



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

**Oral history interview with Raymond J.
Horowitz, 1973 Jan. 17**

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Transcript

Interview

PC: PAUL CUMMINGS

RH: RAYMOND HOROWITZ

PC: It's the seventeenth of January 1973, Paul Cummings talking to Raymond Horowitz in his office at 345 Park. You were born in New York City and you went to college here, right?

RH: Of course. I went to Columbia College.

PC: And was there a culture interest at home, with your family, parents, friends, anybody interested in the visual arts?

RH: Not, the visual arts particularly, my mother was interested in music and my father was a doctor who was interested in Greek and languages and culture generally. But I would think the plastic arts took a very minor place in the family scheme of things.

PC: But there was a lot of interest in —

RH: In general cultural affairs and the world in general.

PC: Did you go to concerts?

RH: Oh yes, I went to the opera as a kid and we had musicals at home and there was that kind of interest.

PC: And so there was some kind of preparation, not necessarily visual but cultural.

RH: I would say so, yes.

PC: When did you get interested in the arts, was it on your own or through friends?

RH: Well, I don't know what you mean by interested in the arts. Interested in art generally or interested in collecting, it's a quite different thing.

PC: The beginning and then into the collecting.

RH: I guess we were, my wife and I (we met when I was in law school and she was taking a master's degree at Columbia) were always interested in the visual arts. When I was a student at Columbia college I attended Meyer Shapiro's lectures at Columbia and I wouldn't say that I was passionately interested in art, but I had a general rather undefined interest in I would say generally art of the twentieth century. In the first place, Matisse, Picasso, Leger and —

PC: Was this through Shapiro's classes?

RH: And through the general I can't quite definitize when the interest in looking at paintings began. I guess I had that all through college but not as a consequence of any particular professor or particular stimulus. I guess it was in the air.

PC: Did you go to galleries and museums?

RH: Yes, I went to galleries and museums. I mean later on I went much more, but even after we got married, which was quite early, we bought trivial paintings at auctions for political causes and whatever.

PC: Oh, when did that start?

RH: That was very early in the forties. It wasn't very serious, it was just a rather vague interest we had.

PC: What kind of things were they?

RH: Well, they weren't very important, they weren't by artists who have any reputation today, but these were people who appealed to us.

PC: So there was an interest in acquiring things?

RH: But I never took that very seriously, that interest in acquiring things. As a matter of fact, since we were depression kids I kind of looked down on acquisitions as something to be frowned on, meretricious almost. It was one thing to appreciate a painting, another thing to be an avid collector. Little did I know that later on I'd fall into this trap or get this disease or whatever it is.

PC: Well, how did all that progress? I mean, you just bought things from these auctions —

RH: Well, then afterwards we got more interested. As we prospered, I took some interest in acquiring things, but again not very great. We bought, French drawings and certain lithographs, it was kind of undefined and undirected, but I think we started to have some pretty good notions about art. We bought a Morisot drawing, which we subsequently gave to the Chicago Art Institute, Jacques Lelon watercolor, things of that kind. And I was groping towards German expressionists art.

PC: So you were sort of feeling your way around?

RH: Feeling my way around, but again I didn't visualize ourselves as collectors, the furthest thing from my mind.

PC: That's what makes it more fun. Well, you know, where were these acquisitions made, just anywhere and everywhere?

RH: Well, with the non-American?

PC: Yeah, and French and German.

RH: Well, we got them from various places, well known galleries in town, distinguished galleries like Slatkin who'd take an interest in young collectors and guide them.

PC: Did you buy many things from him over the years?

RH: Several, not too many. As I said, these were not many purchases. I guess for one thing we didn't have a large amount of extra money to buy things, and we didn't really, as I say, for background reasons think of ourselves or picture ourselves at any time as collectors. How this happened I don't know.

PC: They were just occasional things you liked.

RH: Well, I'll explain if you wish how this particular interest did develop because I know, I know precisely how it happened, but why is another matter.

PC: Right, what kind of centered the interest?

RH: Well, this is the progression of things. I have a very close friend and business associate, Daniel Fraad who is a major collector of American art and we've been friends for 25 or more years and close friends. And he was collecting American paintings of a realist nature long ago and I used to go around to the galleries with him. When we first began to go to the galleries together I was at that time interested in nonobjective painting. We spent our summers in Provincetown and I guess I did buy that kind of painting for a while up there.

PC: Was that when Hofmann was there?

RH: Yeah, when Hofmann was teaching. I didn't buy his work, but I bought a lot of the other Provincetown painters of no great importance at the moment, but again it wasn't very serious purchasing. But as I say, Fraad and I were close friends and I would go around with him and he would go to Delesio who was then running the Babcock galleries and other galleries and I would just accompany him. I kind of was disinterested in his purchases of Ryder and Eakins because I was interested at that time, as I say, in the nonobjective paintings. However he used to give me a Christmas present every year and I said, golly I would like to give Dan something. Now the whole trick since he's a very, very wealthy man and since he was collecting oils was not to spend money and get him something good, but to spend a rather small amount of money and get him something very fine in an area that he wasn't collecting, mainly drawings. He only collected oils, he didn't even collect water colours until later on, that was his taste. So my wife Margaret and I conceived the idea of getting him a present for his birthday, a present of a drawing by an American painter whom he was interested in, and as I say the object was to try to do it with a modest amount of money but get a drawing of great quality because we thought that would be interesting and it would be appropriate. I don't know when this began but we united around for a whole year and we bought a drawing from Miss Kraushaan for him for his birthday. It was a beautiful drawing by William Glackens as I recall. That was the first one and then for several years thereafter we repeated this. We bought a Bellows drawing and something from Graham, I don't recall precisely what because it's about seventeen, eighteen years ago that this got started. And then there came a time after we'd been doing this for about three or four years and since we by that time had gotten to know many dealers and because of the sharpness of our looking to get something of great quality for a modest amount of money, which was possible in those days, it's not possible any longer in this field, but in this field it was then possible, we got to know a rather good deal. I think about American art of the late nineteenth century, early twentieth century. As I said, there came a time when we said if we're doing this for Dan, let's maybe start on our own. That's how this began, I think it's fair to say however that I was even then when we first got started buying American painting, even then drawn to other things and I would have gone off and still bought French drawings and German expressionists and anything that appealed to me. But my wife Margaret was the one who after a while she said, well, let's stick to this particular field. We had found after a couple of years that we were drawn to the American field, at least to a particular kind of painting, it was lyric, it was beautiful, it was generally serene and it was an unconscious affair and we found ourselves drawn to this and there came a time when she said look, let's stick to this and not go afield and that's how for the last twelve or so years we've just remained I this one rather narrow field I would say.

PC: What happened to all the previous acquisitions?

RH: We gave them away to museums or to friends or whatever I don't know, my wife is a very

generous person, she gave one painting to a laundry man and another painting to a delivery man and

PC: Spreading the culture all around.

RH: But, as I say, the very good Morisot drawing we did give to Chicago. So that's all gone, some of it may be around this office in some obscure secretary's office or whatever, but I've lost track of it.

PC: But your interest in abstract painting really didn't sustain itself?

RH: It didn't sustain itself as far as buying went. I continued to look, we always went to the galleries and I was very interested in it, but I was never interested after awhile in acquiring. You know, knew when I went to Betty Parsons gallery and saw the Jackson Pollock show in the fifties that this was a major painter, but I just wasn't going to get involved. It was another thing. It was for me a looking thing, not a buying thing.

PC: Well, what's the difference of feeling, to like one thing and then look at something else and that's what you want to acquire?

RH: As I say, I don't know, I can't explain. I can't explain that because I admire many paintings other than those that we own, I mean many other kinds of painting. As I say, we deliberately after a while restricted ourselves, limited ourselves to forming a collection. I hated to use that word for many years, I thought it was very pretentious, and I didn't visualize myself in that way. But we limited ourselves to acquiring paintings in this area, even though I, more than my wife I would say, was drawn to other kinds of thing. Now you ask what the difference in feeling is. I can't explain it, and in many cases there is not difference in feeling once you've established this format for yourself.

PC: Well, how did you decide on that?

RH: As I say, we found ourselves drawn to a particular kind of painting after a couple of years.

PC: It just became apparent by looking around.

RH: Well, I'd spent a lot of time in museums and I for instance admired Theodore Robinson. There's a painting in the Metropolitan and I used to stand in front of that painting and say my lord this is a knock out painting. And hells bells, who is this guy Robinson, whoever heard of Theodore Robinson. You know, this is the fifties or what ever and I look at this painting and I was dazzled by it and said shucks, we ought to look at this fellow. And so we found ourselves looking at and being attracted to a particular kind of painting and after a while we became aware that this was what we were interested in. We didn't plan it as such, it wasn't a conscious thing at the beginning. After a couple of years we then had some insight into what appealed to us and then we decided to stick to it.

PC: Well, when you say you didn't like the term collection, when did it appear to you that this was what was happening?

RH: Oh, I can't put a date on it, but well, —

PC: Saying roughly ten years ago?

RH: I would say roughly more recently than that I guess eight years ago. We were kind of frenetic at times would buy at least a couple of things every Saturday, and it was a very unsuccessful day if we didn't. My wife would spend all week long scouring the galleries and whatever and as I work very

long hours as a lawyer the only time I could get off to look was generally Saturday afternoons and I would very concentratedly try to look at the things that she had turned up during the week and decide. Although I must confess that if an art dealer called me, no matter how busy I was during the day, that something sort of smashing had turned up at the gallery, I would drop everything and go up to the gallery during the week. But this didn't happen too often because they knew that I would be turning up Saturdays anyway.

PC: Well, would your wife spend time looking for things and then you would decide together on what?

RH: Yes, she would spend every day, it's hard to say every single day, but virtually every day going to the galleries, driving to the museums, going to the Frick. We did incidentally a good deal of research ourselves and she would try to locate things. And we had a rule, both of us had to like the painting enough to get it. There were occasional instances when she liked something and I didn't or vice versa and we didn't acquire it. But generally we found that our tastes coincided and things that she was wild about I would be very enthusiastic about too. So that it was never a problem.

PC: During this time did you start reading books and catalogues and magazines?

RH: Yes, we read everything we could put our hands on. There wasn't very much, when we got started there was the Slatkin book on American drawings, there was Richardson on American Painting, Larkin, a few other things that turned up. But I don't think that the literature was very extensive or very deep. I mean we knew Lloyd Goodrich's stuff in fields we didn't collect in. We tried to read generally everything we could about American painting, even in fields that we weren't collecting in. But again there's a dearth of material in American art.

PC: That's true I'm afraid, it's hard to find.

RH: It's one of the reasons why I'm now trying to do something about the graduate program at City University, which does have a PH.D. Program in American art.

PC: What are you doing there?

RH: Well, I'm trying to raise money for them and help them to add to their programs.

PC: Through Milton Brown?

RH: Professor Milton Brown heads this up and I think it's a marvelous effort and I think in years to come as a consequence of that program there will be more scholars and there'll be more publications. Unhappily it has come this late.

PC: Well, I always say it's a young culture.

RH: Well, we've been at it a long time, really.

PC: That's true. What about the paintings you've collected? You've mentioned research, did you document them? Would you develop

RH: Well, we would always ask the dealers for whatever provenance they had. We found at the beginning considerable reluctance to disclose the provenance, the dealers were afraid I guess that either we might go to their sources or unwittingly lead others dealers to those sources. Which I thought was ridiculous.

PC: It still persists, though, that idea.

RH: It still persists, but it's diminished. We would insist on it and I sometimes said, alright, give it to me in six months or whatever. Because I think the dealers did understand that we would never go behind their backs to their sources. I think their major concern was that if a work that the dealer had sold to us was exhibited somewhere and the provenance was published by the museum or the gallery then exhibiting it that their source would be disclosed. That was the real concern, because they knew that we just weren't interested I'm a bug on condition and I'm not going to go to a private source and —

PC: Well, you don't have the same recourse at the private sources.

RH: That's right. I'm saying if the condition is punk what am I going to do and etcetera. So anyway it wasn't our style to do it that way. But what we would do and we found interestingly enough that we could document ourselves some of the paintings by going to the Frick, by going to the New York Public Library. Once I spent some time in Boston researching an alleged Sergeant, which I finally decided was not a Sergeant. It could have been, but I just decided there wasn't enough documentation. I guess also in many cases the dealers didn't have any real provenance. The American paintings during the depression and thereafter were not very costly, not very valuable that is, and the people who had them didn't pay much attention to them, or the owners or the dealers. In many cases they were just bought here and there and no one knew where the devil they had been before, and with all the best intentions in the world they couldn't tell you anything.

PC: Well, yes I guess that's so, although we did buy from all the dealers specializing in the American field. The major dealers that we saw virtually every Saturday for a long period of time were Hirsch and Adler, Babcock, Kruschaar, Roy Davis, later on Larry Fleischman, Gordon Allison for the Bellows, Ira Spanierman, Bob Schoelkopf, Virginia Zabriskie, Victor Spark, the Grahams, and I don't recollect which gallery was the source of most of the paintings, although I wouldn't say that there is any one gallery from whom we bought a major portion of the paintings and watercolors.

PC: It was pretty well spread around.

RH: Spread around among a large number of dealers.

PC: Well, do you think that any of those dealers, or even any other ones were influential in guiding you towards things or telling you about people, or was it just that they constantly offered things and out of the variety you found your own interest?

RH: Well, I think that all the dealers were helpful, but I don't think any one of them ever guided us as such. I think they were rather understanding that we wanted a particular kind of painting and would tend generally to offer to us the best of that variety. But I don't think anyone took us aside and said, well, you ought to look at so and so or do so and so or concentrate on so and so. None of them did that. Nor were we I think adapted to that kind of approach. We wouldn't want someone to tell us what to look for.

PC: You had certain independence in your own tastes.

RH: We had a conviction about what we wanted and we made that quite clear to them, although it didn't always come through. I would run up to Boston and talk to Bob Vose and say I'm looking for a particular kind of painting, and with all the good will in the world. Bob wouldn't remember and he'd call me about other things. But nonetheless I got some marvelous paintings from him.

PC: Well, how extensive is the collection now? It ranges from what? The late eighteen hundreds to —

RH: Well, the collection is not very extensive. Actually it's very narrow, it's really a turn of the century collection. And we've now given so much of it away to museums that we don't have all that much anymore. I guess we must have about a hundred-odd paintings, drawings and watercolors.

PC: Well, how many have there been in the collection over the years?

RH: Oh, I would say well over two hundred. Of course we do give paintings to museums on a rather regular basis.

PC: Do you have particular institutions that you give things to?

RH: Well, in recent years we've preferred to give to the New York Museums, the Metropolitan and to the Whitney.

PC: Is that for particular reasons?

RH: Well, it's just I think that the I have a closer identification with the Metropolitan because I got to know first Stuart Feld who was very helpful in many ways, and then Jock Howat at the Metropolitan, and had long been I guess even before that friendly with Goodrich and Baur at the Whitney, although there were times when we used to give to other museums, we kind of narrowed it down to that now, generally I mean. I find for instance when Bill Gerdts was at the Newark Museum, and I don't know how long ago this was, quite a while ago, he met my wife Margaret on the street and he said that they didn't have a Twachtman and he would like us to give Newark one. I came home that evening, she told me about it, I said it's outrageous, I said what the hell do I know about Newark and what am I giving a Twachtman for and she said for crying out loud they need it and you have a lot of Twachtmans and Bill's a nice guy and so I thought about it and I said, well gee whiz maybe I ought to give it to him. So in due course I gave them, we gave them the Twachtman and I remember it was a great thrill to go there. And they had, I don't know, some blooming luncheon or something. I saw the Twachtman all alone on the wall and I said what the hell have I done! You know this is absolute madness. But it was so beautiful!

PC: Do you ever regret giving those things away over the years?

RH: Sometimes, you know, sometimes you do of course.

PC: As you see them afterwards on exhibition you say —

RH: You say oh lordy isn't that a knockout! But then you say, well you know.

PC: Well, you know one thing that interests me is that in the last decade the value of these paintings on the market has increased considerably in some cases did that have an influence in your collecting and giving things away? Because it's a little difficult not to be aware of that.

RH: Well, obviously the giving away was substantially assisted by the rising market prices because this was a way of in affect trading up, trying to trade up. As I say, from time to time you make mistakes when you see that what you've given away. I want to add a footnote in a sense. I felt we couldn't give to major institutions like the Met or the Whitney anything less than a marvelous work of art if our names were attached to it. But nonetheless we were trying to get even better things and the rise in market values and with the tax laws of the United States being what they are,

certainly this was a factor in the giving away, plus the fact that even though the dealers are marvelous people when you're buying, when you're talking to them, if you ever try to sell it's a different thing entirely. I had one or two experiences and I decided my role is just to buy and not to sell. So I rather than do all that thing with the dealers about exchanging, selling god knows what, we gave paintings away and clearly the rising market value as I say helped that.

PC: Well, talking about the trading of pictures, have you sold many things or traded?

RH: No, we haven't traded, we haven't sold. I don't think we sold two paintings, because the whole business with the dealers is just too, too awful for me, even though they're my pals and all the rest of it.

PC: When they're buying it's different.

RH: Crime without passion, and I just decided that since this is a fun thing for me, I didn't want to get involved with that aspect and the giving was the equivalent of it. So we didn't sell. We may have sold one or two things, it escapes my attention so unimportant, and we did trade a couple of times but it was not a significant part of our acquiring this group of paintings. The giving away was much more significant in that direction.

PC: Well, I was just doing an interview yesterday with Leo Castelli and he was telling me about the rise of prices for certain of the artists is staggering, you know. How do you find it for the artists that you've collected? Do you find it tremendous shift or has it been gradual?

RH: Well, the artists we collect have not gone up in value, in price as much as artists of the somewhat earlier period in the nineteenth century, I'm talking about American art, or certainly anything like the rise in price of nonobjective painters since World War II. There has been obviously, not obviously, but there has been an increase in the price of the paintings that we started with and in the fashion of buying the paintings that were interested in. And when we first got started my avant garde friends thought it was very square of us to be buying these paintings and I think it now is regarded as not so square. However, the rise in price has not been as dramatic as the rise in other areas. I mentioned post World War II, I think the even greater rise has taken place in the paintings of the twenties, that is Demuth, Dove, Stuart Davis, and I think that whole Stieglitz school has had more of a rise and I think I knew that it would. I also I think knew that the earlier paintings would have a very swift ascent in market price. The paintings we're interested in certainly from the time we started to the present day have gone up considerably, but I don't think analytically that they've gone up in price as much as other areas. Incidentally we did buy all the way up that is we bought the first Robinson say at two thousand dollars and we didn't stop when we had to pay thirty thousand, which is sometimes a deterrent. That is, a collector says well, my lord. I could have had all these paintings for X dollars and now they're ten times X or fifteen times X you know. I just can't do it. It did happen to me a couple of times psychologically. A painting that had been offered to us at twelve hundred dollars twelve years or thirteen years ago was offered to me for forty-five thousand a few months ago and I loved the painting, but I just couldn't get myself to get close to that kind of price.

PC: Well, what about that, have many pictures like that gotten away from you for one reason or another or have you been fairly successful?

RH: We've been fairly successful but we have limitations. I don't have all that much money and there is a practical limitation to what we can afford and what we can acquire. And whether you rationalize the process and only desire the things that are fairly possible to acquire, I don't really

know. But so far we've been luck. I do feel now it is big business and it's quite difficult to acquire top flight things for prices that we can pay.

PC: Do you find that then as time goes on you buy fewer things but quality?

RH: Well, we buy fewer things because for one thing at this particular point just another pretty picture, another nice picture isn't what we're looking for, and frankly the masterpiece in our field doesn't turn up with all that frequency, they just don't. So we don't have the test that often.

PC: Right. Well, what about the curators and the museum people. Have they been helpful about ideas on particular pictures or general history?

RH: I think all the curators, all the people that we know have been very helpful and talked to us really whenever we've asked them and volunteered on many occasions, all of them that I've mentioned Stuart Feld Howat, Baur, Gerdt, Goodrich, Brown. I guess these are the people whom we've talked to most in the museum field and Henry Geldzahler.

PC: You know, one thing that interests me is, again, the kind of method of selecting things. Once you've narrowed your field and kind of defined what you're doing, does it take a long time to make your mind up on a painting, do you take it home and look at it or do you just see it on a Saturday and say, that's the one?

RH: Our own particular habit has been to decide instantly. In recent years I've tried to go through the motions of sending it home and saying that I'll decide but actually we decide in one second and if it doesn't have an instantaneous effect it's not picked up, except in cases where the money is so extravagant that you then have to wrestle with the problem of how you're going to put it together. But as far as making the choice that happens in a second.

PC: It's fascinating because that is so difficult to explain to people who are not involved with art. They can't understand how somebody can say alright, I like it and that's it.

RH: I understand and I know what happens. Why it happens I don't know, that is something else again.

PC: Well, do you find now that since everybody's writing books on American art that you read many of these things? Do you find them useful. Or are there some you find just over-produced and under-thought?

RH: Well, I don't know what books you're referring to.

PC: Well, the general there are so many books on American art coming out.

RH: Yeah, there are general books on American art which I kind of sample but I don't read them intensely anymore because I do find them either turgid or overproduced, which I think is a good word, unthought out. What I am interested in is scholarship on particular painters and I find that this is not done enough in enough volume. As distinguished a painter as Eastman Johnson, there's no book —

PC: A Brooklyn Museum catalogue.

RH: Well, there's the museum. Arid Pat Hills at the Whitney did an exhibition. But I think before you can have meaningful surveys, histories of American art, you have to have a devil of a lot more scholarship on particular painters and particular periods in American painting and that is still to be

done.

PC: True, it's very difficult.

RH: We do try at least to sample everything that turns up or look at books particularly in our own field. Don Hoopes book on the American impressionists which just appeared a couple of months ago, of course we stood on line for that. Incidentally I should have mentioned him because when he was at Brooklyn and Tom Buschner was at Brooklyn, we also had a rather large interest in the Brooklyn collection and I failed to mention their names as people who were very helpful.

PC: Well, I'm curious about one other thing. You know being a lawyer in this large firm, you must have a lot of people who come through here in the course of a year. What kind of comments do you get on the works of art that you have?

RH: Well, I have a painting in my office of April, a young lady in the center of the picture painted by Charles W. Hawthorne and the usual comment is that a relative or do you know the lady. That is, they have no idea of it as a work of art. And my own habit is not to draw attention to the paintings, or if someone asks a question about them to pass it off or finesse it so that it isn't discussed because I've made it a habit not to intermingle the art and the lawyering. In the conference room I have a lot of Bellow's lithographs and people sometimes comment about them, but I don't indicate that I own them I just want to keep it separate. I think when people consult me as a lawyer my hunch is that they're interested in me as a lawyer, including many clients who are themselves collectors or even art dealers. I represent some.

PC: Well, you know, I'm always interested in art in public places, and this is sort of a semipublic place I guess, and it's affect on people. In talking to collectors who have offices and it's interesting the variety of reactions that some of them get. I'm just curious, have you had any strange experience with that?

RH: No, I wouldn't say I've had strange experiences. There've been a number of people obviously who have an interest or some knowledge of painting and they've commented on the paintings, but generally speaking they're the typical reactions of people who aren't deeply interested in the plastic arts. As far as unusual experiences or incidents go I can't recollect any at the moment.

PC: Well, in a couple of months the Metropolitan Museum is having an exhibition of fifty works from your collection. How did that happen? You know that's a sort of rare occurrence there.

RH: I don't really know how it happened. I think it started in a very accidental way, as most things do, one summer. I don't know how long ago this was, we wanted to have our apartment painted and I didn't know what the devil to do with the paintings, or at least some of the larger paintings in the living room or whatever. I don't recall the particular circumstances but we had lent a picture or two to a summer exhibition at the Met and so we knew and were familiar with the Met and Stuart Feld was then the curator at the Metropolitan and we asked him whether he would do us a favor and put I don't know, seventeen or twenty of the paintings in the basement for the summer while we were having the place painted and since we were going away. I didn't like the idea of a room in a warehouse, which I have actually, but I thought it would be just better and safer and easier at the Met which was when we lived directly across the street on 83rd and Fifth. I thought it was very simple, and Stuart said sure, you know, and so the pictures were in due course carted off to the Met and they were in the basement. This was the beginning of the summer and then shortly thereafter someone at the Met called us, I don't remember who but apparently someone not in the American department. Someone in Rousseau's department had accidentally stumbled on these paintings and

said my lord, they're so beautiful can we hang them in the summer show? So there were seventeen paintings hung that summer in the Metropolitan summer loan exhibition. They took up virtually a whole room. So I think the interest in our paintings by the Metropolitan stems from that particular time when a rather large number were there and visible. And for the first time American paintings of that particular kind were on exhibition in the summer loan program which was prior to that time I would say largely devoted to French impressionists and post impressionist painting. So there was a consciousness on the part of the Metropolitan of this particular group or collection of paintings. Now how this developed, how this further interest on the part of Jock Howat who succeeded Feld as curator and who's responsible for this idea I don't really know.

PC: How do you like the idea of having this exhibition?

RH: Well, I tell you it's a little until two days ago I didn't believe it, I just didn't pay any attention to it although of course I've made all the records available and the pictures were going back and forth to be photographed and this, that and the other thing, but the whole thing didn't hit me until two days ago when a dummy of the book was brought up to the house. Then I said, well, now it's real.

PC: That first summer exhibition, did you get any reaction from people from that?

RH: Yes, we got an extraordinary reaction. All the dealers were aware of the interest on the part of people in this particular phase or period of American art and they all, almost without exception, commented that people who had been interested in other areas of American art, or people who were interested in French art, were suddenly much more aware of this period and of this kind of painting as a consequence of that exhibition. I was very conscious that this had a rather large impact on a great number of people.

PC: Did you get any letters or phone calls?

RH: We got a few, I wouldn't say we got many, we got a few letters complimenting us or saying how beautiful the pictures were.

PC: How about friends of yours?

RH: But everybody talked about it, everybody talked about it.

PC: But the dealers got substantial reaction.

RH: The dealers got, no, well I don't know if it was immediate but the dealers were aware that this had distinct impact on people's judgment taste or whatever the Metropolitan was displaying —

PC: American art again.

RH: American art at the turn of the century. It was the kind of thing that made people take notice and also I think the people generally liked the paintings and they thought they were very beautiful and people who didn't know that we were collectors called us and said, gee, you have that Prendergast or that whatever, you know.

PC: Well, what kind of plans do you have for the collection? Will it continue in the family, will it go to a museum?

RH: Well, I think it's too early to say. I think ultimately we would like it to go to the museum, the Metropolitan I think, but it's just too early, and we figure we have a lot of collecting years, a lot of

collecting years and a lot of fun ahead of us. So we're just not thinking about that particularly.

PC: Do you continue then in the same area still looking?

RH: Yes, as I say we're still looking. It's harder to find things than ever, both because of scarcity and because of high prices, but we still continue looking. We do not continue to do it at the same pace that we did it years ago because there just isn't that much material around, and to go talk to the dealers on a daily or even weekly basis when there's really nothing new gets to be tiresome for them and for us.

PC: Do they let you know now when they really come up with a good thing?

RH: Well, they do let us know. But again it's something that the dealers don't like to do, because then they're accused of favoritism. We do make periodic visits to all the dealers and keep in touch. And I do urge them to call us and several of them do call us.

PC: Have you ever used the dealers to find particular things for you?

RH: Well, yes, some dealers specialize in certain painters and we kind of urge them to look for us. But it doesn't always work, I've urged Vose in Boston to get us a Dennis Bunker who's a Boston painter, and I got the Dennis Bunker we have from Hirschl and Adler and another Dennis Bunker from another source, and I'm looking for Sergeant and I got the first Sergeant from Vose.

PC: Round and round it goes.

RH: That's the way it works. However I dreamed about one picture, it's called At the Shore, by Alfred Mower, and it had been owned by Curt Valentin, and it was reproduced in the MacCausl and book. And I dreamed about this picture and I told Mike St. Clair who runs the Babcock Gallery that I really hungered for this picture and if it ever turned up or if he ever heard about it I would want to buy it. And there came a time when he called me and he said he had it and it was unbelievable that it had worked in that way, because you wouldn't expect it to. But it was a whole funny chain of circumstances. But in direct answer to the question, there are certain dealers who are identified with certain artists because at one time they represented the estate or they had a great many works. So that you would if you're interested in that particular artist, go to that particular dealer. We were interested in a major early Sloan, and Antoinette Krauschaar of course is the major source for that, but we got our early Sloan from Kennedy, even though we were pursuing Krauschaar for many years for the early Sloan.

PC: You never know where it's going to turn up.

RH: You never know where it's going to turn up. But if you know that a particular dealer has dealt extensively with a particular artist you obviously ask that dealer to try to find something if you're looking for that particular painter. But we don't regard this as a historical collection as such, that is that we have to fill this in or we need this particular artist, we don't. I think that's a big bore and we don't do it.

PC: Yeah, it takes the passion out of it. Well, as things become more difficult to acquire in this area do you think you'll move into an older area or more contemporary area?

RH: Well, I don't know, I found myself about four years ago being drawn into Chinese porcelain and so now I have a kind of beginning collection of Conche blue and white porcelain and I started this because it was fun and it was possible and it also gave me the advantage which collecting this kind

of thing has that collecting American painting doesn't have, that I could do this in Europe because we like to go to Europe. Every time we're in Europe we ask the european dealers for Robinson and Twatchman and Prendergast and they don't know who the devil we're talking about, but we do it on the chance that something might be there. But the Conche does supply that European ingredient. But what we would be drawn to as we found ourselves drawn to this chinese porcelain thing that's getting crazy too now.

PC: Very expensive.

RH: Well, when we start edit was very reasonable and now it's getting as I say, again that's getting to be big business too so I don't know. But I find myself very attracted to the blue and white Chinese porcelain.

PC: You're a member of the Whitney aren't you?

RH: Friend of the Whitney, and I'm on the Historic Art committee and a few other committees there.

PC: How do you find that activity? Do you find it useful, interesting?

RH: I find it interesting. I think that the efforts of the Whitney to assemble a historic collection now are deserving only because they have now decided to make a staff commitment. When they started this some years ago, having disposed quite a few years ago of all their pre-1900 paintings, I felt that even though I was on the committee and would help them and gave them paintings that the effort wouldn't amount to anything until the staff was committed to this program and they had some dough for it. This has just begun in the last year, not in terms of acquisition funds but at least they have Pat Hills. And I think in that sense as time goes on the Whitney may have some force in this area. I doubt if at this late stage the Whitney can simply by fifths assemble a meaningful collection of pre-1900 painting, and they certainly are not making any major commitments in terms of money.

PC: It's very expensive now to buy some of those things. Well, on the whole, out of the paintings that you've had and still own, which artists are the more favorite ones to you? Are there some you like more than others?

RH: Well, I think that we like particular paintings, and we do like particular artists. My wife's favorite painting I guess is a painting by William Merritt Chase, a Shinnecock painting. I think my own favorite is Alfred Maurer, the Shore and Theodore Robinson's self portrait. But we like sergeant, we like a great many of the other painters so it's very hard to say that we like one painter more than others. I'm very enthusiastic about Twachtman for instance, who I think is not thought highly enough of. But I'd say if there were a fire in the house I think I'd grab the Maurer and the Robinson as I mentioned before, and I think Margaret would grab the Chase.

[END OF INTERVIEW]