I still haven't heard.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's interesting. Were you involved with any of the Federal Art Projects or any of those things?

LUDWIG SANDER: No.

PAUL CUMMINGS: None?

LUDWIG SANDER: When it was new, before it was called that - you know in its early days it had several names, several motives.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, every few months they seemed to have another ...

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. PWA or something like that in the beginning. And CWA.

PAUL CUMMINGS: And the Treasury thing.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. Well, I'll tell you my history of that. When it first came I applied at the first temporary sort of office. And I was told that I would have to take a pauper's oath. I don't think there is such a thing in New York State. But the woman who was there said that I had to take a pauper's oath. Which I couldn't possibly do. I didn't. I was not a pauper. But I didn't have enough to live on. I had something like ten dollars a week. You could stay alive on that. Things were so cheap, you know. And then there were all sorts of things. Girl friends and so forth influenced me outside. My family never took charity, you know. Stupidity. Then I was asked to go on it because they had to have some things done and they didn't have enough guys who could paint. At least that's what they told me - you know, well enough to do a serious job somewhere. It was in the matter of murals. Then I was offered a job to be a museum director on the WPA somewhere in Iowa. And I was all ready to take it. And my young lady said if you go to Sioux City you can go alone; I'm not going out with you. So that fixed that. Some of my colleagues, you know, were in supervisory jobs long before that and they were looking around. Most of those guys had just spent a week in art school who got on the project. So they didn't have too many people who were competent to do the murals that they needed. There were some fairly good ones done. Jim Brooks did one out at La Guardia. Guston did one. Bill de Kooning did one. But by and large there weren't enough to go around.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you ever do a mural in those days?

LUDWIG SANDER: I had done one in Italy which I had to pay to have removed from the wall when I moved out. It wasn't much. It was cheap. And I had done some on large sheets of paper to decorate an apartment. And then I did some for a couple of parties, you know, they wanted to convert the apartment to some sort of an idea, I rigged up the walls with paper and did them. And they were kept permanently. Yes, one place kept them, had them on the walls. No, what the hell, there were no buildings. Very few of them had murals. And they were by the entrenched mural painters.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Who were there first.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, the guys who did it like a business. Like the sculptors were just about dying out who did all the memorial sculpture. You couldn't do anything else. Just because Epstein had done a couple of things in London didn't mean that a Congressman from you-name-it was going to accept those on federal buildings. So this whole crowd of historical sculptors or whatever they're called - I wasn't so bitter against them because I wasn't a sculptor. Everybody else was ... I'll tell you what. The sculptors who were complaining about it weren't good enough to do anything. They hadn't done anything that size. There weren't very many good one, you know, because there wasn't much interest in sculpture. They were worse off than the painters were. They were starving. All they did was little cruddy things to put on a table, heads with the necks bent. Refugees or something - I don't know. People who always looked very sad. Nakian was one of the few real live sculptors we had. He had ideas and he could do them. But there was no place to do them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No materials, no money.

LUDWIG SANDER: There was nobody interested. Everybody recognized him. But there were no projects for that. Oh, he did some WPA things, yes. He did some animals for the wading pool over on Welfare Island at the Children's Hospital. He did dolphins and bears and a few other things, supposed to be fountains, you know. I don't know whether they were ever cast; or if they were cast if they still exist. Yes, he was the great hope. My God, I wish he'd gotten his recognition then. He had it earlier, you know. He's ten years older than I am. And he had very early recognition. But that was still another era. That was in the early twenties. And there was a stone wall between those - when we say the three past eras, I don't know, there may be one right now too in some way, you know, that cuts off the apostolic age of American art, you know, the abstract expressionists and so forth. They were the only painters of the fifties.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's true.

LUDWIG SANDER: Although socially I was one of them, you know. But I had a different outlook. And those of us who were really the apostolic age of the development of present day American art, I think a lot of them were cut off by a stone wall from the younger ones today.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, some say that.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I think so.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The social situation is different and, as you said yourself, --

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, there was that thing among artists, some of them are older by age, some of them are older by conviction almost. Some of them came into it late. Some of them got their success very late, so late that they're almost with the younger ones. They're all with the younger ones. And some of them who had their

success when they were young are with the older ones. It hasn't so much to do with actual age and years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, who did you know in the thirties? Do you remember any of those people that you've known since then and still do?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it's hard to remember. I first met Bill de Kooning about 1930. Although we were never friendly I used to see him on the street or somewhere and sort of say hello to him. But I never really knew him well until I came back at the end of the war. My second night home I was right down there in the cafeteria. Nakian took me right to the cafeteria where everybody was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: On Sixth Avenue?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And I saw guys I knew from before. Lewitin I knew very well in Paris in the early thirties. I was really surprised to see him sitting there. I never thought he'd come to America. And I can't tell you exactly who all was there. But he was sitting there. And de Kooning was sitting there. I didn't have to be introduced to him. Although I didn't know Bill very well I remember having met him in Woodstock when he came up to visit. Oh, there were some more guys who eventually - I can't remember so well because I never knew them before. And other faces that looked familiar from before the war. In those days everybody was split up before the war. A lot of guys were in Europe. A lot lived in the suburbs. Or lived uptown. Lived where they could, how they could, and didn't necessarily concentrate here in the Village. There was an old generation that did, you know. Like the bunch that sat at the Lafayette. Niles Spencer and people like that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The old Whitney crowd in a way.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, yes, but that was a fractured thing too. That wasn't all one crowd by any means. I knew Joe Pollet. He lived in the same building I did in Paris. And Calder lived in the same building I did in Paris in 1930-1931. He was not then known so much as an artist so much as he was a great sort of playboy and a lot of fun with his gimmicks. I'd have to really think up a lot of the guys I knew in the thirties who are still around. I'll tell you in the winter of 1931 or 1932 somebody - and I can't even remember who it was - said to get a picture and bring it to a certain place, there's to be a big exhibition (They weren't called group shows then). And it turned out to be in the lobby of the Roxy Theatre I think. And I took over a picture. And I think that's the one that had a big banner across it reading "Help Needy Artists." But I looked around and I thought oh, what a bunch of backward guys these are. (You know I was just back from Europe). And I had the worst sort of contempt for most of this. It was pretty smeary stuff. They couldn't make up their minds whether they wanted to paint the figure badly or the landscape badly or whether they couldn't even paint it well in the way they intended painting it. But it was pretty crummy stuff. and I saw one picture that impressed me. And it was what in those days you would have called an abstract painting. And I thought here's the only guy I feel related to. A couple of days later there was a knock on the door. And there was a big skinny kid with his wife. And it was Burgoyne Diller. He said, "I painted that picture." And he felt the same way about mine, and he looked me up.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So did you get to know him well then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. And then of course he was in the war too. He was an officer in the Navy. And he was a supervisor in the WPA.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: In fact he was one of the guys who wanted me to come in and do a mural.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But you didn't?

LUDWIG SANDER: One of these Treasury Projects, you know. I can't remember why I didn't do it. I just can't remember.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It didn't happen.

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't know whether the thing petered out. I just can't remember. I knew Mike Loew in the early thirties too. I can't remember how or where. And, oh, all sorts of people that I'd run into. Oh, John Nichols who's dead and gone. One of the first things I did when I started painting again was to do a portrait of him. He had a studio on Tenth Street. He's dead and gone now a few years. He died in the psychiatric ward in Bellevue. He wouldn't eat. He was an old time sort of - I knew him in Paris too. He was there when I got there and left before I did and came home. Oh, God, you know a lot of them have - well, they've disappeared or they died.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What do you think was the problem in the thirties? Was it just that the economic situation was so bad?

LUDWIG SANDER: They were just painting into a dead end. There was nothing. And we thought that was normal.

If anybody sold a picture, my God, word got around.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How about the people who were in a gallery?

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't know who was in a gallery. Max Weber. I can't think of some of the other names. Reginald Marsh, maybe. I don't think what they were doing was selling pictures.

PAUL CUMMINGS: John Sloan?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, Sloan was a very old man. I knew him. And I knew Everett Shinn. But, you know, that was Spanish-American War. I suppose somebody has a line on it whether those fellows ... Well, Shinn of course was a commercial artist largely. He did illustrations. I mean a commercial artist in the best sense.

PAUL CUMMINGS: He did the natural thing to do.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, he illustrated books. And he came from a generation when there wasn't that terrific division between fine arts and illustration, let me say. The ordinary commercial artist illustrated for advertisements of sock and handbags and shoes for the department stores. Of course that's a different thing. But the people who were in illustration and the good cartoonists were in and out of the fine arts. They were from the fine arts and they were looked at separately. George Luks, you know, was probably one of the first comic strip artists. I remember when he died. I was supposed to meet him the next night. Some friends of mine knew him well and it was set up about two weeks in advance to come to dinner. Yes, I think he did one of the first real comic strips and continued it. Older than the Katzenjammer Kids.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. So the first generation of comic strip artists were still in their prime. Rudy Gersh just died this past year, the guy who started the Katzenjammer Kids. Then they stole it from him, you know, and called it Captain and the Kids and somebody else did it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: But sure he was the ... And he didn't seem like such an old man to me. I met him in the thirties.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, when did you get really involved with abstract painting? Was that in the thirties?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes, sure.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Early thirties?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. You know abstract painting in those days didn't necessarily mean that there was nothing recognizable in the picture out of life. There was very often some suggestion.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was sort of abstract rather than non-figurative.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And, you know, the abstract artists association was formed in the early thirties.

PAUL CUMMINGS: In 1939 or something.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, no!

PAUL CUMMINGS: The American Abstract Artists.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Much earlier. In the early thirties. Let me say 1934 or something like that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Early thirties?!

LUDWIG SANDER: That was the first organization of it. Maybe 1935. Let me say 1935, huh? It couldn't have been as late as 1939. That was reorganized, you know. I can't give you the dates on that. But the first one fell apart. And it was the same crowd. It was Diller and Mike Loew and Vytlačil. And I was going to go to a meeting somebody asked me to attend - maybe it was Diller - and somebody said you know you can't have anything appearing in your picture that will suggest anything in real life. And although I had been completely abstract in the modern sense before then, you know, there was a great deal of ambivalence in the beginning for everybody. I don't think there was ever any ambivalence with Diller. You know he was a constructivist.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, no, his very first pictures were sort of amorphous. The ones I first saw. Amorphous shapes. Not even fried egg shapes. But just amorphous soft edge and so forth. And there was no construction in them. But he got to it pretty quickly. And to me a lot of it was like phony modern, phony abstract and I didn't think that the main issue of abstract painting was whether it was to some extent figurative or non-figurative. And so I didn't go to the meeting. Then the thing broke up. And it was reorganized.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I didn't know that there was --

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. It was the same bunch. I remember a guy by the name of Matulka. I don't know whatever happened to him.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Jan Matulka. He still teaches at the League I think.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, no!

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: You're thinking of Vytlačil.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No. Matulka teaches at the league. He's very old. And he's still there once in a while I think.

LUDWIG SANDER: I can't remember the other names. If I'm not mistaken Balcomb Greene was at the back of the organization.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. And Charles Shaw.

LUDWIG SANDER: Charles Shaw, sure. And of course what's his name - I always thought of the two of them together -

PAUL CUMMINGS: George Morris?

LUDWIG SANDER: George L. K. Morris and Charles Shaw, of course.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, they were part of the second one, weren't they? They weren't in the first one?

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't know whether they were in the first one or not because I didn't belong to either. I should have.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You never joined things?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, I never joined anything. I was in when we started The Club but it wasn't started as a club, you see. When I was in the organization of that it wasn't intended to be what it became. It was just sort of a place to get ourselves off the street instead of sitting in that degrading cafeteria, where they wouldn't let us sit anymore anyway. You had to buy a second cup of coffee, you know, you had to have two nickels. Then they used to hound us. And then they closed up the toilets. And you couldn't have more than four chairs at a table or something like that. Although the place was filled with pickpockets. It was much more of a reunion for the boys from Sing Sing. Then we used to stand under the awning at the cigar store. Well, it got to be ... Because everybody sort of left home around eleven o'clock at night to get his paper or cigarettes and see what was going on. Almost everybody was unconnected then. Either divorced or couldn't afford, you know this whole thing. Or their wives went to bed early because they had jobs. Everybody would be out on the street about eleven o'clock at night.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, it was all Sixth Avenue and Eighth Street then.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. There was an uptown crowd too. I think they had a little more money a little sooner. Some of them had it to start with. And there was wandering back and forth. Everybody didn't show up every night. So we found out it was feasible to rent a loft. It had a kitchen in it. So we had coffee. We didn't allow liquor. And we had sandwiches. And it was pretty nice. There were about fifteen or twenty of us. And it wasn't intended to have any membership or any organization, name, and, God knows, no panels or lectures. But that was forced in eventually and then membership and all that. It's like the Renaissance. It was over when it was started. And it was very good. It did an awful lot for a lot of us. You know, we began to evaluate ourselves. We weren't just - we were really just like Bowery bums in a way. Of course in those days a lot of us visited each other's studios in the afternoon. We'd go out to dinner in the late afternoon. Or somebody cooked. We'd go out and get something and cook it there. Which we did for dinner often at Washington Square South where I was after a while. I'd get a couple of pounds of hamburger and cook it in the fireplace.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who was in that first group before The Club got to be The Club?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I have a list somewhere. I have a telephone list that we made up. And they became the charter members. With the exception of a few names that just didn't come through, they never came to meetings, or only came once. I think there were sixteen or seventeen. That's the figure. And I can't name everybody off the top of my head. But there was of course: Lewitin, Ad Reinhardt, Pavia, Jimmy Rosati, Bill de Kooning, Franz Kline, Marca-Relli, - I'm sure to leave out some names - Peter Grippe. Oh, dear, I'd have to look that up. But we had that loft. We cleaned it up and fixed it. We had our own New Year's Eve party the first New Year's Eve. And we had a dinner party that Joe Pollet and myself cooked up. He wasn't a charter member but he came in soon after and was made an honorary charter member.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, this was really just a place to get out of the Waldorf?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And be by ourselves. And we did sort of make sort of common laws that there were to be no pictures on the walls, there were to be no manifestos, it was not an aesthetic grouping but merely a social grouping. Because people painted like anything you wanted look at. And nobody took a strong stand or was defending himself, his ideas. Nothing had any name. There was nothing called abstract expressionism.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, there were no critics really active.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, de Kooning had had two shows by then at Charlie Egan's. I guess he was the only one who had one. I think Ad Reinhardt was with Betty Parsons and had a show. Marca-Relli had one with Viveau Gallery. Jack Tworokov was a charter member. I just saw him the other night. That reminded me of it. George Cavallon was a charter member. We had a radio-record player which Cavallon built in. It was that sort of thing. We had a fireplace which we got wood for. We had sort of comfortable furniture for a while. Milton Resnick was a charter member. He threw all the furniture out. He thought it was bourgeois. Got chairs. A lot of guys who were in there we had to buy their stuff. There was a couch and there were coffee tables and lamps with amber colored shades because we had the Sing Sing lighting put in, you know, bare bulbs. It wasn't an aesthetic grouping or anybody with any manifestos or any axes to grind. It was aesthetically as diverse a crowd as you could find. There were no academic portrait painters among them. Although we all did a portrait here and there just for fun. I've got a charcoal drawing of Nakian around somewhere. The one I did of Nichols I don't know what happened to that. I think that was the first thing I did when I finally got paints together after I got out of the Army.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What did you do in the Army? Because we haven't even mentioned that.

LUDWIG SANDER: I was a soldier. So special racket. I had infantry basic. And went into tank destroyers directly as they were formed. In fact, before Camp Hood was finished I was in sort of a hobo jungle about thirty miles from there. That was the first. And I was in what they called the academic regiment, in the instructional end of it. And then I did, for a while, maps and things like that. I had a cartographer's rating. And from there, because I could do that, I did other training aids such as charts and things like that for a while. Then I was sent off to be - then I got into a tactical unit. The school sort of broke up a bit and I got into a tank destroyer battalion. And from there I went to the Language and Area Training. I was a Turkish --

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you get that?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I was sent to the University of Indiana. And you couldn't take a language you already knew. And I was mistaken then. I thought now what language can I learn that will do me some good after the war. Oh, in the thirties I did a lot of mosaics.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really!

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. I just plugged away at it. I don't know where I got the money to get the materials. Of course they never saw the light of day. A friend of mine took color photographs of them and I took color photographs of them and I took them up to Dorothy Miller. I said somewhere before I disappear into this catastrophe, you know, as the war came, somebody ought to see them. And Reuben Nakian warned me. He said, "She'll be interested in the photographs. She won't be interested in the mosaics. She'll say who took these pictures?" And, by Jesus, that's all she said. She also said the Modern Museum doesn't exhibit mosaics. And I was about to tell her that okay for plastic toilet seats and things from Japan, five-and-ten items from Japan, and things like that. But I had learned discretion by then. Where were we? After the war somewhere? No, during the war. Oh - Turkish. I was supposed to take three semesters of it. There were accelerated semesters, you know. You'd take solid classes from 7:30 to 5:00. Language all morning, and the afternoon the economics, and folk lore, and physical anthropology and geography of your area, and political science. And when I was at the end of my second semester of Turkish, it and other exotic languages in the Russian field were broken up, that is Serbo-Croatian, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Finnish, and Turkish. And everybody was shipped out. But I had very good luck at the point, which I rarely had in the Army. They had flunked fourteen guys out of German at the end of the second semester. And they had to keep a full class. So they picked out fourteen guys from other languages who would fit into the third semester of German, knew enough about the German area besides the language. That was a pretty rough estimate because some of those who were born there had left so early that they didn't know

anything about Germany. I think I was more widely traveled in Germany than any of the German natives. Of course the language they knew, which I didn't. I knew it well enough but not as well as they did of course. So I did my third semester in German. And I was interviewed and about to be shipped - my orders came, but too late for - not CIA - what was it called then?

PAUL CUMMINGS: OSS?

LUDWIG SANDER: OSS. In an analytical capacity. Somewhere out in Virginia they had a place where they analyzed captured material or made up area papers on sort of the maps and the history and so forth. It came the same day my orders came to go to Camp Ritchie, the Intelligence School. And that had precedence because it was a fully Army thing. OSS was part civilian, part Navy, part Army, and it didn't have quite the force. Some colonels came in and examined the crew that they picked out, you know, from the background sheets and so on. And there were I think just two of us to go to that. Then I went overseas in the German Intelligence Section and got into an infantry division. Worked for a while at division level. And then eventually and for the rest of the war was at regimental level. Rifle regiment which is the furthest forward that Army Intelligence goes - Army Intelligence. I don't mean OSS, or spies. I wasn't a spy. I was at the analytical end, the cavalry end of Intelligence. And of course when you're at a regiment you do all the other intelligence work which was done by entirely separate units at higher level, such as counter intelligence, and local security, criminal investigation, and so forth. So we worked at rifleman level. We were forward of regiment, between regiment and battalion. That's the first time in my life I felt useful. In fact, I felt very, very useful and became very useful and never doubted that I was most useful to humanity at that point.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Why was that do you think?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, the way things are very important and getting them done. And it happened to suit my past experience and personality, I think, to have done that sort of thing.

PS What sort of rank did you have then?

LUDWIG SANDER: Staff Sergeant. Equivalent to a guy in Germany who was a major. They didn't have enlisted men doing that sort of thing. I think we overrated what they were doing along those lines. And did more than they did eventually. Maybe we weren't as clever, you know. We didn't have top men as clever as theirs or as experienced. But when it came to intelligence teams at regimental level they didn't have that. They didn't find out as much - at least when I was in them, in combat as we found out about them. They did in a big way, you know. They knew when a whole division was moved up. Even though we went up under a different name, number, and different markings on all our vehicles. We were up on the lower Rhine, you know, getting ready to cross the Rhine, we went up with some other number and entirely different code names. And they said over the loud speakers, "Welcome to the 30th Division." The place was lousy - we caught spies, actually civilian clothes spies. That is we caught them because there were always people brought in. And the lieutenant who was my immediate superior and myself broke them down. I mean it was real business. We weren't playing at it. And I tell you it took a lot of skill to break those guys down. By that time we were very skilled. Not only from our schooling. But we had a lot of experience then. We knew what to say. The lieutenant was a very sharp guy. I could say that of very few of my superior officers. But we worked well together. I think we were terrific.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Whatever happened to him?

LUDWIG SANDER: I had dinner with him about two years ago. He lives outside of Philadelphia. He was with a pharmaceutical house, a Swiss pharmaceutical house before and after the war. And sometime a few years ago he changed to some chemical thing where he has a sit-down office job. He does well. His children are grown up and in professions of some sort. Yes, we understood each other very well and we could operate with very few words to each other. We knew what we were about by then. We accomplished quite a few things. You know, if you come across it by chance or some way by instinct, and then by interrogation and by other things find out the location of a missing German armored division and can get through to the rear and have a photo mission flown within half an hour and a bombing mission flown an hour later, and have that whole division destroyed for good and for all, you've done something. That sometimes take five divisions to do, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. It's a good day's work.

LUDWIG SANDER: You bet! and you feel pretty good about it. But that was war. I wouldn't feel so good about it now. But then I felt quite useful. I finally found my profession.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You could see things happen.

LUDWIG SANDER: It was real. You did something and there were results. It wasn't just painting something - a picture over for the fifth time in a haphazard sort of way. And its aim was purposeful. In fact, that's why I got into it because I was sort of a square. Now is the time for everybody to do things that would have been distasteful to

them, but it is a moral necessity, you know. A lot of other guys I know made a sort of WPA project out of the war. They thought that shouting at Union Square was going to help. But I thought that action was more important then.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How long were you in the Army?

LUDWIG SANDER: Between three and four years. But I was never an artist in the Army or anything like that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was all military business.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, once in it I wanted to be a soldier, you know. there's no halfway about it. You either eat your heart out or think you're something special because you're an artist. I'm talking about real war. I'm not talking about what we have now. But we had, I guess, one of the biggest purposes of the last few centuries. You know, it was nothing compared to World War I, which was kind of mild. Some sort of guy like the Kaiser was child's play. I mean the issues were certainly wishy-washy compared to this one.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I wonder if history changes a lot of those things.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I don't think there'll be so much here because so much is recorded. I remember vividly when the first World War was declared - that it would last a few weeks. Today civilized nations don't fight over nothing, over the assassination of an archduke who wasn't much good anyway. Now we would have thought it was nonsense.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I just wonder - we're almost at the end of this tape. It must be two o'clock. Well, why don't we just stop here for now.

END OF SIDE 1

SIDE 2 - February 12, 1969

PAUL CUMMINGS: This is Reel 2. February 12.

LUDWIG SANDER: 1969.

PAUL CUMMINGS: 1969, right.

LUDWIG SANDER: If this had been done in 1949 or 1959 it would have been better. Everything was nice and sharp then.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Well, that's one of the big problems of scholarship in this country. No one does anything until --

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, you know this is it, too. What are the art historians going to do if they have all this external evidence?

PAUL CUMMINGS: It helps. It helps, you know. Bits and pieces. I think when we finished the other side of the tape you had just given me a description of the loft The Club started in and who the members were and this sort of thing. And I think we could start talking about ---

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, about The Club, I guess you have a lot of people's recollections of it. But there were so few people in the beginning that most people who recollect, recollect after the what I like to call the apostolic period of The Club when it had nothing to do with anybody but its members. It was just a place for them - it was like -- The Club was somewhere between a bunch of kids building something in the backyard that they called a club, and a club like, say, The Players or The Century or something like that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What year was that, do you remember?

LUDWIG SANDER: I have an idea it was 1949 or 1950. I did know and I should know accurately. And eventually, you know, for political reasons and suppression and so forth certain people who were charter members were suddenly not considered charter members. They were gladly considered charter members in the beginning but later on they were read out. In fact, there was a little group who tried to make one guy a charter member. As nice a guy as he is, and I like him very much, and I wish he had been. But he was living in Europe at the time and came back about a year later and they began to swear he was a charter member.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who is that?

LUDWIG SANDER: George Spaventa. And Leo Castelli was a charter member. But Phillip Pavia started denying it

right after the first Stevenson campaign. I don't know - he felt that it was taken out of his hands and given to what he called the Uptown crowd to handle. And, oh, I don't remember - I could have given you the details at the time. I think Tom Hess and his wife were big workers for Stevenson, probably contributed. And, oh, Phillip always, you know, suspects plots. If he sees two people talking on the street, you know, Aha!

PAUL CUMMINGS: Aha! A conspiracy!

LUDWIG SANDER: And as I recall - this may not be accurate - his complaint was that he was getting The Club organized as Artists for Stevenson, whatever that amounted to. That's not even a drop in the bucket. I don't know - that's too big an amount. Well, he felt that Leo had taken the thing out of their hands and given it to Motherwell and his crowd, or something like that. Which he always felt as some kind of opposition.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, was Motherwell an early member?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, I don't think he was ever a member. He may have paid dues later on for a year or so but he was never a member and was hardly ever there. You see, a lot of people got them confused. You remember that Motherwell had a school.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: And nothing much happened at the school they organized. And so in the loft right next door, two doors away from where The Club was they had something where they had a lecture series.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Did you ever go to them? Were you here then?

PAUL CUMMINGS: No.

LUDWIG SANDER: You see, Phillip Pavia always looked at them as sort of competitive - I don't know. He was like - as some people said, "Look, this isn't a club anymore. He's the padrone of a restaurant." You'd vote one way and he'd do it in another way. Somebody would be blackballed and he'd write them a card that they were members. Or we'd vote somebody in and he didn't agree with it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did he sort of take over?

LUDWIG SANDER: He still does that to me. He runs this --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, the new place?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. He made several attempts. One time he was out altogether. And I think Irv Sandler reorganized The Club. that's when it was at Tenth Street and Fourth Avenue. In the same building where the ruben, the other with the small "r" ruben gallery was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Upstairs.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Where they had the first manifestations - what do they call them?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Kaprow's Happenings?

LUDWIG SANDER: Happenings, yes. Yes. Not the same place but the same building. Not the same floor. Irv Sandler organized that. There again you see a club never succeeds unless there is a leader - what is called a dictator.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Somebody who says "Today" and "now ..."

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. "We're having a panel on such and such a date. And that's what it's going to be." You know a lot of people figured that if Phillip Pavia organized a panel it was because it was something he wanted to know something about himself. Like when he discovered Zen Buddhism that there was such a thing he had four panels in a row on Zen Buddhism. And there he had his adult education on the subject. So did everybody else.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, initially you said The Club was really the place where people went, you know, to be social.

LUDWIG SANDER: We just went once in a while, brought in a friend. Sometime around eleven o'clock somebody would phone and say, "Look, I'm bringing a couple of loaves of bread, you get the baloney, and I think there's coffee there but maybe you ought to pick up a pound." Something like that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: When did the lectures and all that start?

LUDWIG SANDER: That came later. I can't tell you. But I'll tell you something - I recall of the beginning of it. Now I remember. One night somebody brought Will Barrett around when it was The Club and was still nice and neat and clean and sanitary, and there were no talks or panels or anything. We just sat there and shot the breeze and drank coffee. We'd only get there around midnight. You know a lot of them would paint at night, or, as I say, those who were married by that time the wives had gone to bed so they could get to work the next morning. It was just a nocturnal crowd anyway, you know, after all a long lonesome day in the studio. And it was very nice. There was great love and cohesion and respect for each other, and non-competitive. Nobody knew what it was like to be very ambitious then. We were very happy within ourselves. There was a kitchen there that we cleaned up like mad. In fact there was a real professional restaurant stove in there. Bill de Kooning and myself boiled every part of it and put it back together. And the first New Year's Eve we had - well even before - somewhere around Christmas we had a little dinner party there. It was very nice. We had bridge tables all in a row. It was well-behaved. Everybody was a little high but quiet, sort of glowing. It was glowing more than anything else. And initially we had some regulation about liquor on the place.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, you told me that there were no drinks.

LUDWIG SANDER: And no chess playing.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Because that meant we would soon be tied up with the Communist Party immediately.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That was the symbol.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, sure. The chess players. That was one of their ways in. And there was, you know, among a few people there was at times, and they were old enough to have the experience that some Party member would come in and then take over and we would be delivered --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. As a package.

LUDWIG SANDER: -- as a package deal to the Party, yes, or to something on the edge of it. and that was something nobody had any stomach for. I suppose a lot of the guys who were Trotskyites or something like that in sentiment and were anti-Stalinists, you know, they came of another age when the only sort of liberalism they could attach themselves to was communism with a small c, you know, not the Communist Party but the idea of Marxism. And they'd have nothing to do with Stalinism or the Party or any of its machinations. A lot of them had their nose full of it on the WPA.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But all the painters at that time seemed to be quite independent in their political views acting as a group.

LUDWIG SANDER: You know, they were a little antiquated. They had no political views above the present. They had sort of romantic notions of 1849 or 1917. It was nice. It was all very honorable and well-intentioned. To them it still had its purity, you know, for the good of man and so forth. You know, there's always that anachronism - well, cultural lag, eh? - it's a lag anyway; whether it's cultural or not that's another story. Oh, yes. Well, Will Barrett was there one night. I don't know who brought him. You know, he's with the Philosophy Department at N.Y.U. Do you know him?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, I know the name.

OS Well, I knew him - I don't know how. But somebody else brought him. And pretty soon there was a little crowd sitting around him listening to him holding forth. And somebody got the idea couldn't he put this into the form of a talk. Well, a couple of us immediately got apprehensive. They had nothing against Barrett. They loved to hear him. But they were afraid - and I remember it was Jack Tworkov who said, "This is going to end up like a women's club. We're going to be lectured to. And we don't want that." It was something that I was afraid of too. So I backed him on that. And I said, "Let's specify that there'll be no rows of chairs facing in one direction with somebody standing up in front of it. It will be nice to have him come. And there are so few of us we can sit around him in some informal way and he can talk and we can question him and it will be very nice." Well, it was announced. And, by gosh, wouldn't you know it, when we got there somebody had gotten a lot of chairs, put them in a row, and set up one of the bridge tables in front with chairs behind it. And there we were sort of like we were getting our first lectures on the Revolution. Although he just spoke about - he had some ideas about Picasso. He had some ideas about Guernica which had nothing to do with the Spanish Revolution. It had to do with actually the pictorial idea, nothing about the plastic notions of Picasso. And that's how it started. I can't remember who was next. I think it was Paul Goodman. And it might have been Tom Hess. But I think it was Paul Goodman. And he was very good, too, because he was very flattering. He said in essence that the only people

who did not walk around in quiet desperation were artists because they were doing what they wanted to do. Everybody else who had a job of some kind or some kind of business wished to God he had been doing something else, and not that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. I know many people do that.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, that's everybody. And at that time it was artists too. They had passed the examination and had become letter carriers or something to have regular income. Or gone through some teacher's college and were settled down in their nice little houses out in Queens.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You know, speaking of teacher's colleges, one thing I didn't ask you before and that was your comments on your art education and how you evaluated its use of ... do you think that one can learn things in classes?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I tell you as far as art departments at universities are concerned, I think that's nonsense. Because, you know, of the few hours a week they spend at it. And then of course the universities are staffed by recent graduates and that's the way they perpetuate that ignorance, or the idea that you can just paint a little and --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Pick it up.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Sometimes it's only Thursdays. And unfortunately the people who are the regular staff at universities, well-intentioned as they are, they don't know much. The outlook is provincial. I think that's the biggest trouble. Of course, as I say, the staffs are recent M.F.A.'s.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. And they've got to make their academic points.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And they know a lot about painting but they can't paint. They have nothing to give in that sense. You know, it's like music. Theoreticians teaching the mandolin. You know what I mean?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. But, you know, you have traveled in Europe and you had the Hofmann School.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, the only thing my opinion right now about art schools after some experiences is that they should be art schools, you know, the way it was at the league or any other art school as such where you're there five mornings a week and you work at something. And of course you have an instructor come in once a week who's an experienced practicing painter who has great sympathy for you, who has no axe to grind at a university, has nobody looking over his shoulder as they do at the universities. You do an actual amount of work in a week's time that give you the experience. Talking about practicing the violin is not practicing the violin.

PAUL CUMMINGS: True. Never learn a skill by talking.

LUDWIG SANDER: No. And then in the afternoon you have yourself either to ruminate or to go to museums or to paint in your own studio things that you were too self-conscious to do as a student in class, instead of worrying about academic credits. You can't have it both ways - to work toward painting and to work toward academic credits. There may be some people - I don't know who they are - I know some people who've done it that way and they're in galleries in New York and occasionally they're mentioned. But they're not very good painters when you get down to it. They've missed the boat. They know all about it. But they just don't have the core of painting in them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You were at the League for a while, weren't you?

LUDWIG SANDER: A long time ago, yes. It's hard to reconstruct now. At one time I was at three schools at the same time, you know, morning, afternoon, and night. I was nights at Columbia, mornings with Archipenko, and afternoons with somebody else; or afternoons with Archipenko, and the morning with somebody else for maybe two months, three months, six months.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you find Archipenko as a teacher?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, at that time he didn't know much English but it came through. Of course if you expected him to be a theoretician he probably was, but it didn't come through; it was a very practical sort of thing, you know. You spoke about what you were working at. He had an exercise you had to complete before you worked from the model.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. There was a drawing of his on the wall done very precisely, I guess with a lettering pen.

And the idea was to copy that in a flat piece of clay two-dimensionally. And, as he said, the idea was to master the proportions of things in your work. In other words, that thing out on the wall five or ten feet away from it and, you know, it was a figure in his style, the head cocked to one side and the elbow out and then the legs joined and flaring out again at the bottom. And the idea was - in other words, the edges were lines. And the edges or lines on your work were to be in proportion to each other as they were, as those parts were in proportion to each other on that drawing on the wall. Not the same size but proportionally, and the direction of the angles, and so forth. It was just a beginning exercise. And he found out how much you knew, too.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What is it that you made then - a three-dimensional sculpture or a relief?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it was in effect relief. It had no back. You make it about a quarter of an inch or half an inch thick as a flat thing. It wasn't relief because you actually did a sort of flat figure on an armature. It had a plain, flat, one-dimensional front. And after you got that done then he said now how about texture, either make it very flat or give it a texture, give it a good texture. And he had a few hints about that. And then you moved on - there was a model on the other side of the studio that a lot of them were working on. And then after a week or two of that onto the model. And although he didn't know much English his criticism was to the point. (imitating Archipenko) "Arm must have direction, must have dimension. That arm hot dog, too hot dog." You know, the idea of significant form again. That is, an arm wasn't required to look like an arm in nature but that thing that was the arm on your sculpture was to have form. I use that - what is it? - Roger Fry's or his contemporary's Significant Form. He put it in another way but that was ... Because anybody who was aware of anything in those days was aware of that. Whatever you did when you painted it couldn't be a blob or a hot dog. It had to have significant form. And let me tell you my colleagues were very unaware of it at the time. If you look at that painting of the late twenties and the thirties, God, it's gone somewhere now.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, that's true.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it carries through to today. You know there are some of them who still don't know what they're doing. I mean those who are alive and known and whose work you still see, there's a formlessness in the plastic form. There's just no recognition, no intelligence about a thing like that. Still even what they consider had painters of the nineteenth century knew about that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Well, that was maybe the schooling, too.

LUDWIG SANDER: I think it was - well, the lack of it for one thing, or what they thought was painting when they went in for it and never did catch up.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who would you say was influential in your work as far as teaching goes?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I meant to say before - let me get back to that - this reminds me of it. When I said the art school, as against the college class, and that the instructor only came in once a week, the other students, good ones in the class, conversation with them -- and they loved to give criticism -- was the real school, your colleagues. Sometimes a class was good that way. And sometimes a class wasn't. Even in teaching I realized that. You know what it's like when there are three-year-old and six-year-old children around, when the parents are gone the six-year-old will tell the three-year-old what the mother meant. You know they put it in terms ... And I've even seen six-year-olds tell mothers what the three-year-old meant.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Serve as an interpreter.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, they do. They interpret between. Because I still have a very sharp memory of not understanding criticism in the early days and some sweet gal, maybe, you know, some old maid about twenty-four years old would come and tell me what he meant. Very sympathetic. God knows where they are now but they were very - they gave me more than they thought they did. And I think they did to other students too.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. I think the whole learning process thing is greatly affected by the group that you happen to be with. The sheer chance of it all --

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes, sure. You know, often there's what is thought to be the outstanding student in the class because there's so much communication between him and the teacher. And it may not be that this guy is any good. It may just be that he's convenient in a practical way, you know, helping out the teacher with a lot of things, stretching his canvas for him or is a hundred percent in attendance, or takes care of the plants.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you've done some teaching, haven't you?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you like it?

LUDWIG SANDER: Not now. I did for a while. In fact I would have taught for nothing at one time.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: I liked it so much. But I don't now. No, it's a drain. You see, it means teaching at a college where the students don't really care, don't know. It's a snap course.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, I don't think you really want to become professional anyway, do you?

LUDWIG SANDER: No - well, there was a time in my life when it looked to me like the solution, since nothing was ever going to happen in painting, and I sort of looked forward to life on a campus somewhere and I thought --

PAUL CUMMINGS: When did you start teaching?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, after the war gradually; not immediately, no. And I taught. See, I'd take somebody's place for a few weeks. I'll tell you there was one man as a teacher - and it was not in teaching sessions that I got a lot from him either - a born teacher and will always be a teacher - He's now in his seventies. And that's Vytlačil. Just conversations with him in the late twenties, you know, when he was teaching at the League. But I was not a student of his. I just met him. Every time I met him and spoke to him for ten minutes I felt so enriched. And in Paris you know I sublet his studio. He had a class down at Capri in the summer of 1931. Well, that whole spring I used to sit at the Dome with him. And he liked to talk. And to me everything he said was a revelation.

PAUL CUMMINGS: In what way, would you say?

LUDWIG SANDER: Ah, it's hard to remember now. Maybe I didn't always understand him. But I always thought a good deal about - it was almost orientation. And then I went to Munich in the fall of 1931 and then decided to study with Hofmann. So I stayed there. See I got there in September I think. And the School hadn't opened yet. In fact I had no intention of going then. I was just going to Munich for the first time. And I went out to the School and there was a secretary there. And I inquired. And I found out that Hofmann was in America but was due back at any moment. A fellow named Kinsinger was running the class. In a few weeks, maybe two weeks, Hofmann was back. And it was small - one room. We drew from the model in charcoal. I think I told you that last time.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: But I kept thinking of Vytlačil, you know, who had been one of the early and long-time students of Hofmann and very enthusiastic about him. Oh, there were his many tales of, you know, almost verbatim conversations with other students. They were quite mature when they went there. Vyt started teaching in 1918 before he got in the Navy out of Minneapolis. He taught here at the League way back. And then he went to Europe, you see, after Czechoslovakia was formed. Although he was born here in New York, he was going over there as a loyal Czech to paint the peasants and the countryside and so forth. He was very much disillusioned. And he went to Munich. And of course he was caught in the revolution. He couldn't get into the Academy because he was a foreigner. They didn't have the means, they had so few means to run a school. I think he went anyway. But he couldn't live in Munich. He and some others moved out in to the country, and came in on bikes. There wasn't enough food. And then there was sort of an awakening on his part. And he heard about Hofmann, that he had a few students. There were two or three other Americans. One of them was I think - he's dead now - he was out in Berkeley - I'll have to think of his name. You know it's very difficult - like you ask me of the twenties and thirties it's very difficult to remember the forgotten.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. They've disappeared slowly.

LUDWIG SANDER: It's difficult to remember. There was that Ernest Thurn who I think is still alive, that I spoke of up in Boston. And just living on very little, you know, Social Security, which isn't much in his case. I think he became a commercial artist. But he ran a school in Woodstock in 1928 as a disciple of Hofmann. That was the first time I ever heard of Hofmann. I didn't go to his school. But Thurn and I lived in the same little hotel up there and I knew him very well. And he expounded.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I'm curious about Hofmann's influence. Did he influence you while you were there?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, he influenced me in this way of breaking away from other ideas that I had, you know, which may have been very corny ideas. For drawing, you see, I still drew from the figure and from the landscape not in an academic way by any means, but in sort of - my earliest influence was the German Expressionists. And although it didn't look like typical Expressionist drawing, that's what was behind it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The flavor, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: It wasn't the idea to copy the figure down the way the Bridgeman Class did at the League at the time, or to get that sort of distortion that Kenneth Hayes Miller's class had, which was distortion for no

reason that I can even see today. Reginald Marsh was drawing bulbous breasts and bulbous behinds sort of, and bulbous faces on the women.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Sort of rococo.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And to show, you know the lower levels of life or something. I guess that was more Marxist influence than anything. But indirectly. I don't think they were even aware of it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I thought of those usually as kind of social problems rather than art problems.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, that's right. But still there was the lack of form. It was backward. It was a retrograde outlook on what drawing actually was. And Hofmann had - there was a logic of a sort. And there was of course dealing with the surface - and to use an overused expression - the integrity of the two-dimensional surface.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, that was a new idea though, wasn't it, in a sense?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it was a new idea for new people. But it was an old idea to anybody who was aware of, broadly speaking, the old masters. Or even Cezanne. Consciously or otherwise, I don't know, Cezanne kept the surface. It was the flat surface of the canvas that was what he was working on. I don't think he was very aware of it. It was a reconstruction of the space that he saw in the landscape on the canvas, but there was an illusion of the space. It wasn't the old open window that you ... And it was certainly anti-romantic. And there was this way to find a system of showing the three dimensions on a two-dimensional surface, keeping the two-dimensional surface as a material thing. He said a lot more in his writing, too, but in philosophical terms that are not quite professional. So it's difficult to understand what he really meant. Because they would sometimes deny each other. But the idea was to reconstruct in terms of the two dimension what you saw in front of you. Now he allowed for you emotional reaction to what was out there. He didn't say so. But he certainly did when you watched him draw on the canvas.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You talked earlier about school and growing up in New York and all, and I couldn't find a point when you really decided to become a painter.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, well, that never happens.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was a slow --

LUDWIG SANDER: Tell me this - you know, as I think I mentioned before, biography has gotten to be a - has in my lifetime in the United States become one of the great literary forms. At least we think that. But unfortunately it turns out to be too academic, too chronological, and too filled with interesting little facts which leave you nowhere about the man. Have you ever read Henry James's autobiography of his youth? No, I don't think it's in print.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, I haven't see it.

LUDWIG SANDER: But it's called *The Small Boy and Others*. And if you are interested in biography you should read it. I don't know when that was written. But probably it was written seventy or eighty years ago. It wasn't written when he was a boy of course. But maybe I'm ten years off. And he gives significant impressions. He doesn't say, well, we lived on Fourteenth Street from, you know, 1864 to 1870 when I went here. He speaks about different schools and his wanderings around the city with his brother. And he'll mention the Albany uncles without giving their names. He doesn't mention what his grandfather made his money on. He mentions their trips to Europe. And little illness, and living on Staten Island, and hotels, and dashing off, and giving such childhood impressions at that age, you know, as he caught when something went wrong in the family. They dashed up the Hudson - I don't know - I think some relative was probably going out of her mind. But he doesn't tell you that exactly. But, you know, by the time you've finished reading it what it is. And I think it's very successful. To me it's more of what Henry James's childhood was like --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Than the statistics.

LUDWIG SANDER: Than if someone had three shoe boxes full of 3 x 5 cards, you know, doing it. I felt that a lot of things were lacking that I would like to have known, other things, but it gave me an idea of New York at the time, his social level, or his father's Swedenborgian quirks, or what the schools were like, and who went to what school. You know, they were switching from one school to another because there was nothing very organized or positive in those days about schools. There was a great state of flux about education.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Still is.

LUDWIG SANDER: There still is. Well now that you can take, you know, Economics 101 in New York and have it very much resemble Economics 101 in Wisconsin it doesn't help much. It might help the textbook industry. Or it

might help the recent M.A. to know what he's going to have to teach. But it doesn't educate the man. Well, I always like to follow a painter around. I loved the idea of making pictures. And really my great love for looking at landscape - not landscape painting - is what I mean now. I liked looking at landscape.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Real landscape.

LUDWIG SANDER: Real landscape.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The city?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. I was impressed by things. You know sometimes coming down a sunny street if I - if you ever happened to go wandering off, which I always did, I used to wander around - I didn't know where the hell I was sometimes. But I remember at an early age crossing 57th Street in the afternoon with the sun down the other end - and I didn't know 57th then from 56th or 55th because on the Fifth Avenue side - I'd been to Carnegie Hall from the other approach, from the west, not knowing how I got there, maybe, having been taken by my mother. And I still remember going up to the Metropolitan Museum and as the bus passed 57th Street and I looked off to the left this broad green street and the sun at the other end. And I could see something going on at Fifth - you know I was looking toward Carnegie Hall. And I saw a lot of rather palatial private houses on 57th Street then. You know the Van Hook houses were still there where Bergdorf Goodman is now. Certainly they were still private houses. There was one on each corner of Fifth Avenue. The Heckscher Building, I still remember when that went up - I can't place it. And where Tiffany's is now there was a two-story building where Park & Tilford's... That was built first after the old house was torn down. Park & Tilford had a restaurant downstairs. Upstairs was Tailored Woman. Of course the Vanderbilt houses were still over on the northwest corner, you know, at 57th and 58th. And there were some old hotels on the right at 58th... Yes, sure, the Netherlands was one; and the Sherry-Netherlands was built where the Hotel Netherlands stood. The Netherlands Hotel, twenty stories high, a good one. And what's the one they just tore down? - where the General Motors Building is.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The Savoy-Plaza?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, the Savoy. You see, they took the names of the original hotels and where the Hotel Savoy stood became the Savoy-Plaza. And where the Netherlands stood became the Sherry-Netherlands. There was no traffic to speak of, although we thought there was a lot of it. It didn't look like New York to me, you know, looking up that hill toward Sixth Avenue, Seventh Avenue. And then I got to know it better when I went to the League. Or when I went to the first classes. I can't really tell you now whether I went to the classes in that 57th Street studio building on the corner of 57th and Sixth Avenue, an old red brick place that was torn down just a few years ago; or whether I went to the League first. My first classes at the League were at night and it was Boardman Robinson's class.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Was that a drawing class?

LUDWIG SANDER: It was a drawing class, yes. And Sidney Perelman who I knew - he used to go around with my brother - I walked in and he was in the class - S.J. And his brother-in-law Curt Weinstein, who became Nathaniel West, was there also. And after two or three weeks they didn't come back anymore. I don't know why. Perelman was originally a cartoonist when he came to New York. And then became a writer. He had been the editor of The Brown Jug up at Brown.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And he did cartoons. He did a sort of woodcut style for Judge, for which he got twenty-five dollars a week. He'd turn in three or four drawings a week. Not all of them were published. And he had a real cockeyed sense of humor. They were very good. And then he went into writing. I guess he knew what he was doing when he did that. That was the first class at the League. And whether my first class was over there with this guy Jacobs in the old - I guess it was called the Sheridan Studios - whether it was he or not I don't know. Well, whichever came first it's six months' difference or something like that. And there I painted portrait model, figure model. And I daresay that for that kind of painting - portrait figure of the time - that the other students were more helpful, were very helpful. And with Boardman Robinson it was the same thing. He didn't come in very much. He was always - don't know - sick or something. But it was a very small class of very bright people, mature compared to my age. I was probably the youngest in the class. The men who were in the class in age group were probably World War I. Maybe some were a little younger. And there were a couple of women. And there was more talk in that class than drawing. It was very good, too.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you remember any of the other students?

LUDWIG SANDER: They also are, you know too forgotten to remember. No, I don't recall that any of them ever did anything. Well, that's life in the art school.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: You know, I can't think of anybody I knew at the League who I ever ... The only one I can remember at the League who I occasionally still run into is Marjorie Windust who is married to a fellow by the name of Halper. He has a gallery up in Provincetown. Either Halper or Halpin or Halpert.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I don't know. I know her name very slightly, maybe from a League publication or something.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, she had a brother who is a director in the theatre. And she was a very pretty girl of course. I still run into her occasionally. She was in a class of mine at the League. But she was in a class that had no instructor. There was a class - that was maybe a little later like 1930 - they had a class that was I think in the old room that Boardman Robinson had been in up on the top floor in which they had a model and you went up there and painted but there was no instructor. I think that's the one she was in. But I don't recall another soul who was at the League at that time. There probably are some. We were there at different times of the day or in different classes. I didn't know their names. But their faces certainly don't show up on the screen anywhere. Yes, such is the percentage of dropping out.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I think we've kind of really covered that period fairly well. Are there any things that you might think of, say, in the thirties that we haven't gone into, or that I might not have been able to find out.

LUDWIG SANDER: They were bad. I worked in mosaic a good deal in the thirties. In the suburbs.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes, you told me about Dorothy Miller and she liked the photographs.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, that was predicted. I had a studio on Third Street back of the law School. I went to Woodstock in the summer. I did lithographs up there. There was a printer by the name of Grant Arnold. I guess he wasn't very good or he'd still be a printer. Well, there were still old time etchers and lithographers up there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you'd met Diller early in the thirties?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Somewhere in the fall and winter of 1932-1933.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you keep up an association with him?

LUDWIG SANDER: I'll tell you this. I met a girl in Woodstock in 1933 whom I'd known earlier and we spent so much time together that I didn't see much of anybody else. And I eventually married her. We had a nice ten years before we got married; wonderful ten years. We didn't need anybody else. We saw a lot of people but, you know, a sort of mixed bag. A good part of my life was taken up with young ladies. Which, of course, will be my two volumes of my secret life. They weren't bawdy or anything like that, no. They were very nice relationships. And although it's as important a part of my artistic life as anything I say about painting, it's a little difficult, you know - I'm not attuned, maybe not right now, to include them, but I will say it would be a loss to my life as an artist not to do it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I think it's often underestimated by professional historians and people like that.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, nobody wants to talk about it because for even those who had the one wife from age 23 to age 97 there probably were some pretty bitter years there that they don't want to mention. It would be very interesting if I could tell you about them. But I just don't feel like talking about it. I'm going to have to deprive - well, this is something for the historians to dig into if I am remembered well enough not to be forgotten. If somebody comes across a name and says who in hell was this.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you keep a diary? Or do you write?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, just for income tax, just the daily statistics that you need to prove what you've done to warrant certain expenses. You know I wrote a diary when I was very young and my brother found it and he wrote things in it. If he'd seen it and said nothing, you know, it would have been different. But he wrote very snide things in it and I've never again kept a diary. I thought it wasn't safe, you know. This is not an age in which one keeps diaries. Even the sergeants in the Lewis and Clark expedition kept diaries. And when you go into the literature of the Missouri of the years right after the Louisiana Purchase everybody kept a diary. Even the most illiterate voyageur who went up the Missouri kept a diary.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you think it was a sense of history or just a thing that everyone did?

LUDWIG SANDER: I don't know. Well, I guess they realized by then that there had been so many years of people going into the woods that never recorded anything, first of all because they were illiterate I suppose; or things weren't kept because nobody thought they were important. They all kept them so that by the 1830's when Washington Irving wrote his Astoria he already had loads of material to go on.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Are you interested in American History?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, centering on New York City. Then of course on the periphery, which has to be New York State. And then as background there needs to be the history of the United States underneath it. In fact, you know, I just pulled that story off the shelf last night. I bought it some years ago and only read part of it and I sat up until three this morning reading about half of it. I don't know, I just had that desire. See I have shelves full. It's like having a nice refrigerator full of all sorts of goodies.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Pick and choose.

LUDWIG SANDER: I can reach in there once in a while. In fact I have a refrigerator back here, too, that I can reach in and get a slice of cheese at two in the morning if I feel like it, or make myself a Nescafe.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you have any sort of jobs during the thirties or forties?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. Yes, I had one job. It didn't last too long. When Bellows & Company was still a family business - for twenty-five years or more it's belonged to National Distillers - when that was still a family business and Bellows was in a brownstone house on 52nd Street I worked for them for about, oh, six months; maybe not even that long. See I could pronounce the names of the wines. I knew when I saw a wine whether it was a Burgundy or a Bordeaux. And I knew the German wines well, nobody knows them except experts -- at least compared to most of the population, I had drunk them, I knew their names, and I knew whether it was a Moselle or a Rhine or came from one of the smaller wine-growing areas. Or as I said whether it was a Burgundy bottle or a Bordeaux bottle. Even that slight gift was given to very few at that time. But I was supposed to be a salesman. When that decree came I was not very good. I remember my lady friend said, "What are you doing with Renan's Life of Jesus in your pocket selling liquor?" I always carried something to read. You know, the Modern Library were the only things in those days that would fit in your pocket. That was before the days of paperbacks.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's a good combination.

LUDWIG SANDER: In fact, that's what I had in my pocket. I didn't find it so interesting.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you read a great deal, all kinds of things?

LUDWIG SANDER: No - well, I had periods in my life where I have read very little fiction, let us call it, in the last years. I get to read maybe two or three a year. I feel very guilty if I read.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It takes time.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, if it leads to nothing.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What kinds of things do you read besides history?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it goes up and down. I still have an interest in the City of New York. And I have a fairly good library. I will tell you this strange thing. I have an awful lot of art books and I don't know when I last opened one. They are in front of me day and night. They're right at the foot of my bed.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But you never look at them?

LUDWIG SANDER: In fact I thought a few weeks ago of giving them away, giving them to some institution, or school or something like that. But they have their monster budgets and they don't need me. So then I thought better of it. I was going to sell them, too, because I just never look at them. And the space they take up! I can't get myself to pull one off the shelf. You know I stand there and I stare at the title and I don't even put up my hand to take it down. I know what's in there. I don't want to see it again. There's nothing ... It has so little connection with my painting.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you know, you mentioned your one experience with the Museum of Modern Art in the 1930s, showing things to Dorothy Miller. Was the Modern Art an influence?

LUDWIG SANDER: The Museum?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: No, not to me. No. To me it felt like some 'elite amusing themselves as I look back, and that I was sort of an outsider allowed to come in and look. I always had some feeling that it was the wealthy who were the trustees and the curatorial staff were more or less like their servants with white collars on, arranging things for them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How about the Whitney Studio Club?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I wasn't a sculptor. You see that was mainly for sculptors. The Whitney Studio Club - Reuben Nakian was sort of brought up in it. Well, I liked the Whitney when it was down there on Eighth Street.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Which is now an art school.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes, that's right. And it was a very live thing. Very prejudiced, you know. You couldn't get into a Whitney Annual. I don't know how the hell they picked them but it was Mrs. Force's private taste. They said in the early 1930's I was too much the School of Paris, as they called it. That was some invention of theirs, you know; it's just like being called a Communist, un-American. You know, I wish I still had the letter - a few years ago I came across it - I had a letter from the Whitney. And it came to me in this crucial winter of 1932-1933. It asked me to bring some things over because annually they like to see what American artists were doing. And I brought in three paintings and three drawings, two packages. And then I got a postcard to pick them up. One of the two packages hadn't even been opened. Either the drawings or the paintings. And I had to go around to the back door. I remember it was such a cold, icy day I could hardly walk up MacDougall Alley. And I had to tie up these things myself. And my hands were so cold I couldn't handle the knots. And there was somebody from the staff there, somebody, a curator-type - I don't know who he was - was laughing at my attempts to tie the knots. I said, "This package hasn't even been opened." He said, "What's your name?" I told him. And he said, "Well, we saw your drawings (or paintings perhaps), you should have known better than to bring things like that in here!" I can show you some of the drawings. I have some of the paintings somewhere. Most of them were in a garage that water leaked in on. I have one or two of them out in the country. And when I think of what they bought under the name of abstract painting in the early thirties it would tear your heart out. Things they didn't open. And what they bought. I mean guys that didn't know what they were doing. They just painted, sort of flat patterns, textile patterns or something or other on canvas. And let me tell you that was discouraging. Well, that was the last I ever heard of the Whitney until recently. Now that was the winter of 1932-1933. I never heard from them, not a thing. And sometime when I was still at Kootz, let me say in 1962 or 1963 or something like that, the Friends of the Whitney bought a picture. And they bought an old one.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Somebody remembered something he'd seen in my studio. And they bought an old one. I've never been in a Whitney Annual. Can you imagine that!

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's amazing.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, that's the Whitney. I feel as though if they ever did ask me sometime between now and when I die I would tell them to stuff it. Well, look, they've had forty years. Well, the first ten of the forty are insignificant, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: They've had a good thirty.

LUDWIG SANDER: They've had at least since the end of the war. They've had since 1946. It has rubbed under their noses. They own one of my pictures. But they have still to ask me to an Annual. My God, sometimes when I look at the list of who they have asked!

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, part of it I think is up until last year or two once you got in you just automatically were in year after year after year. They'd add one or two new people.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, they did better than that. Because I remember - no, it has to be that somebody rubs it under their noses. Because I've seen people there you wouldn't have remote access to unless somebody went up and reminded them and told them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Some years ago, I guess when I was with Hacker - I was with the Hacker Gallery before he gave up - somebody came in from the Whitney to look at the work of an artist. And he suggested me and somebody else. He said, "I've come in here for one purpose just to see this one. I don't worry about the others." That is, you know, they make up a list and then they go out and look. And I don't know how they make that list up. As for the Modern Museum, they pay scant attention to what's going on. I don't know how the exhibitions are made. Well, of course, it's too confusing now. There are just so many artists for them or any museum to pay attention to. And since their field isn't just American Art I can see that the whole thing is just too big for them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's unwieldy, sure.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. But there was a time when it wasn't.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You had your first show what? - at the Morton Gallery in 1930?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What was the Morton Gallery?

LUDWIG SANDER: A very nice woman. The only other artist I remember in it was Milton Avery. Milton Avery had his first show there. We had an unannounced exhibition. Half the room was Avery and the other half was mine. It was about 1930 I think.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: She was on the north side of 57th street at two different locations and I'll be damned if I can tell you exactly now where. I think the last one was opposite - it was right opposite the house that Eilshemius lived in.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, East.

LUDWIG SANDER: East, yes, between - I think that was between Park and Lexington, wasn't it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: I think --

LUDWIG SANDER: My memory goes back thirty-nine years. I should go and see the old man. He wants company. That's just when he was sort of rediscovered - he wasn't really rediscovered - his real rediscovery came later.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: But there was this old painter and a couple of people knew him. You should go and see him. And I have sort of a dim memory of being in a kitchen on the ground floor with some other people sitting around and this old fellow was complaining about everything. A real, sort of paranoid old man, muttering. And I didn't care for those watercolors. Now I can see them, I'm a lot more objective. But they certainly weren't my dish of tea then. They were too wishy washy.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So you really didn't have a show then until Hacker in 1952?

LUDWIG SANDER: That's right. 1950, 1952, yes I had group shows there too. I had a one-man show. And then they raised his rent and he went out of the gallery business.

PAUL CUMMINGS: He moved.

LUDWIG SANDER: And it just became a bookstore.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. When did you join Castelli then?

LUDWIG SANDER: I can't tell you accurately but it must have been 1958 or 1959.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, because he's only been there - his tenth anniversary was last year, wasn't it?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, I think his tenth anniversary was 1957 - let me see, I have a catalogue here somewhere.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, I have one of those too somewhere.

LUDWIG SANDER: Buried. See, that's the trouble - filing. Let me see, it was I think in 1956 or 1957, early 1957 or late 1956 when he opened. Although we were friends long before he became a dealer. Nobody came and looked. In my house out in the country I remember twice that Eleanor Ward came to my house. It had to do something with a ride back to New York. Either we were waiting for somebody else or somebody at my house was riding back with her. And she sat in the kitchen with a drink in her hand and if she reached out her left hand she could have opened the door to my studio without getting off the chair. She would not go in. And, you know, we were no strangers to each other by any means. Because at the time her gallery was made up mostly of my friends. And that would be like 1954, 1955 - 1955, 1956 - not 1954. I got that house just before 1954. In the summer of 1954 that was the tremendous year when de Kooning, Kline and myself took a house in Bridgehampton, a completely empty house, not a stick of furniture in it. And some friends of ours down there were closing their big house and sort of camping out for the summer and so they stored everything in our house. That was our furniture. Almost everything; they didn't store everything. We had a mixture of the best and the worst. For instance, we had sterling silver sconces to hang on the wall and our only chairs were folding chairs. The sitting furniture was taken along. And the dining room table that was sawed off at the knees for the children to eat off. They had this tremendous thing of coffee table height or a little higher but it was a full thing with leaves and everything, you

could pull it way out. That was in the dining room. Oh, it was a wonderful summer. Bill had his mother come over from Holland. She was with us all summer.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I didn't know she ever came here.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. We played a lot of croquet. It was a nice old Victorian house. It was in very good shape except for the plumbing. There wasn't enough water, ever, to take a bath on the second floor - just enough to flush....We had an outhouse, too, you know, with so many people in the house that one john upstairs didn't flush too well. But it was roomy. We had room to work. It was right on the main road and everybody stopped in. Sometimes there'd be fifteen for dinner. Well, it was a meal of some sort. Yes, we had a nice time. Four months and never a harsh word passed. That was the summer Jackson broke his leg and grew the beard. He broke his leg over there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Horsing around, yes. So while he was in bed recovering from that he grew the beard. And he left his old Model A Ford there. I used that to do the shopping in until I got my own car. The second hand cars got cheap toward the end of the summer and they couldn't sell them. I got a \$150 car. It lasted me for years out there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You were in the famous Ninth Street show?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who organized that? Was that --?

LUDWIG SANDER: Leo Castelli. I'll tell you how it happened. Somebody said that there was this wonderful place on Ninth Street. A lot of people lived on Ninth Street then. One building had Conrad Marca-Relli, Franz Kline, and John Ferren. And Milton Resnick was across the way and he had that girl friend who has since gone back to Cincinnati. And down the street from that Conrad had had another place in which he kept renting out rooms to different people. So there was a lot of activity on Ninth Street then. And somebody came and brought the idea around The Club that there was this wonderful big barn of an empty store. It was really a wholesaler's place. I know I'd been in there - had a job or something like that. But it had tremendous high ceilings and deep and open, and that we ought to have a show. And we had a meeting, a charter members' meeting. The Club, you know, had a policy against manifestoes, exhibitions, and so forth to see if we could get somebody else. And Leo volunteered to run it. And everybody was supposed to give him five bucks for expenses. We had to have electricity put in. And there was an announcement and so forth. I know I was one of the few who gave him five dollars.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, that was a big show, wasn't it?

LUDWIG SANDER: Sure, it was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Lots of people in it.

LUDWIG SANDER: Some of them just came and hung their things on the wall. Some were asked.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That was kind of the first manifestation.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I tell you, it got to be much more than we expected it to be.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: The crowd there the opening night! Really it was an exciting thing. Somebody got the idea, I think it was Freddy Kiesler who mentioned somebody - he wasn't in the show - ... but when they had one of the Surreal shows, I think it was in Paris years ago, what they did was hang a bare 200-watt bulb out in front, just a bare bulb, that stark light. And the second floor had hardly any flooring in it, I don't know why, it must have been ripped up - and I went up with somebody else and there was a flagpole socket there. And we put a flag pole out and hung a 200 or 300-watt light from it. And that night the cars that arrived! The cabs that came! It was like, you know, the old newsreel pictures from a movie opening in Graumann's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: And all the stars. And you know the strong lights that they used in those days that blotted out everybody? Well, That's what it looked like. There was this stark light hanging out in front, this bug bulb. And the jam of taxis pulling up, you know, five or six at a time. People getting out in evening clothes. Whoever they were in those days. I didn't know too many. One thing I do remember. I was a little surprised that Leo Castelli didn't

know Bertha Schaefer. I thought Leo knew everybody. And I remember that introduction. And then we took turns sitting there in the daytime and at night. And really it was amazing the number of people that came to that. It gave us some enthusiasm about ourselves I think. It did us more good in our own eyes than it did in any other way. I think there was only one thing sold.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well then, the Tenth Street Co-op started to develop after that, didn't it?

LUDWIG SANDER: What's that? Oh, you mean the Tanager?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, it didn't come out of that show because I don't think any, or many of those people were in the show. They were a lot younger, you know. They were in our eyes recent graduates of Cooper Union.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: And then we looked down. We used to kid about it because Lewitin called it the Teenage Gallery. Oh, the Tanager was a wonderful thing. I think that and The Club were the two most important institutions at the time. Because certainly the galleries and the museums were strictly unaware of us or didn't know what to do about us. And I think the Tanager was a wonderful thing because they gave exhibitions to other people who they thought deserved the, not just to members. And Sally Hayes and Lois Dodd used to trot out to Queens and Brooklyn and look at things; if anybody suggested it they would go out and look and report and they would have meetings. and they were dead serious. I'm talking about the earliest days - I don't mean later on. Later on they closed it because they felt it was deteriorating and there was nobody worthwhile to give an exhibition to anymore.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, there were other places too I think by that time.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, some of those other galleries were cooperatives in the sense that they showed only the members. They didn't give shows to outsiders like the Tanager did.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, but at the end there were galleries uptown who were interested and --

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, well, as I said, they felt that there wasn't anybody anymore who needed an exhibition, needed that push. They gave shows to people who never painted again, you know, who only painted as a gag. Or when they did bring in their shows brought in junk. There were disappointing things like that. But they gave others - they gave a show once that I thought was terrific. How they crowded it into that little place ... and the announcement was very good. Anybody who worked on Tenth Street from river to river was in it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: And they printed - I think it was Angelo Ippolito who designed it. He was a guiding spirit of it. He had a good eye, taste, and was rather selfless about it. And they blew up a map of a few blocks on each side on Tenth Street from river to river and then overprinted it. They overprinted it with the names.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: I have it here somewhere. It's buried, you know. Filing.

PAUL CUMMINGS: In some incredible place.

LUDWIG SANDER: But it would be a bit enlightening now to look at the names on this and say "Who's this?" And I know people who lived on Eleventh Street felt terribly put out about it, who lived on Tenth Street but painted on Eleventh!

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. I remember one hausfrau painter who occupied an entire brownstone on the best block of West Tenth Street but she had a studio on Broadway. And she was excluded. Oh, she raised hell.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You were never involved with the American Abstract Artists ever, were you?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. I told you that one was organized - that was two organizations. The first one I almost went into but then there was this strict rule that it had to be completely non-objective. And I didn't think that was the important thing about abstract painting. And I thought that it was a whim at the time. And that even if you looked at a lot of abstract painting you could see something in there from life. And I didn't go along with it. It was sort idiotic. But we were all pure in our own way. For a long time I felt that way; that if something was

abstract and based on - I don't mean "abstracted from" - in other words, what they called "abstract" was really concrete.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Geometric painting.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, geometric was called concrete then - "art concrete".

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: And that they were quibbling around a bit. And the fact - some of it I didn't think was abstract painting. I thought it was just sort of either textile design or mindless pattering around. Sticking to primary colors too I thought was just derivative.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, there's a lot of Mondrian in --

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. It was derivative of two or three men. I thought the whole idea then was quite derivative; they all looked like the de Stijl group.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you have any interest in those painters?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, none at all.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I mean the European group.

LUDWIG SANDER: No.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mondrian?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. None at all. Gosh, go in and look at my art books. There's not a Mondrian book in there. You know, or there may be in some sort of things that are not monographs. I knew him. And I know that rectangles eventually came out in the pictures just a sort of by-product of what the original intention was, you know, if you're working on a vertical and horizontal lines and their relationship to each other. But they're rectangles; they're certainly not squares, they're not geometric squares. They are if anything ageometric. But if some geometric group includes me in it okay. Because I don't belong to any group, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Independent.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But how about, you know, the development, because I don't know the transition from --

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, you see that thing - like verticals and horizontals?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Whatever else, it's a sawmill that I was looking at at the time. And it grew out - there was less and less decoration of the surface, that's all. In fact I'd start off with things like, you know, as they look more or less now, crudely. But then I felt I had to decorate. Everybody said that's not enough. that was a great saying at the time - "What you're doing is okay but it's not enough. You know you have a terrific form there but ..." Of course then you always had these guys who were influenced by the party who always thought you ought to have a bit of a struggle in there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: There are lots of kinds of struggle.

LUDWIG SANDER: I remember I did a lithograph in the summer of 1933 - at the same time I did that drawing there - of another sawmill but on the inside. I have the drawing somewhere. I think it's out in the country. And there was this whole interior of a sawmill, you know, that sawed logs into crude boards, a water turned mill. And I won't mention his name because he's still alive somewhat - and he was I think a real party member - not just one of these people who talked about it. And he came in. And the lithographer was working on the stone and he said, "Gee, that's okay but there's none of the struggle." Well, I didn't know what he meant. I thought the struggle was the medium, because there was a lot of talk about that then, you know. Things looked too blib or too facile. But he wanted people in there, you know, he wanted Volga boatmen straining at the ropes; you know, workers being beaten; cops beating the workers.

PAUL CUMMINGS: A message, yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: You know, you had people looking over your shoulder demanding things of you. Of course if

you're younger - today if somebody said that I wouldn't remember it. Or maybe they wouldn't have the crust to say it to me now. But when you're younger people --

PAUL CUMMINGS: They all go around saying, "Why don't you do ..."?

LUDWIG SANDER: You're emptying out your picture. It's not enough what you've got there. Well, I used to hear that. Like in some art class -- Like if I was in some art class and I'd have something like that and I'd think this is it - "Well, that's pretty good but it's not enough." The eye was unaccustomed to looking at something that --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, The Sawmill, for example, what were the following general steps after that, would you say?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, I did a lot of drawing in those days because I didn't have enough money for canvas and paint or a place to work. See, there I could get a ride in a car and go out and sit in the woods or fields and make a drawing, or in front of an old busted down farmhouse or something like that. I used to work on some building, or something like that. Well, at least it gave me something to hang my hat on. And I daresay I would have done it without that landscape. But it was completely unjustified. There was nobody - there were no two people in the United States I knew of who would look at that and consider it as having done my duty as an artist or making a work of art. It was not enough. So I used to hang it on things like that. And friends, too. It wasn't just strangers or mean people. You see, this sort of thing is accepted now. I feel like a landscape painter of 1912. You know what I mean?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Schoolgirls look at that and like it. But back then you don't know how it grated on people. They thought they were going to look at a picture and they saw that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, their idea of a picture was, you know, three lambs.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, it wasn't even that far back. But, after all, they saw Cezanne and they saw --

PAUL CUMMINGS: But it's amazing how many people didn't see --

LUDWIG SANDER: Nobody saw it. Nobody saw it. Nobody saw it. If I'd taken it up to the Modern Museum they wouldn't have seen it. Nobody saw it. And I thought to myself okay, what's the use? Why fight city hall? I didn't feel very strongly about it myself either. At that age the issues aren't as serious.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, and also there was no support, so you wonder --

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, you know, you're quite ambivalent at that age. I mean take painters who are at that age now. They try one thing or another. They're not certain. They feel as though they have something and then nobody sees it. They're convinced there's nothing there. I think today there's just as much derivation, derivative work which seems to get high critical acclaim. You know, somebody does a box of metal and the next ten people do boxes of metal just as good as the first guy who did the box of metal. You know, that sort of derivation doesn't seem to bother anybody. If somebody painted some stripes ... Now anybody who comes from Washington who hasn't got an awning in his hand is not very good. Yes, they're all sitting down and painting them. You know Washington is full of them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: All the color people are doing the same thing.

LUDWIG SANDER: Doing it more or less. You know, they're doing stripes in different whites. And - well, they're all looked at. They're taken seriously, aren't they?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes -

LUDWIG SANDER: Probably they're artists. What's the name of this guy up at Fischback?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Davis?

LUDWIG SANDER: Gene Davis, yes. And then there's Merring down at Saxon. And there's some other guy down at Saxon. There are two or three of them we haven't seen yet. They're all over the place. So what is it? In those days I think at least the people I knew were much more aware of the sin of derivation. Self-derivation was even considered bad, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Everything had to be new.

LUDWIG SANDER: It was a real Job you were then. What is it that I haven't done? Or what is it that I have done?

Why does this happen to me? I've done everything I could. But there wasn't any audience.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You think the audience is important?

LUDWIG SANDER: If there's nobody to look at art there is no art. It's not art. It's something else, isn't it? It's sort of a diary. It's letters to myself.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you ever get interested in the Zen thing that came up at The Club?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. I went to all the panels. Oh, I had known something about Zen before that because, you know, I do have a lot of graduate work in art history. So if you do have a course or something in Asian Art you can't help running into Zen.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What about the Cedar Bar? That was quite a different kind of place than The Club or any of the other places.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, that had its stages, too. I remember the Cedar Bar right after the war when it was mostly empty. And I was still going to the Lafayette across the way once in a while when I could afford it. Although in my earlier days I had gone there a good deal. In fact my wife and I used to eat there a couple of nights a week. And a lot of our friends used to sit there. They're all dead and gone. In the cafe, not in the restaurant. And when the Lafayette moved across the street. And a few others. But the original, the bunch which was over at the cafeteria couldn't afford to - it was often a question of the second coffee. They had to hold on to that moist little nickel. Couldn't afford a fifteen-cent beer over there. Well, the Cedar was no more important than the other hundred saloons around the Village until The Club moved into the neighborhood - of it you were more apt to run into your friends in the little Riker's around the corner.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: You see, that's where a lot of us ate.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's a place to sit and drink coffee, too.

LUDWIG SANDER: And we'd drink coffee. And you'd pass by the window, you'd see a friend inside, and you'd go in. You see it was in that sense.

PAUL CUMMINGS: And the Chuck Wagon. Lewitin used to sit in the Chuck Wagon.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, the Chuck Wagon came later. That came much later. The Chuck Wagon was called something else. You know, they kept changing the name and they moved the walls around. At one time it was three restaurants. That's a much later stage. That's after The Club really had deteriorated that Lewitin held forth in the Chuck Wagon. Oh, I used to go there all the time. If I was alone I'd walk over, it wasn't much of a walk for me then, and look in the window to see who was there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was a great period of looking in the window.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, the owners were glad to have us, you know, they looked like they appreciated us. Not because - I don't know whether we were especially good customers or not, or attracted a lot of people. They were in sympathy with us. I don't think they knew very much of what we were doing.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Certainly didn't know what the conversations were about.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, yes, the cashier was a very nice, bright guy. One of the Greeks. He wasn't one of the owners; he was I think related to one of them or something. But the Cedar really - the bunch who went to Motherwell's lectures are the ones who first went to the Cedar. Although I used to go in there once in a while with a friend. You know what I mean? Because of its location; not because it was anything. It was no institution certainly. That only came much later. Then later on after a couple of years of the lecture thing some of the guys who were on panels would go over to the Cedar and get themselves oiled up, you know. Some of those panels were such disasters that they thought that if they talked it over first - you say this and I'll say that sort of thing - that they met at the Cedar first. And those that were planned of course were worse than - they were like these Middle Western art department panels. - "Well, Paul, you know, I respect your opinion ...". And you know it just sounded like those - like those Middle Western M.F.A. crowds. (You notice my disrespect for the M.F.A.)

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, they've put their time in.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, you bet they have.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's what they get their button for. I used to go to the Cedar a lot.

LUDWIG SANDER: You're thinking of the later years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, in the fifties.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. By then, you see, I tell you what, Paul, time moved very quickly in the early fifties. Rapid change. The big influx of mistreated Middle Western art students, you know, who thought that if they sat in the Cedar Sidney Janis would come in and say I need you for my gallery. They all hoped something would rub off on them. And then of course the English Department sent its delegation there too from around the country. Then there were always those cops who were just off duty in plainclothes muttering at the end of the bar.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. All the time.

LUDWIG SANDER: Nobody knew they were cops. They thought they were barflies.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: Gee, I wish I could tell you - Well, you know, then somebody would say let's get the hell out of here and go to a bar further up on University Place at Twelfth Street.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes, on the corner there.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Dillon's, wasn't it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: I think they said let's go up there. And the students beat them to it. They were sitting there at the tables when we arrived.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. So that's what happens when you get a good fan club.

LUDWIG SANDER: I rather enjoyed much more sitting in the Cedar, you know, with Lewitin at the head of the table. I knew him in Paris in the early thirties. And we didn't like each other then. I couldn't stand him then. But it was such a breath of fresh air, you know, as he got older and less fresh airish that you enjoyed him more. In the early days at the Cedar I used to go there for dinner after work. And I'd meet Bradley Tomlin - he lived down on Bleecker Street I think and I lived on Washington Square south of Third Street - and often we'd meet each other and we'd have dinner together. Or go in and sit down and people would come in and fill up your table. And the food there at one period was very good and cheap. I mean it wasn't terrific but it was fine for a dollar or a dollar and a quarter, which was a lot of money, at least for us. We'd eat other places, too. I've forgotten. But the Ticcino was, still --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, but the Cedar was kind of a conversation place. You could come and go.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, but if we got there late ... I've been going to Ticcino to eat since the twenties. They've got two floors.

PAUL CUMMINGS: They have a third now.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And I was there the night they got their liquor license. I had dinner with Joe Pollet and Rube Nakian and I think Earl Kerkam. The fellow who owns Monty's now who is a brother of the man who owned Taccino - Vittorio. He was still a waiter there. And he was going to be the bartender. Somebody ordered a scotch and soda, the first order. And he takes a cocktail shaker and scotch and soda and ice. And everybody screamed at him. They had to take the pool table out. You see, they had a pool table there in the downstairs part.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: And their license was delayed because they didn't quite understand that you couldn't have liquor in a poolroom. You know, the earlier liquor regulations were very strict. And they had to get that table out. It broke their hearts. And they lost a lot of their old friends. You see that was a rooming house like for part-time railroad workers, who mostly worked on the Erie. And that was where they ate, down there. And they'd sit around. There were long lines of bentwood chairs on both sides. They sat around and watched the pool players. And went to bed early. And they'd get word there to send up ten section hands or something like that. That's how it really went. And I'd go in alone and always run into somebody I could sit down and have dinner with over the years. Of course that's - everything changes. That place is more the same though than anything else I know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

LUDWIG SANDER: It has had many changes in it. But it's still the same family. That woman who runs it - I

remember her head came about as high as the table. Yes, she was a little bit of girl. She had a brother who died quite young; he was already old enough to tend bar. I think he was even married. He died very young.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You have mentioned before just very briefly some interest in color. Did you ever study color theories? Or were you interested in anything especially?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, I knew about them and I looked at them I guess like anybody else. But they weren't much different than the Newtonian theory - there were some variations from the Newtonian. Later on, too, there were some that took in, you know, intensity of hue and so forth. No, they didn't relate to what I was doing.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you have a theory about the use of color in your pictures now?

LUDWIG SANDER: None that I can think of. If I have, it's lost upstairs somewhere. I do when I go about it I know what I'm going to do and I have an image somewhere in my mind of what I want that I cannot express to you in words. And I find that as soon as I can explain them they're no good.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really? That's interesting.

LUDWIG SANDER: No. In anything you do, you've got to do it beyond the point of where it can be explained. That's the way you separate them, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's the test.

LUDWIG SANDER: That's the test. Because otherwise then you have a commonplace. And if you're an artist one of the things you try to not have is a commonplace. Yes, everything you do - I mean if you have any idea of doing the best there is (using the word "best" advisedly - it's not a very good word right now) but doing the best there is in you to do it's got to go beyond the point where it's comprehensible. Again the violinist, you know - there's a certain point -- in fact they tell me these thirteen-year-old - they're not called geniuses on the violin - what are they called? - well, these little virtuosi can play everything that the master can and with just the same accuracy but they still haven't gotten beyond the point. After all, music, you know, it's just scratching on the strings until it's transposed into music and then the strings and the bow are no longer there; but are dematerialized. I have to use analogies because there is no way of my telling you about it in painting. And I imagine a violinist would probably have to use analogies in painting to bring his idea of what is the best there is to be done. The excellence is somewhere beyond explanation.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. I'm curious, you know, as I've looked at your paintings over the years and I've seen the shows --

LUDWIG SANDER: That was a very colorful red picture three years ago.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The far one? Oh, really? It changes every once in a while?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, it's just that a lot of people don't realize the difference. That was considered a very, very brilliant coloration three years ago.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, I know that.

LUDWIG SANDER: It's pretty hard because you see them next to each other. That's just a browny bromide, isn't it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. But I'm curious about it because I've often got the feeling that - you know I may be absolutely wrong - that your lines and spaces and things are arrived at not by formulas or by --

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, no, by no means. By eye.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, by eye.

LUDWIG SANDER: And I know what I want. And since we don't have subject matter, a previous painting is the subject matter in a negative way very often. What I have here in this picture is what I don't want to do.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Because it's been done?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. It's merely a way in my mind of seeing what it is I want to do. It's entirely different. There's no way of describing it. And, you know, there's the - what is the right word? - there's a right word for it - it just escapes me - it's a question of when that line gets down there of where it really is. You know, like often the *je ne sais quoi* of a figure drawing is the line on the shoulder - does that contain the shoulder? Does it define the background? Is it a line between the two? And it's the ambiguity (that's the word I was looking for). That's

not the whole thing.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: But one of the elements of drawing I think that makes it more vibrant, takes you into it and you don't know what it is, it's one of the elements - not the leading element; one of the elements is the ambiguity of the color, the ambiguity of the line.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you make drawings for these paintings?

LUDWIG SANDER: No, sometimes I'll take a scrap, a paper and in the corner I'll do something about the size of a postage stamp not for the painting but if that's the proportion I have in mind, you know. Or sometimes I'll do it bigger or draw on the edge - on the wood of the table. I want this line here, or I want it there, what did I have in mind this morning when I was thinking of this. Now I can take - I think it's very important - for instance, you take that, let's call it that format, that design of the little square in the left-hand corner of the big one dominating it. Now I can take that a thousand times and never do it the same way twice. The variation from the one before doesn't have to be very much. And there are many places to vary it, you know. The variation may be just the thickness of the line at its upper part. Because it speaks quite differently, you know, say, that one, that long perpendicular, or in this one here, if we take just that, now that can be a very strong line, it can be a very fine line, it can be a hairline, or it can start out being fairly broad and then sort of disappear. Or it may be painted over and then - it's always overpainted in the process of painting - and then my brush slips over it and then I draw the line in again and work some more. Now what remains of that line - it starts with a reserved line - what remains of that line then makes the picture speak differently. It may be partly obscure. Or it may even show through the paint, the red paint that covers it. And when I re-define the line with black paint or dark paint (it doesn't need to be black), and I do it with a fine watercolor brush I get ideas as I do it, too. I see suddenly a plane shifting forward; or it does something that I can't describe, you know, in the color. That color will do something else to the one next to it. You see the line, the line up above the line that thins out, in fact next to the blue you don't see it so much, here where it goes running through two reds it's very strong. Now that may look very crude to me, or I may like it the way it is, it may do what I wanted it to do. But I would then have to come along and repaint one of those red fields to bring that line back to where I want it. And each time that happens the picture speaks differently.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I see.

LUDWIG SANDER: Now the question really comes up, if you're looking at it and you are the critic and you say, "Ah, it's just the same thing," - well, will you accept my idea that the difference between one painting and another physically does not have to be very great for it to speak differently.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, of course.

LUDWIG SANDER: And the way I looked at it first was if I do three or four versions of the exact same layout, how much different must the next picture be? Should it be radically different? Or within one inch can I get a thousand varieties? Or must I have a mile to have those thousand? Or a mile to have ten variations on a theme? Or can I do it within very narrow limits?

PAUL CUMMINGS: I don't remember seeing - I keep thinking of the yellow painting at Kootz's where you have two vertical lines that divide --

LUDWIG SANDER: Near each other? Or --

PAUL CUMMINGS: No. It's almost like a diptych or something.

LUDWIG SANDER: No, I don't think so.

PAUL CUMMINGS: They only have the one vertical, don't they?

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. Well, I tell you what. You know, after all the four edges of a canvas are lines that are in there there's nothing you can do about it. They're given.

PAUL CUMMINGS: They're there; right.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes. And they sometimes act more strongly than at other times according to the picture. And you come away with the impression that there was a third line or a second line. That must be played off when you work, too. It becomes more apparent when there's not baguet on it because there's certainly no stronger line than the right-hand edge of that picture.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: It's stronger than the one that's painted in. And they're given and that's what you have to deal with. You can cut that line off but then there's another one.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Well, also the small one here which is not - which is just off from being ninety degrees - most of them have been ninety degrees, haven't they? The vertical?

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, they've never been exactly.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, but I mean they're closer to that than this one which is really quite a bit --

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. Sometimes they're much more geometric than ageometric. But if it turns out to be geometric, you know, a perfect geometric rectangle I don't destroy that. But I don't aim for it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How about your colors? You know they've been getting brighter and brighter and brighter.

LUDWIG SANDER: Yes, they have. It's hard to see those two next to each other. You know if I didn't have these red ones in the room you would still probably see that as quite a bright one. That was hanging downstairs until a few weeks ago. And I didn't have anymore - I had to hang pictures down there to get them off the floor, you know, before the show. So I put that away up here. And I just got it out the other day to see what would happen when I hung it next to that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: How do you like your exhibitions? Do the paintings look very, very different to you when they're out of the studio?

LUDWIG SANDER: They do look better in a way. Sometimes I'm disappointed in one. It may be the hanging. Or it may be the strong light on it and you see things that you didn't see in the studio. But when they're isolated from all this confusing junk around here in the studio and they're given their own space in the gallery and they're given good lighting -- here they stand against the wall. Here you can't even see the picture. Oh, I think when I first get the show up I'm sort of a little disappointed for about half an hour. And then they come through to me. I've felt very good about my last two shows. Which surprises me. Yes. I don't know what the hell I feel so good about. I have been very confident I should say in my last - my last five shows although I think the first one of the last five nobody paid much attention to - well, some people did. You know, the critical stuff in some cases was understanding. In other cases it was as if they were blindfolded.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Does the critical response produce much of value for you? Or are you interested in it?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. No. It may; but I'm not aware of it. The reviewer may be aware of it but I'm not. I feel no anger. I feel no ... Like Mellow did a review of my last show at Kootz and all he did was talk about the titles. He had read Jimmy Schuyler's sort of long article in Art News about me in which I said that I gave them Indian names just for identity because I didn't want the title to read anything into the picture, that they were named like kittens. And in kidding with Jimmy I made chance remark - which he put into the article - that I was going to use Tonawanda but when I found out what sort of a dump it was up in New York State, I didn't use it. And he immediately took that up. He thought that was very significant in my giving titles that I really didn't use the titles consciously to read something into the picture. About the pictures themselves he didn't have anything to say. Well, that's all right. That's him. He wrote it. I didn't. That's his responsibility. I'm responsible for the pictures, not for what people write about them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. But is there any reason why you have developed the palette you have?

LUDWIG SANDER: It's grown. It's changed over the years. The palette has changed very much over the years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It always seems to me, you know, that - I really find it very hard to find a word that makes sense sometimes to describe it - this is a new one, isn't it? - the one on the chair.

LUDWIG SANDER: That was done during the painting of my last show, yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Which has a different kind of space, or illusion quality.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, people have said that. I don't quite agree. But it's hard for anybody to remember anybody else's exhibition, all what's in it. I remember several times somebody has said, "Gee, that show you just had blue pictures in it." Well, it wasn't so at all. I had red ones and green ones and yellow ones.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Some things stick in the mind.

LUDWIG SANDER: Well, since nobody is going to hear this for another ten years my last show at Sachs - the one before was at Egan in the fall of 1967.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

LUDWIG SANDER: This is just the fall of 1968 that we just passed.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: So that would be the fall of 1967 when Sachs first opened.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

LUDWIG SANDER: And I had all my yellow pictures in one room and in the other room I had reds and blues and violets and so forth. And I wanted all the yellows in one room. Now that's the third time I had done that. My two previous shows at Kootz's I put all the yellow pictures in one room and the rest wherever they would land. Because I think my yellow pictures just can't hang, as far as my eye goes, in a room with other colors because some sort of nasty fighting goes on. And Jules Olitski came in when he saw this show hung with all the yellows in one room, and that was the third show in a row - and he'd seen all my shows - his show opened just a little after mine. He said, "Gee, you did just what I wanted to do. I wanted to put all my yellow ones in one room." Well, I didn't have the heart to tell him that this was the third time I had done it. When I see other pictures in a room with the yellows - my first show at Kootz was that way - we had them all like a stamp collection, you know, a green or a red one or a blue one and a yellow one. And it made me sick. So fortunately when the next show was hung he was sick. And so we hung the show ourselves, Kate and myself hung the show. It was my idea. You know I was sure he was going to come in the next morning and call me a Communist to hang all one color in one room. But he liked it. He liked it very much. Oh, my God, I was supposed to call him back before noon today. I'm to come for dinner on Saturday.

PAUL CUMMINGS: So you left Sachs though, didn't you?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: And you're with Rubin.

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, yes. Well, that was decided some time ago. Sachs knew it. I told him.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Have you done any work with new materials or anything?

LUDWIG SANDER: No.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You don't make collages? You haven't got involved in any of that?

LUDWIG SANDER: No. Years ago I did mosaics, as I said. I did this and I did that and everything else. I did all that experimenting so far back. I used to make my own paint, my own tempera, egg tempera colors. I'm talking about thirty-five, thirty-six, thirty-seven years ago. I prepared my own canvases if possible. But there's not that much time in life today. I've just got to concentrate on painting pictures in oil. I don't have enough time for that, for all I want to do.

PAUL CUMMINGS: You don't use any of the plastic paints or anything?

LUDWIG SANDER: Oh, I tried --

PAUL CUMMINGS: Acrylics?

LUDWIG SANDER: Acrylics, no. Simple-minded colors to start with. I don't think they're as flexible as oil colors. There's a quality oil colors have that - to me acrylics look like house paint. I mean they have no life.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. It's very flat, dead.

LUDWIG SANDER: Dead, yes. And the pigments themselves ... Oh, I'm not going to bother to learn a whole new technique. I haven't got time for that either. I'm closer to the end than I am to the beginning. I'm going to do what I'm going to do within the limits of where I can handle it. That's why I don't do big pictures either.

PAUL CUMMINGS: We don't have very much tape left. Is there anything that you think I should find out about or know about in about a minute and a half?

LUDWIG SANDER: Shut it off. Shut it off.

END OF INTERVIEW

Last updated... *December 11, 2002*

