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Oral history interview with Marie Appleton,  
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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Marie Appleton on June 27, 1977. The interview took place in Brooklyn, New York, and was conducted by Paul Cummings for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The Archives of American Art has reviewed the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

PAUL CUMMINGS: I was just talk—today is the 27th of June 1977. Paul Cummings talking to Marie Appleton in her house on Hicks Street in Brooklyn. Hi. A little bit of background because you didn't come to the Whitney right away. You know, you were—where were you born? In New York or Boston?

MARIE APPLETON: It was in Brooklyn. I came—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really? Brooklyn.

MARIE APPLETON: I came—that's just the—I was there when it was the Whitney Studio Club down on Eighth Street, you see—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

MARIE APPLETON: —when Mrs. Force was there. And then there was a hiatus for about a couple of years where they were going—I went up to the Metropolitan for two years, but then I—then they asked me to come back again.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. But what did you do before you got to the museum? What were you interested in?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I was interested in music, but not in any—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —professional way, just played the piano. That's all.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I was a girl of leisure unfortunately. [They laugh.] Then the family decided that—they met with reverse this a little. All the girls started doing something.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: So, uh, luckily, my sister suggested to me to Mrs. Force so I went over to see her. And the only reason she took me in is she said—she said because the artists like me. That's why I [laughs] only—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But did you know a lot of artists at that time, or?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I knew—we knew Spiker very well and we knew the Bellows very well. And, uh—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. How did you come to meet them?

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, my sister was an art student and knew them all at the Art Students League. She started the Art Students League.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I see. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: And she was very good. She painted very well.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Then she married and she lived—went down to Peru. Well these are all Peru—south Peruvian [laughs]. [00:02:02]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: [Laughs.] And then she came back. She was divorced, and then she came back, and she just happened to—Hamilton Easter Field who had been the art critic of the *Brooklyn Eagle* died. And so she stepped right into that job that she had—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh.

MARIE APPLETON: —for a long time.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm.

MARIE APPLETON: She died two and a half years ago, but she had—she—Portraits Incorporated that—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —the 57th Street Brooklyn in the last years of her life.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: She was there. But they had—she was in the gallery—and I can't remember now what she did. Oh, she always the art—she was the art critic for years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Now then the *Brooklyn Eagle* folded up. And—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But that's all about her now. You want to know about me. [They laugh.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: She's your—there are only two sisters, the two of you, right?

MARIE APPLETON: Two sisters, yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I've always had an interest in art.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Was your family interested in art, your parents?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. Yes, my great aunt was—she was the head of the Wheeler School in Providence—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —but she was a student, one of the earliest American girls that went over to Paris to study. And she—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, what was her name?

MARIE APPLETON: Mary Wheeler.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: It's the Mary Wheeler School in Providence.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And, uh, she sort of inspired my mother, you know, with art. My mother was always interested in, and so it kind of—it was a kind of a buildup.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Did you ever study painting or drawing or—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, just as a—just as a child. I studied—

PAUL CUMMINGS: As a child, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: —I never went to—I never went to the Art Students League.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Did you have it in school, any, any art classes in school?

MARIE APPLETON: Well at school, in boarding school, yes, but that was only for a couple of years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But I never—I never carried on with painting in any way. [00:04:04] It was just my pleasure, knowing something and have—me having an interest in art. And as Mrs. Force said, the artists liked me.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: So that's the only reason I got there. [They laugh.] I'm not really good—my ability or anything of that sort. [Laughs.] But she was an extraordinary person. Did you ever see the pictures of her? Uh, part of the [inaudible]?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, some of them. But now what did you do with her?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I was at the desk, sales desk. I was always at the sales desk.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Even on Eighth Street?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. Oh, always.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But now, there wasn't—there wasn't very much sales desk, was there, when you began?

MARIE APPLETON: Just a little—no it was just a little open shelf there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: With books, dusty books pertaining to the Whitney Museum. But she was a wonderful hostess, and we all had a wonderful time. I'm grateful for that because we all had a—I've had a very good time in my life in through art. [They laugh.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, who were some of the people that were—that you were friendly with in the early years?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, Spiker.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: We were very friendly with Spiker, and we knew the Bellows very well.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And—I can't think of other people in those early days.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, Katherine Schmidt was around then.

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yes, Katherine Schmidt.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Kuniyoshi.

MARIE APPLETON: Kuniyoshi. All—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Alex Brooke.

MARIE APPLETON: —they all lived—see, they all—all those people lived in Brooklyn at Hamilton Easter Field's house.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

MARIE APPLETON: [Inaudible] was there but then of course, that was pulled down some years ago, but it was the place where the—a lot of the artists lived there, in Brooklyn Heights.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But as I say, Jehovah's Witnesses own that—all that property now [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Did you know him, Easter Field?

MARIE APPLETON: I knew him slightly. My grandmother's a great friend of his—of his mother's, so.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. [00:06:03]

MARIE APPLETON: But I didn't know Hamilton Easter Field. He was a very strange person, very strange [laughs]. And he had this man living with him—Robert Laurent who was, uh, a man of great—I think he was—I don't know just what he did but he was a very interesting person. But I'm going to get—I can't tell you anything very interesting. I'm sorry I can't give you more interesting details.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, what—what, uh, you know, what was Juliana Force like? Because you must have worked with her on a—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, she was very fascinating.

PAUL CUMMINGS: —daily basis.

MARIE APPLETON: She had a terrible temper, but she was a very fascinating person. She was quite—but had great style.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: She had great style. She dressed beautifully.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And the artists liked her. She had a terrific temper, and of course at her job, she was marvelous with Mrs. Whitney.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: You know, that was—she had a wonderful job. And, uh—

PAUL CUMMINGS: But she really kind of ran everything—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, she ran—

PAUL CUMMINGS: —didn't she?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. She was Mrs. Whitney's first off, being Mrs. Whitney's other secretary, but she developed—got out of that and became the—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh I—

MARIE APPLETON: —head [laughs] of the museum. That's the interesting thing. She actually built herself up.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But she had great ability. I mean, she was artistic, very—she—it was unusual because she got—she was ahead of the—a lot of people, you know. She [inaudible] all these people that are now well-known, but they were—didn't—no one in those early days.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, did you work—well I'm trying to actually get an idea of what the—what the days were like on Eighth Street because it was very different from what it became.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, they were very, very pleasant. I didn't ever have—I was at the sales desk all the time. It was very pleasant. It was very—it was very sort of a social thing because, uh, people were always very nice. [00:08:05] I never had any unpleasant experience, whatever. My life at the Whitney Museum has been very—a very happy life, and I'm glad I had that experience—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —in my life.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. What would you—did you know a lot of artists that way? Would you—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yes. I knew—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Everybody came in.

MARIE APPLETON: I knew a lot of artists. Spiker's been—Spiker's the best of any. We knew the Bellows. We knew Emma Bellows and her daughters.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What was Spiker like? Because I don't know—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, very nice.

PAUL CUMMINGS: —much about him.

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, very nice. He was, uh, a very good friend and they all went up to Woodstock, you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: They went on to Woodstock.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm. Well, what would the—you know Emma Bellows, right?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. What was she like? Because I don't know—

MARIE APPLETON: She was very—very able. I can't—I can't—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Kept everything—

MARIE APPLETON: —I can't describe her. She was attractive looking, and we were all good friends, but that—that's just what I'm telling you. I can't give you anything definite. I can just give you an overall that life was—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, that's fine.

MARIE APPLETON: —very pleasant [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Very—it was a very pleasant—those years were very pleasant for me, all those years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But now how—you know, you just mentioned that Hopper was a good friend. How—you know, he lived in the Village for a long time, right?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. You know, he was a very quiet person but he was—he liked us and we liked him. He was very fond of my sister.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And I think—you know, in this book with Edward Hopper. This book I have—this book—

[Audio Break.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who are some of the other people you knew? Lloyd was around at a certain point, Goodrich, right? [00:10:01]

MARIE APPLETON: Ernest Fiene and—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Who's the man that made the [inaudible] furniture? Max Cooney, he made that—he made beautiful furniture.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: Mrs. Force had a lot of his things.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And, uh, hmm.

PAUL CUMMINGS: When did Herman Moore come around? Did you meet—you knew him too?

MARIE APPLETON: I don't remember just when he came.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: I never knew Moore very well. Of course, we knew Lloyd very well. We've always been very good friends with Lloyd but, uh, I didn't—Moore was kind of a very quiet sort—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —of a person. He didn't—he wasn't very outgoing. He was very nice but I didn't feel that I knew him at all well.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But, uh.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you were at the museum during the Depression years too in the—

MARIE APPLETON: You mean the—

PAUL CUMMINGS: —in the '30s.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes, yes. Yeah.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah. How—did that seem to change the atmosphere a great deal? Do you remember anything different about that or—

MARIE APPLETON: It seems to me the museum always had Whitney backings, you know, and I always think that [laughs] they were—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Kept right on going.

MARIE APPLETON: Kept right on going. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah. Were there more people in those days, do you think?

MARIE APPLETON: You mean the attendance?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: No, I don't think so. I think the museum was—increased very much—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —in the attendance, it seems. Because I was up there the other day and I was very—I wrote to Flora Irving that I thought the galleries and everything had very—very small—elegant and very well arranged.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Because I haven't been around very much. I've been having some trouble with my legs—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —and I don't get around as much as I did and I don't get up to the Whitney Museum.  
[00:12:01]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I was up there the other day and, uh, saw the girls. I think some of the girls are just—were there when I was there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: You know, Doris Parker [ph].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes. Yeah. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: And, uh, Patricia—Pat Wesley [ph].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Oh, yes. Yeah. Pat seems to be there forever and ever [laughs].

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I think it's wonderful because I thought about some—she wanted to be retiring but [laughs] I stayed on—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes.

MARIE APPLETON: —one year in my retirement age. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Absolutely. But that fond of it, don't you think?

MARIE APPLETON: I mean, it was—that was why I was grateful. They didn't say, Well now it's time you stop.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Because I was there until, well, I'm 92 now and I've been away for about five years. So you see, I was there in my [laughs] eighties, which is rather unusual.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Terrific. I think it's great. But now, you know, when you were on Eighth Street, did you work with Mrs. Force or did you have your own kind of little space there?

MARIE APPLETON: No, I didn't—we didn't—I didn't work with her.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: She was the boss and, uh, we had—was very charming. Have you ever been down there?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: I don't know what's changed or not now. I haven't been down there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Somewhat, yeah, because yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: But the galleries were lovely.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: It had beautiful taste, I think, because that was Mrs. Force's taste.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And then Mrs. Whitney. Well, I never saw very much of Mrs.—she didn't come around very much.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really? But she lived just behind the—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yeah.

PAUL CUMMINGS: —studio, right?

MARIE APPLETON: She was there but she didn't come into the—she didn't come into the museum very much.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

MARIE APPLETON: When—at least when people were there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Well that's—

MARIE APPLETON: Or—

PAUL CUMMINGS: But would she come to openings, and special events, and things?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, she came to special events, but I never think of Mrs. Whitney mingling very much with—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].



MARIE APPLETON: —the crowd. [00:14:00] She was shy and, of course, she had a studio down there, the back right up against the—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —you know, against the—

PAUL CUMMINGS: —the building, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: The building. I felt awfully badly when they left that building. It was very attractive.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And I never liked the building very much in the back of the Museum of Modern Art. I didn't think that had, you know, very much personality. I think the new museum has, uh—I didn't like that building at first, but I like it now. How do you like it? Do you like it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm, it has some problems, but it is always kind of a fresh space in many ways.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. It's kind of this overhang.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I like it better now than I did when I first saw it. I thought it was terrible [they laugh] but I'm getting used to it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, it's been there for 10 years.

MARIE APPLETON: I know [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: What did you—you were at the sales desk. What did you sell in the early years? Was it—

MARIE APPLETON: Well, catalogs and then they had some publications there, but it was mostly—mostly the catalogs.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: The catalogs were always very attractive. I don't—well, you've seen some of them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I've seen some of those. Yeah. So I have lots of them. But now with—you know, there weren't that many people that went to the museum in the '30s, were there?

MARIE APPLETON: Well—never a big crowd, no.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No.

MARIE APPLETON: And of course, it's increased very much. The advertising was rather—well, they didn't advertise very much. I mean, and a lot of people didn't like the Whitney Museum, you know. They were scorned.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really? Why?

MARIE APPLETON: I don't know. Modern, you know. [They laugh.] That we're modern is [laughs] anathema to some people.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, do you think it was all that modern though? [00:16:01]

MARIE APPLETON: No, I don't think it was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No.

MARIE APPLETON: But, uh, some of my friends are very conservative. [They laugh.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What did they think of your working there, your friends?

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, they thought it was fine. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: All those artists and all those funny people.

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yes. They were very—very envious [laughs] of me. As I say, it was fun. That's what I

always am grateful—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —because I had a good time. I wasn't, uh—I was—I wasn't pressed or anything. It was just very pleasant association. That's what I'm grateful—I'm grateful for the years I was in the Whitney Museum because I had a very happy life.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Now, did you travel? Because the museum at one time was closed in the summer. Was that in the early days?

MARIE APPLETON: Well—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did they close part of the summer?

MARIE APPLETON: I don't remember.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Do you remember?

MARIE APPLETON: I don't remember.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Katherine Schmidt once told me that they used to come and live upstairs in the summer.

MARIE APPLETON: They—perhaps they lived in Mrs. Force's. She always had—she had a place down in Pennsylvania. She had a beautiful place down in Pennsylvania, and I think she let some of the artists use her apartment.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: She was a very good friend of Katherine Schmidt's. And, uh, that's the—how Katherine stayed there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, Alex Brooke was very busy around there too, wasn't he?

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yes. Alex was a very warm friend. Something happened. I don't know what happened. Something was some trouble there. I don't know what—what it was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Because all of a sudden, it just kind of broke off.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. I just—I really can't remember just what happened there. You see, that's just if I—as I was explaining to Doris, I said if you go and interview me, I won't be able to give you dates. In fact—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's all right.

MARIE APPLETON: —I'm getting very forgetful myself [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah. Well, but—

MARIE APPLETON: Better not say too much about what I said [laughs]. [00:18:00]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, it's all right. It's all right. But what—you know, what were the warriors like? Because the Village has always been full of people and—and did that make a difference during World War II?

MARIE APPLETON: No, I don't think it did.

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, okay.

MARIE APPLETON: No.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It just kept on going along.

MARIE APPLETON: Kept on going along.

PAUL CUMMINGS: The art project and then the war came along and—

MARIE APPLETON: It didn't seem to make any difference.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: It was a lovely place, I think.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Eighth Street.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes, in the old days.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: As I say, I didn't care for the one up at the 56th Street so much, the other [ph] one.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah, 54th Street. Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Fifty-fourth Street.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Did you like the Village, the place in those days?

MARIE APPLETON: That's the post [ph].

[Audio Break.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's okay. You know, keep talking about one thing or the other. Mrs. Force more or less kind of let you do what you wanted to do, didn't she?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. She was—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: She wasn't strict.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was very—

MARIE APPLETON: She was—it was very—it was a very pleasant life [laughs]. I wouldn't go now.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah? Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Well it was, uh, casual. We didn't have to work very hard [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well everything—

MARIE APPLETON: All I can say is I'm grateful to her because it was fun and I enjoyed my 40 years' association. That's my—

PAUL CUMMINGS: With the museum [laughs].

MARIE APPLETON: —contribution to the Whitney [laughs] Museum.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But now, how did you like—you know, you said you didn't like the building on 54th Street particularly. Why not? You know, what didn't you like—

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I didn't think it had much personality.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh.

MARIE APPLETON: I didn't—I'm sure it was a thing that Mrs. Force wouldn't have liked. I think it was rather—did you like it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, it's fine. I felt it was a little grey or something, you know? [00:20:01]

MARIE APPLETON: I didn't think it was very interesting.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: It was comfortable but it was—I thought it was compared—well now, now the museum, I think the way they've fixed the desks and all—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —and the entrance there, now I like very much now. I didn't at first, but I think they have a style. They've created a style up there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And the—there is a—as I told Flora, it's that they have a style and an elegance to it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: She wrote a very sweet letter to me. I—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, good.

MARIE APPLETON: I think she's taking very good hold of the museum. I think she's taking more of the hold of it than her mother did.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I think she has a deeper interest. I mean, she and Tom Armstrong seem to be—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: —always hoping to—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I think she does too.

MARIE APPLETON: —hobnobbing together. [They laugh.] I was up there the other day and she wrote this letter and said she was devastated that I didn't speak to her. I said, well, I didn't speak to her because she was with Tom Armstrong and I wasn't [they laugh] butting in on that. Tom Armstrong has no feeling for me.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What about, you know, the years on 54th Street where you were next to the Modern and you could go from one building into the other, and a lot more people? Did you find that made a difference?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. The attendance increased up there considerably. But I don't know—let me—I never could think of that—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Aspect—

MARIE APPLETON: —that building is very—is very interesting, and I don't know why.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But there was a larger sort of sales area and—

MARIE APPLETON: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: —posters—

MARIE APPLETON: It was a larger sales area and it was—I don't know. I seem to—kind of a blank about that building now. [They laugh.] [00:22:00] I remember this one very well, the one downtown, but the one in the middle—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Not the one in the middle.

MARIE APPLETON: In the middle. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, what did you think of the one on 75th Street when you first went there to—

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I didn't like it at first. I thought it was awful, as a matter of fact.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh.

MARIE APPLETON: But I've gotten used to it now because I think that rough greyness—stucco business, is what it is—and the overhang now, I think now I'm used to it now. And then so many other buildings are being built that way. I think there is—I think it has got style.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Now. It didn't at first. I don't know how the—the way I felt about it. I don't know if they were very happy about it or not.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I didn't get that reactions.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: But I think they're very—I think they're very—getting very successful. I think they're doing quite a big business now. I'm sure they are.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Sometimes, yeah. It depends, you know.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Tuesday nights when it's free, people don't buy very much.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, is the—how is the crowd on Tuesday night? Is it—do they have a big crowd?

PAUL CUMMINGS: A lot, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah, we had 1,600 people last week.

MARIE APPLETON: Now, what do you do at the museum?

PAUL CUMMINGS: I'm the drawing curator.

MARIE APPLETON: The drawing curator.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. I wear lots of hats. [Laughs.]

MARIE APPLETON: Well now that's— isn't that a new— isn't that a new department, the drawing—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, it had been drawing and print, and then there was nobody in other. And, uh, Tom asked me if I—because I'm—have a great interest in drawing, and so he asked me if I'd be the drawing curator. And now he's going to have a print curator, so.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, you see they're enlarging their staff—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, enorm [ph].

MARIE APPLETON: —very much out there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Absolute, enorm, enorm.

MARIE APPLETON: I wonder financially how they—I don't know about their finances.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Growing deficits. [They laugh.] [00:24:00] Absolutely. Well did you—you know, I'm particularly interested in Eighth Street, I guess, because that's—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh it was—

PAUL CUMMINGS: —sort of the more vivid period anyway.

MARIE APPLETON: —a lovely place. It was very good. I was—that was really a lovely little atmosphere there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But did you go to the artist parties and, you know, the—mix with the artists very much?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I knew a good many of the artists.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I didn't go to any of their costume parties that I remember.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But I—

PAUL CUMMINGS: All the other art—

MARIE APPLETON: They had a great many of these preview openings which were always fun.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

MARIE APPLETON: There was all plenty to drink because you know.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I still—they still have. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Right. It keeps everything flowing.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes [laughs]. Well, have you got a new restaurant manager now?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yes, uh-huh [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Is it good? I didn't have any.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I don't know. I haven't tried it yet. I don't eat there very often. I'm not there very [laughs] often. Well, did you get to know any of the other people who came to the museum, you know, collectors or later friends of the Whitney?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I was a very good friend of the Hirschhorns, Joe Hirschhorn.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Of course, he's—later on he's—I have a book here. There's this old opening, a beautiful dedication. I don't know if I shared it to you.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I just spoke to him this morning. Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: We went down there to the opening there. Did you go down there to the—

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, to the museum?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What did you think of all that?

MARIE APPLETON: Well I didn't—I'm not crazy about it. [They laugh.] Oh you like it?

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's an enormous collection he built there.

MARIE APPLETON: I know it. He's a—I have to hand it to him.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I have a picture—a picture of myself and Helen. I have—hold Hirschhorn on his right arm and Helen has his left arm. [They laugh.] To me, it was so terrible. I have it in my—but I cut my picture out.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, dear. [00:26:00]

MARIE APPLETON: I have my descendants—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, dear.

MARIE APPLETON: —looking at their old aunt, what a terrible-looking woman she was. [They laugh.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you know, what do you remember of kind of just sort of general activities that would go on around the museum? Or were you involved in other projects, or pretty much just the—

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I was the sales desk. I wasn't intimate with what they were thinking upstairs. I was just busy with the public. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, you know, Eighth Street's always been a rather busy street. And you were right there off Fifth Avenue. Were there a lot of people who just came in and wanted information or—

MARIE APPLETON: Well, now that's made me think because it—they were very against it, in those days, sort of against searching for modern art, and lots of people, you know. They've gotten over that, but in those early days, it was kind of a, well—some of my good friends wouldn't think of going out there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

MARIE APPLETON: They thought it was terrible. Yes. Well I mean, they thought it was hideous. They've gotten over that now. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's fantastic. Well—

MARIE APPLETON: All I can say is that I was only selected because the artists liked me. That's the only reason I was there, not for any particular ability or any of that sort.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: It was just because the art—that's Mrs.—in the words of Mrs. Force, she told that to somebody. And somebody told that to me [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well did—you know, you never got interested in collecting art, or involved with any of the things that you saw everyday?

MARIE APPLETON: Well my sister was very much—my sister was a very good artist.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: She mar—when she married, after a short time, she moved down to Peru for a while, but then she came back. She was divorced, and then she started right in with the art critic for years—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —the *Brooklyn Eagle*.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: And she wrote very good articles, and uh, then the *Brooklyn Eagle* folded up and she stepped right into this Portraits Incorporated. [00:28:05]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

MARIE APPLETON: That a friend of hers, Louise Schaal [ph] ran this place and so that was—Helen was already scoffing about the portraits—some of the portraits that they showed, but it was very succ—it's a very—and it's still going.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: It's been very successful. And, uh, so that's my—

PAUL CUMMINGS: But did you have—you know, do you have interests outside the museum? Did you travel ever?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I traveled not terribly. I went down to Peru. My sister lived there for several years. Oh, this is—all these blankets are Peruvian sarapes—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —that down there, and I have some Peruvian pieces upstairs.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I have that—all that silver has something to do with Peru.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: On the table. But, uh—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm.

MARIE APPLETON: And I have been—I went to Germany when people weren't going to Germany, and people were shocked that I went, but it was very interesting. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm. When was that, about?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, shortly after. I have to look it up. Wait till I get my dates upstairs. I'll have to—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well you know, it's just—

MARIE APPLETON: No, I'll get it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Okay.

[Audio Break.]

MARIE APPLETON: Germany the first—I went to Germany when I was young, but this was—where did I get now.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm.

MARIE APPLETON: These are my summers. You see, there's quite a long list. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh! What, every summer, you'd go somewhere?

MARIE APPLETON: Different places we went to, yes. We went to Mexico one summer. That one's in Germany.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm.

MARIE APPLETON: For the—someday—but I—I've had it written down here somewhere. [00:30:02] It's 1899 [they laugh] when I was a baby.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Where'd you go in 1900?

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, I was—we had to stay home because my mother was expecting my youngest brother.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh.

MARIE APPLETON: It was just on Long Island. [Laughs.] We stayed there. But we used to go to the Adirondacks. We've been on and off the Adirondacks all my life, Saint Huberts and Keene Valley. I don't know if you know that part of them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Where is Germany? Twenty-one.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: We went out in '22. [Inaudible.] Hmm. 1963, we were in Germany. I stayed at—down in Munich and went down to the Starnberger See and around there. And then, of course, we went to London. I like London, and I was crazy about London.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Have you been there often?

MARIE APPLETON: I went to London two years in succession and last—I was there when I was a child, but I went to London in the '70s, up to Edinburgh, and then again in '71 we went to London. I just loved London. I was crazy about it. [They laugh.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's a marvelous city. It goes on, and on, and on.

MARIE APPLETON: —in the '60s.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Munich, yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you travel with your sister very often?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes, I always went with my sister. We went together, always.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: We were very close and, uh, she was quite near my age so we—we always—she lived—we lived together here for—after my mother's death. She died two years ago. Just she and I lived in this house alone. I live alone in this house now. [00:32:01]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].



MARIE APPLETON: It's been left to her daughter, but I can live here as long as I want to.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: They have to pay the taxes and everything. [Laughs.] I don't have to bother with that.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's nice. How long have you lived in this house, then?

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, well about 45 years.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, wow.

MARIE APPLETON: Not all my life, by any means [laughs] it's—we lived in larger houses here on the Heights, but those houses were—one on Jerome Street was pulled down for the—you know Brooklyn Heights too?

PAUL CUMMINGS: A little bit, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, it's the corner of Jerome and Clinton. It was a beautiful house. Of course, they just took all that area there, about five houses, and floored them down to have a great big office building.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Then we lived on Remsen Street—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —for several years, but then after my father's death, we moved to this house. So we've been here about—in this house about 40 years. We like this old house. It's a comfortable old place. It always needs some repairing all the time [laughs] but—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative] right.

MARIE APPLETON: —don't you want to go on in you [inaudible]?

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, I've been having some. [Inaudible.]

MARIE APPLETON: Take some.

[Audio Break.]

MARIE APPLETON: Here, I'll give you an overall picture. I told that to Doris. I said, "Mister, you will be disappointed."

PAUL CUMMINGS: [Laughs] well they—

MARIE APPLETON: —you won't get any—you won't get anything graphic. I mean, it just—it's just one of those things. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, but the impressions add up, you know.

MARIE APPLETON: Well you can say that the artists liked me. That was why I was—that was why Mrs. Force kept me but no executive ability of any sort [they laugh].

PAUL CUMMINGS: But what was Hopper like? I mean, did you know—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, I liked him very much.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Edward Hopper and—

MARIE APPLETON: Yes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: —know her, Mrs. Hopper?

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yes. They were very nice. It was some [inaudible] and Jo Hopper.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: They were very nice. [00:34:00] I'm very—I have a beautiful etching upstairs of Hopper's that he's—he'd written it, "To Marie APPLETON from Edward Hopper." I'm very pleased to have it. It's the sailboat

one, which I believe—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's nice. Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Would you like to come upstairs and see the—the [inaudible] or—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, sure. Oh, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, come upstairs.

[Audio break.]

MARIE APPLETON: [Reads.] "But I did not go to—to see him. I went to view a lady fair near the door of that museum [laughs]. I did just that the other day and tried to look inside. And then, alas, the light—the last light had flown away and I wondered why it died. I must admit I stopped to stare at the corner I knew so well. The one set that lady fair cast a radiant spell. When I was told she'd gone away, so I knew beyond a doubt that all the world would always say that's why the light went out." [Laughs.] She was cute [ph].

PAUL CUMMINGS: That was marvelous. Who wrote that?

MARIE APPLETON: A friend of mine. A friend that I knew and used to come in there quite a lot.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I thought that was quite cute, so. Oh, I have these two poems. [Laughs.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: And then the one Jack Bauer wrote. That's nice.

MARIE APPLETON: Mm-hmm [affirmative] Jack Bauer wrote. Because—ss I say, I'm just turning little things here and there. There's really no connected story.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, that's all right.

MARIE APPLETON: I have no connection. There's no connection. I don't know how you'll say anything [they laugh] about me because I'm just—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —going hither and yon and I could never give you any consecutive story.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Did you ever go to Woodstock or any of the artist places?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I spent a summer there. I never studied there. My sister studied in Woodstock. My sister painted very well, and we had a house one summer but not—it wasn't a very fortunate summer because a girl we were with was kind of bitchy and we didn't get on very well because her child and my sister's child fought all the time, so. [00:36:06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, dear.

MARIE APPLETON: It was [laughs]—

PAUL CUMMINGS: —pretty raucous. [Laughs.]

MARIE APPLETON: So, I never had much feeling for Woodstock.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And then I went—and we were at Mohonk a few years ago. I thought we'd drive down to Woodstock and look at it. My sister wanted to see it. She hadn't seen it for years. And practically, you wouldn't know the place. It's so different.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Hmm. Do you ever go to Provincetown or—

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I've been there but I've never—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah, never—not stayed there.

MARIE APPLETON: No, I never—I never painted. I only took painting lessons when I was a little girl. I just studied

when I was in boarding school but I never did anything—anything new like painting.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I was always interested in painting, always have been, but I never did anything about it [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I noticed you have lots of books. Do you read a lot? Are you interested in—

MARIE APPLETON: No, I don't read at all. [They laugh.] My eyes are very bad just now.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: My sister was a great reader and we had—and the books are all getting so old, you see, years on the shelf. And we've gotten rid of a lot of them but you just can't do anything with old books. The whole back of the books fall—falls apart.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

MARIE APPLETON: Now, we have the whole line of Trollope up there now. Now, a whole shelf of Trollope. But now, you don't want to read a whole shelf of Trollope. [They laugh.] I don't know why we have all that Trollope up there!

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, maybe at one point, you know. He's coming around again.

MARIE APPLETON: We have a lot of—oh there are many art books.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But, uh, we've got rid of a lot of books.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, did you have any interest in music or things outside—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, I used to study music but I haven't done anything—

PAUL CUMMINGS: No.

MARIE APPLETON: —I used to take music lessons but I wasn't any good at it. I didn't study it very seriously.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: [00:38:00] No, I have no particular gift or anything that I could talk about as far as [laughs] a career goes.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: My career was with the Whitney Museum, such as it was.

PAUL CUMMINGS: And just talking to the people every day and—

MARIE APPLETON: Yes just—

PAUL CUMMINGS: —doing what had to be done.

MARIE APPLETON: —just doing what—saying what comes—what's the saying, what comes natural or something? [They laugh.]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's marvelous. That's marvelous. Um, well are there any, you know, characters that you remember particularly that you worked with or that—you know, Lloyd Goodrich you must have known very well.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I liked Don Gordon [ph] very much. He's out, you know, the curator down at Palm Beach now.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: I was very fond of Don Gordon. Has a nice job down there, too.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And, uh, there was Lloyd and John Bauer the—they stand out in my life.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: People that I—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well now, Lloyd you said had lived over in, uh, Hamilton Easter Field's house at one point?

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. Lots of the artists lived over there. There were several old brownstone houses on Columbia—you know Columbia Heights at all?

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah, right up there.

MARIE APPLETON: It was down, way down at the end, opposite the old Margaret's [ph]. The end of the—practically the end.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: It was beautiful. And lots of the artists lived there, Laurent and, uh, Robert Laurent and I think Katherine Schmidt was there for a while also.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Right. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: But lots of them stayed there. Hamilton Easter Field was the art critic of the *Eagle* and he died, and that's how my sister stepped into his job.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But when was Lloyd there? Was he there at that point or was that later?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, Lloyd told me was—it was always that I was—I lived down in Columbia Heights for a while, living in the Hamilton Easter Field's house.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

MARIE APPLETON: I didn't know it, but he said that, oh yes, he had lived there for a while. But that was long ago. [00:40:03]

PAUL CUMMINGS: All sorts of people seemed to live there or—

MARIE APPLETON: [Laughs] Well it was—they were beautiful old houses and Hamilton Easter Field was a queer [ph]. He had this friend of his. He had a sort of cellar, or kind of a Turkish bath down there. I remember going down there and there were rugs and couches down there. [Laughs.] It was kind of suspicious-looking.

PAUL CUMMINGS: That sounds very exotic. [They laugh.]

MARIE APPLETON: Yes. They went down there and steamed up [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, marvelous. Oh, wow. All kinds of activities in Brooklyn Heights.

MARIE APPLETON: Yeah [they laugh] sub-rosa.

PAUL CUMMINGS: But you were—were you born here in Brooklyn Heights then?

MARIE APPLETON: No I was born in—I wasn't born right here. I was born in another house in south Brooklyn.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: We moved—I moved two or three times in my life, but only in Brooklyn.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I haven't lived any place else. I've lived here all my life.

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's a nice place to live.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, Brooklyn is a very—it's, of course, people think it's nice now, that you should have seen it 50 or 40 years ago, these beautiful old houses that all had been pulled out.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: The gardens, they were big, handsome, big, handsome brownstones houses with gardens. Now, all those—that's all disappeared now at the apartment houses, taking [inaudible].

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: Of course, the promenade. It's quite amazing right there on the corner.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: And, uh, of course there's all the parts of the gardens that are right there on Columbia Heights.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: But, uh, it's a nice place to live. I'm glad I've lived here. I always get mad when people go off on Brooklyn. I mean, it makes me sort of—they just aren't in the know. [They laugh.] I couldn't place them.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, marvelous. [00:42:00] Well, I wonder if there's anything I could ask you about, you know, the difference was—the differences between working inside the museum when it was on 54th Street as opposed to when it went to 75th Street and Madison.

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I think it got more businesslike as we—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative] grew up, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: Yes, it grew up. I mean, it was—the old place is, it was always interesting, and we weren't terribly—it wasn't serious the way it is now. I mean, now it's a real—it's very businesslike where the sales desk is. But that's likely how I got on because I didn't have to be too serious [laughs].

PAUL CUMMINGS: What do you mean it wasn't serious? It was just more relaxed or—

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, it was awful relaxed. [Laughs.] But I enjoyed it. I mean, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed my life there very much. I'm grateful for having been there all those years. It's pleasant to remember.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, it really sounds like there are lots of interesting people and a certain amount of variety.

MARIE APPLETON: We also saw a lot of—they always, they came in.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And, uh, it was always interesting. But as I told you, and I told Doris, I haven't—I can't—you can't pin me down to any one thing and I don't know what you can say about me. You can't say anything.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well with—were there any dramatic incidents that you remember in Eighth Street or town?

MARIE APPLETON: I don't remember.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Nothing—

MARIE APPLETON: Mm-mm [negative].

PAUL CUMMINGS: No dramas, not—

MARIE APPLETON: No.

PAUL CUMMINGS: In the hallways or [laughs].

MARIE APPLETON: No, no. I don't remember any. I really don't remember anything—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: —anything very unpleasant.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: No, I don't. That's the interesting thing about it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you've certainly seen a great change in American art over the years.

MARIE APPLETON: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Of course, as lots of people saw—they found that portrait of Mrs. Whitney's that was by Robert Henri and I but I think it's—I think it's just—it was just that period, you know? [00:44:06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: And I think, uh, it was a graceful long [ph] on that couch there.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Right.

MARIE APPLETON: Our apartments were lovely there, our studio and our apartments. They both were lovely.

PAUL CUMMINGS: What do you think about all the change, you know, when art used to be very nice and have frames on it, and now it's all over the floor and falling off [laughs] the walls?

MARIE APPLETON: Well, I didn't like it. I like kind of—I like kind of old. I don't like anything too casual. I think it's interesting that it's—I mean, I think it's interesting the way that people are using natural wood now.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: I mean, I think the décor in so many houses now. There's no more—there isn't painting on the wall. It's the natural wood in the department stores that I don't—natural wood is—the grain of the wood is always being shown now—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —the grain on the thing. It's a very interesting thing, as far as the decorative arts go. That was a Tiffany lamp there. Everybody said—I think it's awfully homely. It was a wedding present to my sister, and I always thought it was very hideous. And she said, "Oh no, I want to keep it." [They laugh.] So an appraiser was in here a couple of years ago and he said, "That's a Tiffany lamp." And I said, "Yes." I said, "I think it's very homely." And he said, "You know we sell that for \$1,000." [Laughs.] Imagine it.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. They're very fashionable again.

MARIE APPLETON: I know it. But I think that was a hideous one. I think the ones that—with the, uh, wisteria hanging down—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah.

MARIE APPLETON: —those are beautiful, but I think that's very homely.

PAUL CUMMINGS: I haven't seen one with such earth colors, such earthy colors.

MARIE APPLETON: It's homely.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, okay. Um, unless you can think of something else that we haven't, uh, kind of talked about or something. [00:46:00] I can't—

MARIE APPLETON: I really can't.

PAUL CUMMINGS: —I've kind of run out of questions, so.

MARIE APPLETON: I know it. I told Doris I was afraid that I would be a disappointment to you because I—

PAUL CUMMINGS: No, no, no, no.

MARIE APPLETON: —I can't put anything—can't put anything down. I can just get sort of an overall—

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARIE APPLETON: —an overall picture.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, well I—that's—

MARIE APPLETON: Of the museum.

PAUL CUMMINGS: Okay, well why don't we stop then?

[END OF TRACK AAA\_appelt77\_5\_m.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]