



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with John Wilde, 1979

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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with John Wilde in 1979. The interview was conducted by Michael Danoff for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

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

## Interview

MICHAEL DANOFF: Okay. Where were you born? Difficult question right at the first.

JOHN WILDE: In Milwaukee, right here.

MR. DANOFF: In Milwaukee, right. How long had your family been here?

MR. WILDE: My father came here to the Old Milwaukee Medical College in, I think, about 1902, I think, although his father, who later became a teacher in Southern Illinois--just a grade-school teacher--his father was born in Freistadt, Wisconsin, which is just north of here. That was a very early settlement of German immigrants who were *freidenkers*, and that's why the town took the name Freistadt.

MR. DANOFF: Does that mean you're third generation?

MR. WILDE: The third full generation, yes.

MR. DANOFF: Excuse me. I don't mean to build you into a little cage here.

MR. WILDE: I see. You want to get a little more--

MR. DANOFF: A little closer. About like that, maybe?

MR. WILDE: Head level.

MR. DANOFF: Okay. All right.

MR. WILDE: So in other words, the first part of the family that came here came to this area and left temporarily, and then came back again. Although there are some Wilde's around Milwaukee who still go back to that original--you know, the [inaudible] and little bit east of there. That's on Sherman Boulevard and 40th, something like that; I'm not sure--and Central Avenue. Is it Central Avenue? I think. I'm not sure. The Washington High School is well known in the town. And I went there.

MR. DANOFF: There have to be very few artists who have such a close association for so many years with their area. You know, I mean going back generations, then you being born.

MR. WILDE: I guess in a sense--

MR. DANOFF: And then reared and educated and then working here.

MR. WILDE: I guess in a sense that's probably true. I think about it sometimes, you know, that I really--I've never been anywhere, really, you know.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: During the war I got around a little bit. But even then I didn't get overseas. I got around this country a little bit. And then I've done some traveling since, but not extensively. I'm just not a traveler. But I don't have any--you know, I don't have any conscious design insofar as not being--you know, staying just here and that sort of thing.

MR. DANOFF: It just worked out?

MR. WILDE: It just worked out that way. And I think it has something to do with a basic feeling way down deep that all things ultimately are relatively the same, regardless of where you are. Or, you know, all hills are blue at the distance and all cats are gray at midnight.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: I think that essentially is it. But I do have those, you know, close connections. And then went from Milwaukee to--after I finished high school, went from Milwaukee to Madison.

MR. DANOFF: Right.

MR. WILDE: And took a degree at Madison, and then did four years in the service during the Second World War, right back to Madison. Did some work in art history, didn't finish in art history. Primarily because I found that I was paying too much time in the library and not quite enough in the studio where I wanted to go, and finally finished a masters degree in art. And then the very next fall started teaching at Madison.

MR. DANOFF: 1948?

MR. WILDE: 1948.

MR. DANOFF: Okay. This is a fundamental question, almost embarrassingly simple. When did you become interested in art?

MR. WILDE: I mean, interested in art? I guess that's a little bit--probably not till I got to the university. I became interested in drawing and painting, probably slightly unaware that there was such a thing as art at the time--not really. I think in high school I did. I always drew. I used to like to draw--

MR. DANOFF: You did? Even like in elementary school?

MR. WILDE: Yeah, drew crazy stuff.

MR. DANOFF: But most people outgrow that.

MR. WILDE: I guess, that's right. Yeah.

MR. DANOFF: Nancy Bricard [phonetic] said, by the way, that--she said kids learn to sing, and then they usually keep on singing. I mean, whether you sing in the shower or the bathtub or a church choir or whatever. Kids also learn to draw, but that so many of them lose.

MR. WILDE: In a sense, kids don't learn to draw, though, don't you agree?

MR. DANOFF: They don't?

MR. WILDE: They draw, I think.

MR. DANOFF: They draw; they don't learn to draw. I see.

MR. WILDE: In other words, I think in art instruction, where kids are exposed to art instruction, it just doesn't have the same kind of solid basis as music instruction. You know, so many, many kids seriously take music lessons, this sort of thing. And I don't think that's nearly as common in art instruction.

MR. DANOFF: I guess you're right, at least based on my own kids.

MR. WILDE: Yeah.

MR. DANOFF: Like in Richard's school, the music is really pushed, and the instrumental opportunities. Art you can take a class, but it's not the same.

MR. WILDE: Pushed--much more--that's right, you can take a class. But it's very little extra--what do they call it?--extracurricular outside of--in music, by God, there's bands and choruses and whatever that are very, very important, I think, and pushed a great deal. I think partly because of that, the musical thing, you know, tends to continue. Although I suspect maybe Nancy was exaggerating the continuance of that, as well. Don't you, in a way? I still think it's--children are exposed to music, but there are very few who continue an active interest in it, I mean, a very small percentage. There are some, obviously. Probably more than in drawing or painting or that area. I have a feeling, much more.

Anyhow, when I was a kid, I did crazy stuff. I did drawings, I think, that are--well, they're just wild imaginative things, but mostly about war. I did these very careful drawings of whole cities, and then with an eraser I'd bombard the city and have to redraw it in that way.

[Laughter]

Very elaborate things. I wish the hell I had some of those things. I know my brother at one time, as a young man, he did very, very elaborate, involved drawings of cathedrals, churches, mostly Gothic, traditional or

European--primarily European cathedrals, some of which were sort of quasi-half-made-up by him based on something, some photograph he'd seen. And one time I got hold of one of these. They were fairly large. They were perhaps two-by-three feet, something like that in size, very elaborate, involved pencil drawings, architectural renderings almost. I got hold of one of those and destroyed it completely with my eraser and my pencil, put bomb-holes in it, this sort of thing. I can't remember exactly what happened. I know he was very upset with my doing that.

MR. DANOFF: It's like Rauschensberg's *Erased de Kooning*, except you did it first.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: In a sense, yeah. There wasn't any consciousness of that. I was only interested in blowing up that building and that sort of thing, and drawing all the dead bodies lying around and soldiers. Why I had that fascination with war, I haven't any idea. But that was probably--and then the next earliest--

MR. DANOFF: How old was that, I mean more or less?

MR. WILDE: Oh, that was probably even grade school, I would guess, more. And I think when I got into high school I became more interested in natural history and that sort of thing. In other words, I began to show some interest in that. And at that time, I was very aware of people like Bentham and Curry. And as a matter of fact, not the first, but one of the very early awards that I got was at one of the old Wisconsin Salon of Art in Madison. There were some pencil drawings. And that was before I was at the university. I was still in high school. And pencil drawings, which were very pseudo-Bentham, you know that sort of stylized figure. That's right, stylized landscape, and the figures were stylized and that sort of thing, very elaborate pencil drawings. So I, obviously, was aware of those people, and I suppose more of those people, because certainly I wasn't exposed to art in any sense on the national or international scale.

MR. DANOFF: Well, how did you get exposed to them?

MR. WILDE: I have no idea how that happened, but I imagine through a high school art teacher, I would guess.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm. Maybe were you looking at magazines?

MR. WILDE: Perhaps I saw an exhibition. I certainly wasn't looking at art magazines. I don't even know if there were any at that time. There certainly were some, but I wasn't aware of them. Exhibitions, I suppose, probably at the old Milwaukee Art Institute many, many years ago. I know I had a couple of high school art teachers. Ruth Lohr took an interest in me and the work I was doing.

MR. DANOFF: How do you spell "Lohr"?

MR. WILDE: L-o-h-r, L-o-h-r. I have no idea what happened to her. And it was Gutch [phonetic], was another high school teacher at that Washington High School, who made me aware of some of these things, I'm sure. In other words, probably told me about exhibitions at the Milwaukee Art Institute, whatever.

At that time also I started doing some life drawing with Paul Clemens. This was during the Depression, I suppose; it was in the early '30s. Had a life drawing class. It cost 10 cents a night, was the fee.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: Now, that was while you were in high school?

MR. WILDE: That was while I was in high school.

MR. DANOFF: And you just did this as an extracurricular thing?

MR. WILDE: Extracurricular activity, I think one night a week. And it was held at a school on--I think it was 35th or 27th and Wisconsin Avenue. I think it was an old high school or an old elementary school. I have no idea. And it was held there at night. There was a model. And the charge was 10 cents a night. And Paul was there instructing that life drawing course, and I was in high school. I don't remember if I was a senior, junior. I think it was before I was a senior. And I would go to those drawing classes, and did fairly well.

And then I started drawing more and more. I mean, I started drawing things around me. I'd go to the tennis courts and draw people playing tennis or go to the beaches and draw people on the beaches. I was very aware of activities in the city, I think, insofar as Milwaukee artists particularly, who were showing at that time.

MR. DANOFF: Remember any others?

MR. WILDE: Well, Paul Clemens, obviously. Yes, I do. I'm trying to--I think probably the Leitners, and Ruth, [inaudible] at that time, because they were about contemporary, I think with Clemens and a little bit older. They were sort of the big guns in the annual--you know, the painter and the sculptor show at that time. Which incidentally, I think the first painting I had in that exhibition, they were watercolor landscapes, and I think it was in 1934 when I was 14. I submitted some paintings, watercolor paintings. And they were accepted. So you see, I was aware of what was going on or I wouldn't have done that.

MR. DANOFF: It's unbelievable. You must have been the youngest one ever.

MR. WILDE: Well, in a sense, probably I was. I have no idea, you know, what would be the--

MR. DANOFF: Didn't you win a national scholastic--didn't I see your certificate?

MR. WILDE: That's right. That's right. And that was after graduating from high school. And it was at the--where was I supposed to--I forget where I was supposed to take it, at one school or another. But the tradition in the family was to sort of go to the university in Madison, actually. Let's see. Who were some of the other people here in Milwaukee? Not my uncle, my mother's cousin, Gustav Moeller--it's pronounced Miller. It's spelled M-o-e-l-l-e-r. I'm sure you know the name.

MR. DANOFF: It's vaguely familiar.

MR. WILDE: I was aware of his work. Now, I only knew him when I was very, very young, because he died at a very early age. I think he was in his 40s. But I knew his work. And his sister was always active in various activities around town involved with the arts. Some of these things are vague because they are so long ago and I don't recall. I wasn't active; it's just hearsay. There was one--you probably know more about this. There was one club or an organization of painters in Milwaukee, not the Painters and Sculptors, but another one, although I think the--

MR. DANOFF: Not the Men's Sketching Club?

MR. WILDE: No, not the Men's Sketching Club. I think actually it was an organization that--oh, my gosh, I wish I could think of it--that was involved with all sort of art activities, not just painting and drawing, that sort of thing. It's something that would be interesting. It's something that there should be some documentation of in relationship to the history of arts activity in Milwaukee, something like the Walrus Club, but that doesn't sound right to me. You know, that's something that [Inaudible] Leitner I'm sure could probably tell you about.

I was aware of the work of Gerrit Sinclair, and of course in high school I became aware of what Karl Priebe was doing. And he at that time was--well, he was five years old or so, so at that time he was at the Art Institute in Chicago working there. And I was aware of some of his productions, too, at the same time. So, I was in a sense active, I guess, in my high school years insofar as what was going on in the city of Milwaukee in terms of art.

Now, in the regionalist Curry--of course, Curry came to Madison before I went--no, I guess--

MR. DANOFF: 1936.

MR. WILDE: Yeah. It would be two years before I went there. I started there in '38. And it could be that there was an exhibition of his or an exhibition of some of the regionalists at the old Milwaukee Art Institute. I have no idea. But I was aware of their work, Curry, Bentham, Grant Wood.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And I assumed, because they were shown here--how many other things were showing? I have no idea in terms of the national scene. The earliest things I can remember, I think, probably date a little bit later, I guess. The first time I went to New York City, I think, was 1940, just before the war. And I guess what I saw there, and I became aware of something that was going on on the national scene--that seemed like a million years ago. But it was merely a matter of 10 years or so was the first time I went to New York and then my first New York show, really, in a sense. But really, the first time I went to New York, I suppose that was the first occasion that I became aware of what--anything that was going on on the national scene. And I assume that was probably the people, who were involved then, were people who now to a certain extent have been eclipsed to a certain extent, sort of the New York regionalists, some of the latter-day--

MR. DANOFF: Do any names occur to you?

MR. WILDE: Well, I think essentially they were extensions of The Eight, you know, that sort of thing in New York. They certainly were not--it predated anything that even was anywhere nearly abstract, I guess, in most cases.

MR. DANOFF: Like Reginald Marsh?

MR. WILDE: Reginald Marsh, right, whom I knew fairly well--not fairly well, but I knew him later, had got to know later after I showed in New York. But I saw his work there then. Ben Shahn, probably the first time I saw any of his work there. There are others--William Barnham Poore, remember that name at all?

MR. DANOFF: No.

MR. WILDE: Georges, with an "s", Schreiber, I think it is. And I should have the old catalogues to go through them to remind me of some of these names, actually. But there were quite a few who had some significance at that time, before any of the people who are now current had any names at all, actually.

MR. DANOFF: Now, another on the trash heap of art history, unfortunately.

MR. WILDE: In a sense. I think occasionally there are some little indication of, you know, a revival of those people's work, those people--and I think that inevitably is going to happen to a certain extent. Some, at least.

MR. DANOFF: Sure.

MR. WILDE: Of course, there are going to be hundreds who are not. There was a very interesting exhibition in Madison awhile back at the Elvin [phonetic]. Did you happen to see that? It was called American Impressionists. It was a collection of one family. I think it was two sisters, primarily, who made a collection of American impressionist painters. This history might not be correct. I think they themselves were practitioners in the tradition of American expressionist painting, to a certain extent. But they were also well-heeled, the family. And they were able to make a collection of American impressionist painting.

I know a little bit about American impressionist painting. You know, I could name maybe 10 or 12 people who have a reputation in that area. There were maybe 40 or 50 artists in this group, and I never heard of one name of any of those people. And some very, very confident works, actually.

MR. DANOFF: Their oblivion was not deserved in all cases?

MR. WILDE: It seems that way to me. I mean, they were very interesting that that should take place.

MR. DANOFF: May I go back to something?

MR. WILDE: Yes, go ahead, please.

MR. DANOFF: In Madison, when you went to Madison, that was in 1938?

MR. WILDE: 1938, right.

MR. DANOFF: What was it like then being an art student? First of all, were you studying in the school of art, the department of art?

MR. WILDE: Well, there was a department. At that time there was a department of art education and only a department of art education. So, of course, I had to--that was in the School of Education. And the result of that was that the only degree that was available was a degree in art education, which was certification towards teaching at that time.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And because the only thing I could possibly do in the university was in the art school because I had no competence in any other area, and the only area I was interested in pursuing, so I registered in there.

I bloomed at the university in a sense, intellectually. That sounds silly, but--

MR. DANOFF: No.

MR. WILDE: I always had a--I was bored stiff with any kind of academic courses at the high school level. And when I got to the university, I found all of these courses in history, courses in art history, courses in zoology, sociology, and whatever I took--found them very, very exciting, and I did very, very well, just suddenly like that. I got into the university on probation, and I had very few grades in my four years as an undergraduate. There were not A's at the university. It just was one of those where I found an intellectual environment that I could suffer. And at the high school level, I just couldn't any of it. Now, whether that was because of the quality of the thing in the high school or me, I have no idea what it was

So, I found an environment there that was very, very exciting. And really, I spent more time, in a sense, in some of the academics than I did in the art school. Although I found some of the courses there interesting,

particularly drawing courses, I think, and I was fortunate as a freshman to have Jim Watrous as an instructor. And then he was at that time--

MR. DANOFF: He's ageless, isn't he?

MR. WILDE: That's right, yeah, yeah.

MR. DANOFF: He's unbelievable.

MR. WILDE: At that time he was an instructor in the art department. That was beforehand. But he was working at that time on his Ph.D. in art history. And of course, when he finished that in art history, then he started teaching in art history and then the art department.

MR. DANOFF: He wasn't getting his Ph.D. at Madison?

MR. WILDE: Yes.

MR. DANOFF: I mean, Madison was offering a Ph.D. in art history at that time?

MR. WILDE: That's right. That's right. See, they did after Oscar Harken [phonetic] came to Madison. I think Oscar Harken came in the early '30s, something like that. I'm not quite sure what the date is. And he took his degree there in art history eventually. But as I say, I had the good fortune of having Jim Watrous in beginning drawing, where I excelled against--the right word. But I found many of the courses at the university--and the art courses--just tedium and dumb. And I hope that that's changed. I think it has to a large extent.

But on the art faculty at that time there were two or three people who were in art education who had been there for a long time. And then two younger people, instructors, Jim Watrous and John Van Cort [phonetic], who later became a very highly respected designer in New York, and that was sort of his particular interest, in design. And a little bit after that, McCoy came. And McCoy was a protégé of Curry's. And he had come out of Iowa and worked very closely with Curry and was interested in techniques, particularly painting techniques. But those are the young people who were there.

The older people--and I don't know if should mention any particular names. But they were from the time I got there, and at that time they were probably a hell of a lot younger than I am now. But they seemed, in a sense, spent, you know, and seemed to have very, very little interest in students and that sort of thing. So really, my main excitement at the university was intellectual rather than in the art department.

But along with that was a great deal of activity on my own part. I spent a tremendous amount of time drawing and painting, just on my own, outside of classes, and then sort of went through the requirements of the class routinely, actually. And then also I had the opportunity of meeting certain people on the campus who were extremely stimulating, as an undergraduate. And people in the philosophy department. Kent Burkhardt [phonetic] was a very young philosopher, later left Madison and became President of Bennington, I think now is still head of the American Council of Learned Societies, I'm pretty sure. Hale Taylor [phonetic], who was in the philosophy department in Madison--they in turn were very close friends of an iconoclast in Madison by the name of Marshall Glasier, you might have heard the name, who is a painter and also was intellectually very, very stimulating. He had a marvelous library, both record and book library. His father was the state legislative librarian, and he had a means of getting books, sort of thing.

And he sort of had, in a sense, you can say that it was his salon, I guess. But almost in a way it was. It was a very interesting situation, where he had people like--oh, the head of the law school for a while. I can't remember these names. Very well-known name in American legal history, the head of the university orchestra. The other people on the campus who were all sort of--there was a group that informally was involved with Marshall Glasier, who held, periodically, some informal life drawing classes. Really, people just got together to draw from the model. And Lloyd Garrison is the head of the law school.

It was a very intellectually alive kind of environment and very, very stimulating, and really sort of extra-university except insofar as many of the people who are involved in that quarter era [phonetic] and that group had university associations. But had very little to do with formal university courses and that sort of thing.

MR. DANOFF: What about Jim Watrous? You said you were lucky to work with him? What can you say about that?

MR. WILDE: Well, because of his sensitivity to drawing and his understanding of what drawing is and what drawing should be. And so I was most fortunate in that regard. He in a sense was on the edge of that group, in a way, although I think in a way--or actually, that he was so involved in getting his Ph.D. at that time. You know he was working a hell of a lot harder towards getting a degree than I was or some of the rest.

[Laughter]

But that was a very temporary situation. Glasier had studied at the Art Students League, and he had a very interesting and a very--what do they call it? What's the term? History--not a spotted one, but--

MR. DANOFF: Checkered?

MR. WILDE: Checkered. That's right. Thank you.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: And a stint in the Marines, where he claimed he was shanghaied--into which he claimed he was shanghaied. Then going to New York where, for a while, he was a designer and also studied at the Art Students League, and then came home to paint, came back to Madison. And for awhile, had something of a reputation. He, you know, had shows in New York. He had shows. He was with the Association of American Artists for a while. And he had an article on his work in *Life* and *Esquire* magazine and in the old *Esquire* magazine, that sort of thing.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And--but as I say, he was an iconoclast all through his life. He still is. He's still teaching at the Art Students League, actually. He's well in his 70s, going on 80. And really, really a very marvelous and very stimulating kind of person, intellectually tremendously alive. And he eventually took Rose's [phonetic] place at the Art Students League, actually. I think I mentioned something about this to you before. He went to New York to substitute for Grosz when Grosz went to Germany.

MR. DANOFF: That's right.

MR. WILDE: And Grosz died in Germany very suddenly, and Glasier has stayed there ever since, at the Art Students League.

MR. DANOFF: When did you come in contact with Priebe and some of the people in Chicago?

MR. WILDE: Well, I think--of course, I knew Karl very, very early, because he was a neighbor. And he was--

MR. DANOFF: In Milwaukee?

MR. WILDE: Yes.

MR. DANOFF: On 50th and North, or whatever?

MR. WILDE: 49th--within three doors.

MR. DANOFF: Oh.

MR. WILDE: [Inaudible] And I think I mentioned to you, perhaps before, that Karl claims that he remembers when they brought me home from the hospital in a wash-basket when I was a brand-new baby. But he would have only been five years old at that time. And perhaps he does remember; I have no idea.

So, of course, I knew him as an older neighborhood kid, because, you know, when you're young you play mostly with your immediate contemporaries, within one or two years. And if somebody is five years older, that's a great, you know, gap. That usually doesn't happen.

But of course, as I became interested in this, as I got in high school and got to be, I suppose, what, second year in high school, third year in high school, I became aware of what was going on, became aware of Karl. But it wasn't actually until I became aware of Karl's work--excuse me. That's probably recorded.

MR. DANOFF: For posterity.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: Well, that's a good thing.

It wasn't until I got to Madison where I really became involved with some of the people in Chicago, actually, and through Karl. And at that time, many, many weekends I would spend in Chicago. I went out by train or--I never hitchhiked. I either by train or ride with somebody. And there, I became involved with the Chicago Group, in a sense, which in a way, too, has been eclipsed. But really I think that the precursors of any kind of--if there is such a thing, of Chicago fantasists, you know, they work [inaudible] people like that. It is not very far away from



the work of--not so much Gertrude Abercrombie, but to a certain extent. But Julia Thecla's work, very, very beautiful, fantastic kind of painting that she was doing at this time.

And these were widely exhibited, in other words, the American shows at the Art Institute, the Old American Show, I guess. I don't think it exists anymore.

MR. DANOFF: Yes, yes, it still does.

MR. WILDE: And it still does?

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: I think now it concentrates more or less on several individuals instead of--it used to be a large invitational exhibition.

MR. DANOFF: Very much so.

MR. WILDE: And they were always, you know, well featured and shown in all those exhibitions at that time.

MR. DANOFF: Who were some of the other people? Gertrude Abercrombie?

MR. WILDE: Julia Thecla, Charles Sebree [phonetic], who was a black painter, a very good friend of Karl Priebe's, who later, I think, became primarily--and I think probably still is--a playwright who moved to New York and wrote plays more than they did--and did some sets and that sort of thing in New York.

Names are difficult to recall. That's a terrible thing. Those are probably the most important names that I can recall offhand. There were some other people. There was a very fascinating guy who painted on glass.

MR. DANOFF: That's more what Knut did later also on reverse lithograph. That's very interesting.

MR. WILDE: That's what he did. That's what he did. Yes, and that was in the late '30s and early--God, I wish I could remember the fellow's name.

MR. DANOFF: Where did that imagery come from with those people?

MR. WILDE: I have no idea. I have no idea. And that's the--what they were doing was the sort of thing that became of extreme interest to me. In other words, the early interest that I have in the regional was--which I did have, to a certain extent.

MR. DANOFF: Oh, I see. You mean Curry, Bentham.

MR. WILDE: Wood, yeah, yeah, that sort of thing. Disappeared almost completely when I was exposed or got to know these other people. This very--I don't know what the imagery is. It's very difficult. I know really nothing quite like it anywhere in this country.

MR. DANOFF: Were you already working a little bit along those lines yourself? Or you became interested, and then--

MR. WILDE: Well, I think to a certain extent I was, although I don't--I really think that contact with people in Chicago was--I sort of found the excitement, you know, the thing I guess I was really looking for and didn't know I was, really. A certain amount of that in Glasier's work, and I wish I could have some things to show to you. Glasier at the time I knew him was working primarily with Wisconsin landscape. But he was working with it in fantasy; that is, typically a painting of his I have--I think you saw it. It's called *Carmelita and theUpside-down Whippet*. [Wippen]. Whippet--is that the thing that's in a piano?

MR. DANOFF: A whippet was a dog. I don't know. I don't know.

MR. WILDE: It's the striker. And you can remove it from the piano. And it was a typical, beautiful Wisconsin landscape, sort of in the tradition of the Hudson River School, in that sense. But in the landscape is the portrait of a woman he knew called Carmelita. And there's a very large, gross magnification of this thing, which comes from the--I think it's called a whippet, if I'm not mistaken, the inside of a piano, in other words. And then he did a landscape with large eggbeaters in them, this sort of thing, a sort of surrealist character.

MR. DANOFF: Stewart Davis did something with eggbeaters also.

MR. WILDE: Yes. Well, that would be a completely different thing.

MR. DANOFF: Traditional.

MR. WILDE: But using the same idea, right.

So Glasier had some of that as well. And also these people in Chicago and, to a certain extent, Karl Priebe. Priebe in a way, of course, is a fantasist, but not to the same extent, I feel, that Julia Thecla and Gertrude Abercrombie were, or even Glasier in a certain way. Karl Priebe had a very personal imagery, but in a sense his subject matter was less fantasy. In other words, his subject matter was blacks, the black social environment, music, that sort of thing, and exotic birds and exotic animals, although very often he would make them up. They would be an extension of a real thing, you see, in a way.

MR. DANOFF: So your imagery really underwent a change while you were at Madison, to some extent, because of your contacts?

MR. WILDE: Yes. That's right. Very, very definitely.

MR. DANOFF: Maybe in the people in Chicago?

MR. WILDE: Yes. And then I'm sure also, simultaneously, I became aware of some of the surrealists. And then probably the most widely publicized one of that time and still in a sense is Bob Stilling [phonetic], not so much anymore, but then was Dali, I think, more than anyone else.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And then I became very, very excited about--well, primarily because my first getting out of this area and seeing some paintings. And became very, very interested in seeing some paintings, of course, in art history [inaudible] those are reproductions. But I'm talking about real paintings. I became very, very excited about the Flemish and some of the Italian Renaissance artists, and particularly the ones who manifest superficially. Of course, I reacted to these things totally optically; in other words, I didn't know anything about the iconology and that sort of thing, and the iconology meant nothing to me. It's just that the artists like Pierre de Cosimo [phonetic] who has this sort of aurora fantasy about it, which I absolutely--I know I flipped when I saw the painting in the National Gallery in Washington of the rearing horse, and it had a very sparse landscape, really a marvelous painting. And it excited me a great deal.

And then the elements of fantasy that you find in Flemish painting, not only in Bosch--the obvious one, of course, is Bosch. But you find it all the way through Flemish painting. And that's the part of it I found so very, very exciting.

MR. DANOFF: It's the fantasy that appealed to you?

MR. WILDE: Yeah. It's sort of a strange--I don't--actually, in that sense, I think it's fantasy only to me. In other words, I think the time it was painted it had a very rigid iconology. It was done because of a certain proverb, a certain religious or Biblical story, whatever. But it had a fantastic quality about it.

MR. DANOFF: It does look storybookish to us for whatever reasons, right or wrong.

MR. WILDE: That's right. Yes, yes, exactly, exactly. Yes.

MR. DANOFF: But I should have thought--maybe I'm wrong about this. The last thing I want to do is put words in your mouth--is it the quality of drawing or crispness about them that would have interested you, or not especially?

MR. WILDE: No--well, I think both. In other words, it was the fantasy, the quasi--I guess, or pseudo-fantasy, I guess, because it might not even have been fantasy. It appeared fantastic to me. And then of course, the sharpness of focus. I think there's no question about that. In other words, I would not and never have been as interested in a fantasy which is, so to speak, blurred or--well, blurred or mysterious, that is not quite touchable, not quite available. I've never, for instance, been--referring to a contemporary, once again--Chagall. They are some very, very beautiful things. But they are not my first love. They are simply not things that, as much as I appreciate his fantasy, the absolute, free use of fantasy, simply the way they are done, they don't have that kind of precision, that sharpness which interests me primarily, although I certainly like what he says, and not only in his work, but also some of his [inaudible].

MR. DANOFF: I don't know if this is a question that can be answered. But does the precision interest you as a way of capturing the objects in the world? Or because it satisfies you to draw crisply in a more technical sense?

MR. WILDE: I think primarily the latter. I think I am more pleased to bring things in clearly and sharply. I think it's probably the German coming out of me. It's there to a certain extent--or the Northern European. And that is essentially the tradition, isn't it?

MR. DANOFF: [Inaudible]?

MR. WILDE: Well, not only that--but all the way through, I think, there isn't a great deal of this which is un-concise. There's some. But even contemporarily, with the German expressionists, of course, which becomes un-concise primarily and of course is historically the most important of the German art, which is done. But simultaneously, that was being done, of course. It was a great [inaudible] German painting which really had nothing to do with that, which again has fallen into a second level.

I'm not just talking about the German genre painting such as in the Bosch Lane [phonetic] collection. There are other kinds of German painting that were going out simultaneously, really. Sort of in the tradition of the Romantics, during the Romantics.

MR. DANOFF: Freidrich [phonetic].

MR. WILDE: Yes, that's right.

MR. DANOFF: Which is very crisp.

MR. WILDE: That's right. He was earlier. But that's tradition in [inaudible] and that sort of--it carries later into German art history, actually, to a later time.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: Some of that actually overlaps. That is, some of those latter Romantics were working at the same time that the expressionists were, literally. And that character of the Northern European thing is a thing that I find stimulating.

MR. DANOFF: Is there something also, the sense of wonder of things in the world? Someone said that Van Eyck painted things as though he were discovering their existence for the first time.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

MR. DANOFF: And there's something in addition to just verisimilitude. There is something beyond that, some kind of inspiration that carries through, a sense of wonder.

MR. WILDE: Sure. I think that's literally true. I don't think that's a falseness at all. I still think--I hope at least, and you know, you can't think about it. But I still think there is a--the basic motivation of anything I do is a sense of wonder. It is simply the wonder or a celebration of the eye, you know, and the way the eye is used as a means of seeing things that exist; that's all. And I suppose the fantastic interest to the extent it exists is there in a way that sort of bespeaks the idea that the commonness of everyday things is the necessity or the importance of not seeing them as common everyday things--is sort of exacerbated or magnified by giving it a certain kind of fantastic twist, you know, a juxtaposition of scale, that sort of thing, which makes the common a little bit uncommon. That sort of quality, that's an overt factor. I don't think about it particularly, but I suppose that's one basic underlying reason I do it, and I suppose in a sense one basic underlying reason why anybody does it.

But I suppose, in a sense, that any transcription or any presentation of a thing, pictorialization of a thing, just by doing it, that gives it a certain uncommonness, I think, in a way. But I guess there's a feeling that it has to be pushed just a little bit harder, just a little bit more attention.

MR. DANOFF: Here's a difficult question.

MR. WILDE: Yeah.

MR. DANOFF: Do you sometimes feel that you don't quite make it in achieving the sense of exactitude that you want when you have a still life set up and then you're drawing it or painting it?

MR. WILDE: Yeah, yeah.

MR. DANOFF: Do you sometimes feel you don't quite make it? Or do you work on it until you do? Or do you rip things up?

MR. WILDE: No. That's only as an after-consideration. When I'm working, I work in such a methodical way that everything really is in the concept. Then from that point on it's mechanical. It's the necessity of doing it.

MR. DANOFF: The concept? Do you mean the way you picture something in your mind?

MR. WILDE: That's right. In other words, the idea that I have. If I could photograph my brain at the moment I have that thought, I don't even know if that would be hard-edged.

MR. DANOFF: You've got it that clearly?

MR. WILDE: It would be there. It would be there, although I'm sure it is qualified as it evolves. But that is really the total thing. Then, of course, there is the function of doing it, which is absolutely consuming. I mean, it's enthralling. You just sort of go into a trance. But it's still mechanical, you see. One thing follows another in a very, very unthinking kind of way. It just happens. But it is trance-like when it is happening.

So there is no thinking about it as it goes on, to get back to your question. I never worry about whether it's going to work out or whether it's working out or not. I read about artists, you know, who tear things up, that are dissatisfied. But that's sort of--this never happens, even for a moment.

[End of cassette 1 of 3, side A]

MR. WILDE: Carry on about the tax matter. Obviously, all people who have an income pay taxes. But the thing that is a little bit troublesome for me is that the government somehow has finally gotten itself into this weird position that it taketh away with the left hand and giveth out with the right. There is no basic built-in incentive for the artist to work. There's only this rather false one, this false bureaucratic vehicle by which the government supports the artist through a so-called, quotation marks, "democratic process of selection of the best." But that's all very capricious.

I like the idea of the best, I think, finding its way through more usual economic channels, where--and it would seem to me that perhaps the best way that the government, either state or federal, could lend incentive to the artist would be to establish some sort of favorable, or to a certain extent at least, favorable tax status, as it does, of course, to many, many enterprises in business all the way across the board, but not in the arts. So that would be, to me, a more reasonable thing. And that perhaps basically is one of the reasons why I--one real, honest, elemental reason that I question the process the way it is now.

I don't know if really I want to be taxed, as I've written elsewhere, to support some idiot who is doing some nonsense which it can't find any other support anywhere else in the so-called creative forms, even though that might in the end be something of great validity. But the chances are slim. The chances are very great that that idiotic act that is supported by the government through a grant of one sort or another is simply going to dissolve into limbo, although I suppose some will be supported that has some lasting value.

Then I'd simply like to end up by saying, in a way, that--not in a way. It's saying that on the whole, I tend to be, in spite of the laughter that punctuates my statements continually--tend to be deeply pessimistic. I do have a sense, not merely advancing age. I had this as a very young man, great skepticism about things in general, about the political state, about art, about society, about the future of society. And I feel elementally that in many respects things do--in many respects, at least, that is. Not across the board--there are certain things that "improve" in quotation marks. But on the whole, things inevitably move towards worseness or inexorably towards--inexorably towards self-destruction.

And I think art is simply a momentary voice of some sort of idiotic optimism that pervades and is not really hold-down-able, in other words, as something very deep and basic which causes me and the thousands of others who seriously and with sincerity and devotion create works of art, in spite of the realization of its ultimate futility and its ultimate absurdity, perhaps.

Just as one final thing, I would like to state in words a tribute to my two wives. My first wife Helen, who died in 1966 and I was married to for almost 25 years, and my second wife Shirley, who I've been married to for more than 10 years now. Both of whom have been totally sympathetic to, I guess, what I'd eventually have to--and supportive of my art and also my idiocy, at the same time. Regardless of how mad my conduct seems to be occasionally, in total, I've enjoyed a marvelous affinity and support from both of those marvelous, wonderful ladies.

Okay. From the notebook of 1965, you forget even momentarily that art is anti-science. Talk of the newest, the most advanced waylays, for the real intent of art is *memento mori*. Things don't change. We are always the same, no wiser, no more un-imbecilic than usual. It states, the world is in every aspect and prospect infinitely lovely and beautiful, and I who observe it, though I have a brief moment of joy am only destined for illness and death, and that nothing will exist, nothing of the bad, but my God, nothing of the good or joyous either.

So this is what art says: Be of good faith, for there is nothing we can do but do. There is no good, no evil, only the thing in the moment. The marvelous beauty of the vista, just now, not later, and death claws at your flanks. Mozart in the greatness of art that is not innovative, but only refines, said this. And Pieter Breughel also: Poignancy and grace, the only virtues in the face of false pride, false progress, false values, false everything

except the moment of love and the moment of death. I say, join in. Be of good cheer with a cordiality and goodness of heart. How can we who all suffer the same dread fate feel anything but warm, awesome love for one and another?

[End of cassette 2 of 3, Side A]

MR. DANOFF: He was talking about high-powered gallery women.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: Well, I guess there were some girls like [inaudible] Betty Parson.

MR. WILDE: Yeah. And I wasn't going to mention any names.

MR. DANOFF: No, no.

MR. WILDE: But I've touched some of those people. In other words, I've been close to them. And there was a kind of social thing. My early business in the art, when I had Shoals [phonetic] and that sort of thing--you know, I started going to all those parties. I'd go home, or go to the hotel. I wasn't interested. I found that unpleasant, in a certain sense. And I think that to a certain extent that is true. I think some of the people who do very, very well had--I mean now do very, very well. You must be very careful when you're talking about this because I don't want to sound--I find that is simply the reality. It's the way things are. You know, most things are bad. Very few things are good.

MR. DANOFF: Did you think of yourself as a regional painter or not?

MR. WILDE: Never really in that sense. I mean, in the sense of the regionalists, where there was a conscious--

MR. DANOFF: Or that you represent the region of the upper Midwest or something like that in your style?

MR. WILDE: I don't think really--no, no. I don't think really--I mean, even though I'm only here and that sort of thing. But I think intellectually, my association is--well, there are some American things that I have high regard for. But mostly, intellectually, my sympathies, the thing that I really respond to is European, primarily. And probably primarily more than anything else, Northern European.

Now, you know, all of that, of course, is qualified by somebody who is sitting out here in the sticks, you know, where vision is really qualified. Undoubtedly--I do not look at a Joachim Patinir painting like somebody who lives in Belgium looks at it. I mean, I'm sure we see it with different eyes. But the thing I'm much more stimulated by is that Patinir painting, and not, you know, really the regional artists or even American art, although some I have such tremendous regard for. You know, the marvelous--particularly the Hudson River School painters.

Church--marvelous exhibition of Church's landscape sketches at the Albion. There's just a traveling show that's going around. And these are mostly oil sketches, sometimes oil and watercolor, really spectacular things, indicating that Church is really just a wonderful, magnificent candid camera. Really, these are photographs, except they're much better than photographs, you know. They are all like very superior landscape photographs, which you don't see very much, actually, but there can be some. Some of the Adams--Ansel Adams photographs, landscapes and that sort of thing.

MR. DANOFF: Right.

MR. WILDE: But the powers of observation of somebody like Church are just almost spectacular. They're unbelievable. I have tremendous regard for that sort of thing.

There is a regard, I think, for the American tradition to a certain extent. But I think I see it through a European eye, in a way. That's very mystic. I have a high regard--well, of the things you have here, I think that Eastman Johnson painting of the old stagecoach with the boys, that's one of the great works of art.

MR. DANOFF: It's like an archetypal image.

MR. WILDE: Oh, really, that's a magnificent thing. But I think they tend to be more individual pieces more than anything else.

MR. DANOFF: Do you think there are some kinds of traditions in Wisconsin art?

MR. WILDE: There's what?

MR. DANOFF: That there are some kinds of traditions?

MR. WILDE: I don't really think so. I don't really think so. Gee, I guess--you know, I guess that might be something you might could work out if you wanted to. I think it might be possible--

MR. DANOFF: Again, someone could say, what I worked out doesn't exist, but there's another one.

MR. WILDE: Right, exactly.

MR. DANOFF: You could always play that game.

MR. WILDE: Or, I think it might be possible to make one up, so to speak.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And it would not be made up wholly out of dreams. I mean, there would be some basis of fact. But it would be elusive. It would be difficult--

MR. DANOFF: Well, there tended to be one in the Chicago area for a while.

MR. WILDE: Yes, that's right.

MR. DANOFF: Tended to be.

MR. WILDE: Tended to be, I think more than anything else. Right. And I suppose one could be found, I guess. I don't know if it would be that much different from what really was going on in Cincinnati. Or I think in a sense it would be a little bit closer to being a Milwaukee tradition because of the German European background and that sort of thing, which sort of takes a peculiar--there's an interesting quality. I don't know exactly where it comes from. I was thinking of the work of Gerrit Sinclair and Gus Moeller and people like that. There's sort of a tonality that pervades it. But I think that indirectly comes from the tradition of The Eight in New York. Here I'm talking in these terms of these art historical decades or epochs, which I indicate I don't really believe in. But when you talk about these things, you have to make a reference.

MR. DANOFF: But when somebody's talking about it--

MR. WILDE: Right. Exactly. But I don't know if that's true. But I think if there were one, it would be more here in Milwaukee than it would be in Wisconsin as a whole.

Now, there are certain people who feel that, I think, contemporaries like Utrecht. Is it Utrecht or Utech?

MR. DANOFF: Utech .

MR. WILDE: Utech, yeah, yeah. And whose work I like very much, and I think he feels fairly strongly that there is a Wisconsin tradition. I don't quite see it. Maybe that's just a blind spot, really. If it is, I don't think it's very important. And I don't mean it itself--I don't think the whole business of worrying about whether there is a Wisconsin tradition or not is very important. It might--if there is one, it might be a very important tradition; I have no idea.

MR. DANOFF: That's for art historians to worry about.

MR. WILDE: That's perhaps for them to concern themselves about, right.

MR. DANOFF: Do you want to get a bite to eat? Is it time to take a break?

MR. WILDE: Fine, fine, fine. Can we get a bite here?

[Off the record]

MR. DANOFF: We can if you'd like. Sure, yes. Let's see. Here we go. Okay.

MR. WILDE: Working?

MR. DANOFF: Working. Well, when did you begin teaching? We'll just start flat-footedly like that. When did you start?

MR. WILDE: After the war, after the Second World War, I should say, I was discharged. I enrolled as a student in art history. And at that time, I had an assistantship in the art history department. And I was a graduate assistant there. That was in 1947, I think, '46 or '47; I'm not sure. Then as I mentioned earlier, I gave up on the art history. I found the hours in the library too many. Fascinated by it, but I think I sort of wanted to do my own kind of art history and not--

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: For your own purposes?

MR. WILDE: The non-book kind. Right.

MR. DANOFF: Make your own.

MR. WILDE: Make my own. And I then enrolled in the graduate school in the art department. And I assisted there till I got my degree, and then I started teaching there full-time as an instructor in 1948 at a salary of \$3,200.

MR. DANOFF: That much?

MR. WILDE: That much, which is about the same as I make now, really, in real terms. What teacher [inaudible]? But I started teaching drawing then. And I've been teaching drawing ever since. I've never taught anything but drawing.

MR. DANOFF: Really?

MR. WILDE: Yeah. I wanted not to teach anything but drawing. I have a very personal feeling that--for some reason or other; I don't know why--that there are things that you can deal with in drawing which can be relatively impersonal. In other words, there are basically perceptual things, rudimentary things that can be dealt with, you can teach, in drawing that becomes almost impossible in painting. In painting, it very rapidly becomes highly personal, highly introverted in a sense, at least insofar as I'm concerned. I'm sure some people can teach painting in very outward-going way. I never felt I could.

In other words, what I'm saying in a sense is that there's a certain amount of my art that I want to preserve from teaching or protect from teaching, from the onslaughts of teaching. I think that's enough in drawing that I can work with and at a profound--I believe, at least, profound and important level. In other words, I can have a high level of instruction and still not become intimately involved in my own personal work and can stay on the outside of it.

I think I try to do that all the time; that is, to--in that sense, I suppose, a certain kind of schizophrenia between, you know, what I do in my studio and what I do in my classroom. They are quite distinct, quite separate. Which I know is a precept that many teachers feel that just the opposite should happen, that you really must teach what you do. And I think in a sense, of course, you do that automatically. I think one thing that I believe that you must do, you must teach what you are. I think you do that inevitably, unavoidably. And yet, by the same token, I've always had the sense that I do want to separate, keep my studio activities somewhat separate from what I do as a teacher.

And I really change roles, in a sense. That is, I dress differently when I go to the university.

MR. DANOFF: Put on a jacket, you mean?

MR. WILDE: Well, a jacket and a tie and that sort of thing. When I'm home, I never do. I wear old sweaters with holes in them and things of that sort. I think I speak differently when at the university than I do when I'm at home. I think I have a different kind of language, perhaps, in a sense. I think my--even my attitude towards drawing. When I do a drawing in class, which I do once in a while, particularly figure drawing, I don't demonstrate ever. I don't believe in it because I think there's a propensity for students to mimic if you do that, which I don't like. But occasionally I will do a drawing in my class, not let people see me do it. But I just do a drawing to make a certain kind of point. And that drawing will look very, very differently from my other work, in a sense. There's a certain similarity, you know, which is inevitable, I think. But I have hundreds, in a sense--not hundreds; maybe a hundred or two--drawings that I have done in life classes, which I have never shown. And someday, God knows what will happen to them. I keep some of the better ones. And I think they're all high-level high-quality figure drawings. But it's not my art, in a sense.

MR. DANOFF: They are done as demonstrations or as examples?

MR. WILDE: Well, as I say, I don't do them as demonstrations. I do them in class, and then I show the result to the student. Yes, in that sense, but I don't--

MR. DANOFF: But the final result demonstrates something you're trying to teach, rather than--

MR. WILDE: Right, right. The final result demonstrates a concept or a precept that I'm trying to get across. But not the process.

MR. DANOFF: Right.

MR. WILDE: I keep that separate, because, as I indicated, I don't want to teach process. I want students to find their own process, so to speak, to get at ends, which are--you know, I try to perpetrate or try to get across certain ideas in drawing. I try to get across--

MR. DANOFF: Do you help them find the process, though, you know, if they're stumped or something?

MR. WILDE: Yes, in a certain way. Never in a direct sense. In other words, never in the sense of saying, "Do this" or "Do that." In terms of actually making the mark--and I think that ultimately is the most precious thing there is, is the mark. And that's something, too, which is so obfuscated, is so destroyed in a great deal of contemporary art, where, you know, the preciousness of the mark, the preciousness of the hand is completely obliterated. And intentionally--I mean, it's an intellectual aim of these people to do it, which is very, very difficult for me to comprehend, because it's always eventually that, you know, the quality of the thing which could not be done by anybody else, which is a thing which ultimately causes it really to be a work of art--and that's why I try to protect it as much as possible.

In other words, I'll try to demonstrate to a student that precept might work, that something--this dark which you apply here must be rearranged and reestablished in another position relative to other darks in the drawing. But exactly how you make that mark to do it, I try to keep away from that as much as possible. All right?

And that very often is something that students seem to want. In other words, they want to be shown the technical process of doing it. And that's the one thing that I won't give them, wherever possible, because I do feel that that--you know, if anything is precious, that's the thing that is precious, is personal. And that can't bend. Ideas, I think, are much more malleable, really.

I think many, of course, would probably take the opposite point of view, that the technical thing is one thing you can give to somebody, but never give ideas. And I feel the other way around. And I think it has to do with, as I indicated before, what I consider to be the ultimate in the work of art, and that is the signature character of the hand, the character of the word. I can read a sentence--I think, at least--one sentence from Joseph Conrad, and I think it's recognizable, even though he is simply saying that the sun came up in the morning. There's something about the way it's said. And it's that quality of the inevitability of the person coming through, which I think is so very, very critical in any kind of work.

MR. DANOFF: What would a semester look like, in broad terms, 15 weeks? I mean, how does it progress? What's the beginning, middle, and end?

MR. WILDE: Well, in a sense, it depends on what it is and what level.

MR. DANOFF: Okay.

MR. WILDE: And right now I'm teaching, intentionally--I'm teaching, which I haven't done for years, 20 years, I guess, I'm teaching the beginning, very beginning drawing. I had such a terrible, terrible desire to do it the way it should be done and the way, in my opinion, it was not being done, generally speaking. And what I do there is simply through the course of a semester, work with very, very elemental concepts, precepts of the mark. The mark as a line and the mark as mass, relatively. And apply these two precepts to an increasingly complex series of problems. That's all.

The simplest application is relative to the cube. And working from the cube, slowly breaking that into a more complex form in I think sort of interesting ways of doing that. Complicating the cube, so to speak, breaking it apart and then slowly adding more abstruse or not-quite-as-concretely described forms to that. So that simply there is a long, long process of applying the same sort of principles towards something which is totally--or as totally as we can make it--elemental, increasingly towards something which becomes very, very complex as we go along through the semester so that the elemental principles remain the same, but of course, they are qualified continually. In other words, they are slightly shifted, slightly bent, slightly shaded in a progressing--in an evolutionary kind of way, always going towards something else more complicated.

I don't know if that describes it very well.

MR. DANOFF: I understand.

MR. WILDE: It's a little bit difficult to pinpoint it, but that's the very idea.

And when I teach the life drawing, which is--I have two life drawing. One is the basic life drawing, beginning life drawing, which people call right from the beginning "drawing 2" to drawing from the figure, I shift the approach a little bit to method. And when I say "method," I'm talking simply about the materials. In other words, the



materials take on a little bit greater importance. And the attitude towards the figure as it can become apparent through the shifting of various materials. In other words, how certain attributes of the figure are amplified or intensified in reference to using a brush as opposed to in reference to using a pencil. There are certain attributes of the thing that you are working with and certain attributes of the marks that can be made relative to the thing that you are working with that I emphasize. So the emphasis goes a little bit more in that direction. In other words, not quite so much preceptual; a little bit more real, so to speak, in terms of the actual materials.

Again, never stressing how it's put down, simply that inherently a certain kind of material possesses, within a very wide range, certain characteristics which are applicable to certain aspects of the human figure, certain characteristics of the human figure.

In advanced life drawing, my approach is, all the rope they need to hang themselves. In other words, I tell them absolutely nothing until after the work is done. And then I attack it as much--or I--or whatever is necessary--praise as much as I feel is necessary. But by that point, theoretically, you know, they have the work--they are there because they want to draw. You see where teaching drawing at the various levels--and I do--you have this very great fascination with working with advanced students because you can work at a much higher level, a much more interesting level. And so that is one of the joys of working with advanced students. So-called advanced students; some aren't very advanced.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: Would you have taught if there were some other way for you to have earned a living? I mean, has it been stimulating? Or does it satisfy something?

MR. WILDE: Oh, yes. There's no question about it. It satisfies something intellectual. In other words, it's a process. And I think it has something to do, again, with my devotion to drawing. In other words, just on the whole, things that excite me more than anything else, I guess, are drawings, given the fact, of course, obviously, that there are hundreds of paintings that I find very exciting. But piece by piece, one by one, all the way through, regardless of what it is--contemporary or anything else--the drawings grasp my heart more immediately. It's really a very basic elemental kind of human communication. That's what it is.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And, of course, that is totally overlooked. In other words, from the very moment everyone is taught--not taught--well, you are taught. But it just happens, to use words and literally taught to read, taught to interpret through the use of words, that sort of thing, but not drawing. In a sense, that was, to a certain extent at least, it was done in the traditional schools for--there was always the drawing course.

And you had very interesting things at that time. That is, you had--the end result was that English tourists in Italy--that is, the average tourist, could draw the scenes, could--knew enough about basic perspective, et cetera, to make a record in the sense that is now done with a camera. The camera makes it unnecessary, so to speak. But I think to a certain extent, the traditional European school and early American, too--or early American, nineteenth century American--certain elemental precepts of drawing were really put forth. They were put forth in a devastatingly stringent sort of way. In other words, this was done this way. And the whole damn class sat down and did a box by rote and did a jar by rote and did a human head by rote and that sort of thing. And it was learned, well, in the same sense that grammar or language is learned, in a way.

Well, that's neither here nor there. I certainly don't expect everybody is going to get that. But I think it's a terribly important thing, and I think there's a whole intellectual world that's involved around drawing, and that's why it can be very, very interesting and stimulating for me to teach. And it's an intellectualization, in a sense that it almost has nothing to do with art. I mean, I can look at it that way, at least. I can think of it as being very, very important, even though it does not, you know, afford or directly in a way concern itself with aesthetics in any sense at all. It's just simply a whole intellectual world that can be dealt with. And that part of it I find exciting. I don't think I could find that with any other area of teaching, only, only with drawing.

MR. DANOFF: Do you have students' attitudes toward their willingness to learn the basic language of drawing changed? I mean, do they think that in the past 10 or 15 years--do students think that they don't really need to know how to draw to be artists? Has there been any change or not really? Have they always been quite willing to learn?

MR. WILDE: I think--I guess that probably follows the 10 per cent rule, you know, that--

MR. DANOFF: What does that mean?

MR. WILDE: The old 10 per cent rule that 10 per cent of the students have the proper devotion and interest and wherewithal and that sort of thing.

MR. DANOFF: I see.

MR. WILDE: And the rest don't. I think sometimes you bring certain things to certain people. I don't think it really changed very much over the years. You always have a few people who recognize the importance of drawing, who are really interested in drawing and who really want to learn all they can about drawing, every aspect. And they're willing to accept any kind of ideas, yours and others', whatever they can get. Others who, generally speaking, don't care a great deal. Our people that I work with as a teacher, of course, in a great state university, as they say--that's a very wide range. And I assume the same thing is true in beginning chemistry or mathematics, whatever, that there are people who are talented, people who are intellectually alive, people who are alert, people who are aware, people who are interested in being made aware. And there are also people who are not, do not possess those qualities. And that, in a sense, can be debilitating. On the whole I find myself amazingly able to ignore that--in other words, to carry on the attitude that this is important, and if you don't think it is, it's too bad. And it's your loss, not mine.

So I can function with a certain blasé-ness, and I can maintain a certain level, I think, of a certain intellectual level in talking about drawing, which I insist upon. In other words, I don't think it's possible to demean the form in order to bring it to people who perhaps are incapable of finding it. And that sounds like a deprecating sort of interpretation. I don't think it is, because I think once in a while, even though there are no immediate or obvious results, I think certain things that you've talked about, I think, eventually can become meaningful, perhaps not in drawing, but perhaps in a certain kind of--different kind of level.

Because in a way, what you're working with is logic. I mean, you're working with a graphic logic, in reality. So some of it is retained, I think, even though there is no immediate gratifying result, in the sense of a student who achieves, which of course, when you're teaching is one of the eventual gratifications, where you actually witness the fact that something that you have professed is actually influential or accepted. None of that--not mimicked or anything of that sort.

MR. DANOFF: Hopefully not.

MR. WILDE: What's that?

MR. DANOFF: Hopefully not.

MR. WILDE: Yes, hopefully not--no, exactly.

MR. DANOFF: Yeah, not just copying, but really inspired.

MR. WILDE: And it does--well, inspiration, I don't think--I think it's--well, perhaps. That's one way of putting it. I think intellectual adjustment, the basic intellectual framework, the whole fund of meaning by--one bit of information can be slightly jogged or shifted or juggled so the whole intellectual activity from that point on changes slightly in complexion. That's all.

MR. DANOFF: Who are some students who you think you have been successful with?

MR. WILDE: Who I have been?

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: Oh, there's a quite a number, actually, over the years, at least that you see some evidence of. Now, you see them, names in exhibitions and that sort of thing here and there. I suppose that's the only evidence.

MR. DANOFF: A few examples?

MR. WILDE: Well, first of all, I'm very poor in names.

MR. DANOFF: I put you on the spot; sorry.

MR. WILDE: No, that's okay. I should, you know. I should have a list of the students and what they do and where they are. I don't, offhand. There are many. They're here in Milwaukee. I think both the Burkhart's [phonetic] were students of mine at one time. And there are people here and there who appear. I think--you know, it's a different kind of situation. The people I have, generally speaking, are not the people who go into the art world. Most of them go into a different kind of situation.

MR. DANOFF: Yes, yes.

MR. WILDE: And yet, there's evidence, eventually, that some of it has some effect. I get much later that people

occasionally express gratitude that I pointed something out to them 25 years ago or whatever, that it did have some effect on their life. And I suppose, in a way, that's the most important thing. In other words, I am not teaching, on the whole, fortunately or--I think probably fortunately, the people who essentially are going to be the--in other words, if I were--had a private school or worked in a private art school or if I had a private school myself--in other words, which I am asked to do very often by many people who said, will I take them as a student in my studio? And I say no.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm. Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: I won't do that because I want a certain kind of detachment. But if I did have that kind of school, for instance, I devoted my summers to people who might be interested in working with me, I think then, of course, I would attract the student who essentially was committed, you know, to--in art to drawing, et cetera. It would be a different level, a different plane of student, actually, which might or might not be, for me, beneficial. I think it would be in my own situation--I think it would probably be relatively exhausting, really. It would be that kind of teaching--it's the kind of teaching I'm thinking of, which is very often referred to as great, great teachers of Frank Lloyd Wright, where all of your students are your disciples.

MR. DANOFF: Yes. That's exactly the right word, yes.

MR. WILDE: That sort of teaching, you see. That's not the kind of teaching that I do, nor is it the kind of teaching that I prefer, because I do--I have this very strong feeling that, above all, I don't want them to be my disciples. I want them to be their own disciples, in reality.

I think--I suppose in a certain sense [inaudible], I think that's just a manifestation or a caprice of my own personality; that's all. I want above all the individuality. And yet, at the same time, I believe in certain elemental precepts in drawing. In other words, I think if the student, so to speak, can survive those precepts that I try to get across, that then inevitably the thing that will come out will be primarily themselves. The thing that will survive, so to speak, will be their own personality, rather, which simply has put into some kind of function some of the precepts that I've tried to bring to them, actually. So that's a different sort of thing.

I think there are teachers--but then again, on the other hand, you have a teacher like Wright, who has this disciple idea, this business which is one way of doing it, certainly. Yet, how many students of Wright are of any moment?

MR. DANOFF: Exactly, exactly.

MR. WILDE: Yet on the other hand, you have a teacher like Hans Hofmann, you know, who is in a sense the adulated teacher, the student sitting at the knee of the master, and yet, at least as of the moment, Hoffman has produced any number of students who have become important artists. So, it's--

MR. DANOFF: None of them have really copied him.

MR. WILDE: No, that's right.

MR. DANOFF: [Inaudible]

MR. WILDE: No, he was a different kind of teacher. But still, he was the kind of teacher that did attract a very, very strong and fervent following, in a sense. In other words, the pariah or whatever.

[Off the record]

MR. DANOFF: A little bit more about subjects.

MR. WILDE: Yeah.

MR. DANOFF: The show that had apples at the core, ha-ha-ha.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: How does that come about?

MR. WILDE: Well, usually things like that are spontaneous. In other words, I really don't know. For some reason or another, it became crystal clear to me that I wanted to do 20 paintings where I'd used--restrict myself completely to the subject matter of apples. I suppose probably the basic motivation of that is one morning I might have been out in the yard and have seen an apple, and said to myself--you know, I'm making this all up now; of course, it probably didn't happen.

MR. DANOFF: I understand.

MR. WILDE: But I said, "My god, that's an absolutely fantastic, marvelous object. And nobody has ever really seen an apple before."

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: Aha. You and Van Eyck, the same mysterious wonder of the apple.

MR. WILDE: Well, I suppose in a sense, that's what it was.

MR. DANOFF: Sure.

MR. WILDE: It's just an absolutely awesome thing. And I'm not indicating that that was--that probably laid somewhere behind that final event, where I did make the decision to commit myself for eight months to painting only apples, and apples alone, nothing else. That's all I did for that amount of time. But precisely where that idea came from, I have no idea. And I know that many people who saw that show told me that, you know, their great symbolic meaning of the apple, the original evil fruit and that sort of thing, which had nothing to do with it. It's just such a marvelous thing.

MR. DANOFF: But yet, a lot of the paintings did have some of that extra mileage that you can't put your finger on.

MR. WILDE: Well, I hope so.

MR. DANOFF: More than photographic exactitude.

MR. WILDE: I hope so. Yes, exactly.

MR. DANOFF: Something else is suggested. And you can't put your finger on it, but there's more than meets the eye.

MR. WILDE: I think. And I think really, I guess what that is is, if anything, what it is is perception. It is the manifestation of the idea that that object was literally perceived rather than simply seen or recognized. And when that takes place, I suppose, at least if there is a certain kind of elemental skill, I guess, or whatever it is, or wherewithal to accomplish it, that shows, I think. It comes through. It makes itself manifest.

It's a non-intellectualization really. It's only an intellectualization after the fact. This is one thing that amazed me about the things that we saw in your Convergence and Progression Exhibition.

MR. DANOFF: [Inaudible] yes.

MR. WILDE: It's the high intensity of intellectualization of those works. I mean, those are all things that are--seems to me. I may be completely wrong. But they have the effect on me of being works that were perceived or--no, that's not right--conceived for a reason. In other words, there was a basic philosophical reason why that conceptual thing was to exist.

MR. DANOFF: That's right.

MR. WILDE: And you're shaking your head. And I assume to a certain extent you're agreeing--

MR. DANOFF: Yes, yes, yes.

MR. WILDE: --that that is the process that happens. And I assume that the work of art can come into existence because of that reason as well as another reason.

My penchant, as I indicated when you asked me about the apples, is completely towards intuitive acceptance of something that simply crosses the mind. And I make a very, very--just inevitably, I make a very strong point. I don't think I tell myself, "Now I'm making a strong point"--of the fact that I never question the validity of a concept for a moment. The concept appears; it's valid. And I have to accept that point of view.

Occasionally, a concept will be discarded before it comes into fruition. In other words, the concept will appear, and with some pondering--it will appear in my mind is what I mean. With some pondering that concept will never find any real manifestation. Something else will replace it before it came into existence, a second concept, simply because, I suppose intuitively again, I'm telling myself that the original concept, the first one which is replaced by a second, was not quite sufficient to withstand the onslaught of the second concept.

But there's never any consciousness of discarding one concept of being invalid, simply that it's replaced by another one. I don't say, "Now I cannot do that because it's invalid and therefore I must replace it with another concept." There's simply another concept that pops up and overwhelms the first one and takes its place. That happens right now with the thing I'm thinking about now. I'm thinking of just beginning. I was just jostling yesterday panels for a series of paintings I'm going to do for a show. And before that, there was another concept, which was sort of lying in the background. And that was a series of paintings which would simply be called *Work Reconsidered*. And what I would be doing is going back to--which is interesting, I think, in a certain way. I mean, it perhaps sets the stage, in a sense, of partly the way I think, of some drawings I did in the early '40s and redoing those as paintings at this time.

In other words, the business of progression and change, to me, is literally meaningless. It has almost no force insofar as the way I think. And those ideas that I had in the early '40s are just as valid today as they were then, and therefore there's no reason at all why I shouldn't do them, just in the same way, I guess, as an apple is just as valid today as it was in Van Eyck's day. So there's no reason I shouldn't do it, you see.

But that idea of doing this series of paintings on *Work Reconsidered*, the drawings that I did in the early '40s, was simply overwhelmed by this second idea I have to carry out now. And that is, the present idea is simply a tribute to the months; that's all. And I have a series of 12 paintings which will, hopefully, do that.

MR. DANOFF: Really?

MR. WILDE: The seasons or the fraction of the season, I think, in reality there.

MR. DANOFF: Is there more variety in Milwaukee--or Madison, rather--than you would find in Florida, I suppose, or California, for a subject like that?

MR. WILDE: I imagine. I would imagine it would be just as good in Florida or California.

MR. DANOFF: Seasons don't seem to be the same.

MR. WILDE: Well, they're not as important. That's for sure.

MR. DANOFF: What about the sexual subjects?

MR. WILDE: Well, you know, they obviously exist. I think it's a very--it's a very simplistic thing; that is, the naked lady simply stands for the sexual ideal, I think, in a sense, or the whole sexual idea. It tributes to ladies, really, to--I like ladies.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: You know, I was always saying I like fruits and naked ladies.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: That can be misconstrued.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, that can be misconstrued, and that's why I say it. I like the ambiguity of it. And very often, as you know, I use them together in one instance, simultaneously. I don't think there's anything insidious. I think it's relatively--well, I think at one time, you know, there was a moment when intellectually, I was--I was, I think, overtly making a statement because I was very, very disturbed about the--you know, that horrible hypocrisy of American sexual morality. It just rather bothered me.

I used to become exercised by the Madison newspaper when I was a student, a young student. In the arrest column, they would always list the people who had been caught in illicit relationships. I mean, they would actually list names, you know, people who weren't bothering anybody else, just in bed with each other. And police would bust into the place and arrest them for doing a bad, a naughty. I think as a young man that infuriated me. I really do think that some of my paintings where I rather explicitly used the nude many years ago were, I think, to a large audience, at least--they were shocking or obnoxious to them, at least. Which is what I wanted to do. I think I wanted to disturb with those things. I think to a certain extent I did. I was simply expressing an unhappiness, I think with a certain kind of expressed, at least, or overt sexual morality, or really sexual hypocrisy, I think in a sense.

I think it's much more benign now in my painting. You know, the nudes I use now look heavenly. I think in reference to some of the sexuality of--overt sexuality in a good deal of contemporary work. But of course, that's one thing, I think, in a sense that really has--hasn't it?--changed, I guess, to a certain extent at this time. And that is--at least in an overt sense. I really don't think there's anybody--people are just sleeping as much with each other as capriciously as ever. But at least it's not disguised nearly as much. As a matter of fact,

sometimes I've become just a little bit nostalgic for illicit affairs. There is something about being illegal which lends a certain kind of spice to it.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: I understand.

MR. WILDE: And also which--I can't think of the word--where everything is acceptable. It's in common usage now--permissiveness, makes it a little less interesting, and also deflates a little bit my subject matter. I sometimes think of that, of the use of the nude and there were--really it did have a certain kind of impact and that sort of thing, particularly when used with a certain kind of glee, so to speak, of a certain kind of erotic glee, I guess. That in a sense has all been taken away. And occasionally now when I use a nude in a certain kind of way, I say, "Well, my god, you know, this has probably been done in one of the girly magazines before."

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: And I'm doing the same thing. I say, "Well, it really doesn't make any difference, because as Chagall said so well"--

[End of cassette 3 of 3, Side A]

MR. WILDE: The question arises after the work is done sometimes. In other words, then there is a time of evaluation. And then, very often, one is so close to it, and it's difficult to evaluate. But there is a possibility of evaluation and a sense of succeeding more or succeeding less. But that is so goddamn capricious--it really is--that I will look at a thing tonight and say it's fine. I'll go and look at it tomorrow morning, and I say, my god, you know.

[Laughter]

But there's a great difference between what I considered I had accomplished that night and what I see I had accomplished the next morning. But then again, it could be when I look at it the following night, and I say, again, "It's fine." You know, there is a vacillation insofar as quality.

The best thing that can happen is for something to go away. In other words, to see something that I haven't seen for a long time. Then I can definitely make a better judgment, I feel, and, I feel, one which is more meaningful, more substantial than any kind of immediate judgment I can make. I'm always on--

MR. DANOFF: Do you make changes?

MR. WILDE: Never. No, no. Never. But I'm terribly fascinated at seeing old work that I haven't seen for--occasionally, I have the chance of seeing something I haven't seen for 20 or 30 years. And I'm--it's almost sort of a morbid curiosity of looking at the work. And that's not really true. But I'm intensely interested in seeing it.

The Abercrombie Trust--I think you have one painting from it.

MR. DANOFF: We have three.

MR. WILDE: Oh, three?

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: They gave some to Madison, too. There's a little painting that I'd forgotten the painting, really. And apparently I gave to Gertrude, a long time ago, a little painting of shells. And I was tremendously interested in seeing how it survived, so to speak, over that period of time.

MR. DANOFF: Did you like it?

MR. WILDE: Yes. I liked it quite a bit, really. And that's not always true. Mostly what I'm interested in, I think, is the inferred immortality or perpetuation of the--that's a strange word to use because there is no life involved--of the paint and how the paint stands up, in other words. Is it standing up well or is it not standing up as well? And there's quite a wide variance sometimes in the work. I don't know why that happens. Or at least in my opinion there is. Or the paint is almost unqualified by the 20 or 30 years that have happened, and in other cases where it's qualified to a certain extent. I imagine it has something to do with the environment in which these things exist, actually, where sometimes you get an unhappy physical environment, such as too much humidity or too much dry heat or whatever.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: Where certain things happen to the paintings, or too much soot in the air, or whatever, where there is a greater qualification of the paint than in other instances. Because the technical method I use doesn't change that much, so there shouldn't be that much difference in the quality of the surface, actually.

MR. DANOFF: So, are you usually satisfied when you're done? I mean, do you usually get it to that point where there aren't too many mornings when you wake up and decide that you were wrong the night before, that you're still quite not finished with it?

MR. WILDE: No. That happens fairly often. But as I say, it vacillates so much I usually ignore it pretty much. In other words, this business of feeling that you had done something very, very well. And then the next morning you look at it and you don't have that feeling--it goes away. But then that feeling can return again the next morning, or whatever, you see. So it usually has--in other words, if I feel that it isn't quite what it should be, I just go ahead and start working on it and usually it seems to come around where I want it to come.

But there are differences, obviously, in my evaluation of one thing as against another. But then again, I suppose at the same time, even though that's always there and I think you understand that with any artist who is working with anything, it doesn't make any difference--

MR. DANOFF: Sure, sure.

MR. WILDE: Always there, and I think it has to be there. I don't think it can be too damn overt. In other words, it can't be too terribly influential on what happens, because if it is I think it becomes devastating. In other words, there's sort of a blithe spirit that keeps on going to [inaudible]. And consideration that on the whole what you're doing is worthwhile doing. That's all. You know, I have also been a teacher for many, many years. To do anything fairly well is very difficult to do. So there is that kind of reward as well. I don't know if that answers your question or not.

MR. DANOFF: No, no, it does.

MR. WILDE: [Inaudible]

MR. DANOFF: The process again--we're going to pick that up beautifully.

MR. WILDE: Yes.

MR. DANOFF: Let's take the probably the more difficult one, of the painting. What is the process involved from the time you get the image in your brain until you get the painting? What is the way of preparatory sketches? Are there any studies?

MR. WILDE: Yes, there are sometimes, Mike. The drawing--it's always preparatory, in a sense. In other words, I never paint directly. And the drawing, which is preparatory, is either preparatory on the panel I'm going to paint upon or it is preparatory as a separate drawing on a separate sheet of paper, which later I use as a reference to putting it onto the panel. But in the sense of the drawing as preparatory, even if it's on the panel, I am working it out on the panel. In other words the drawing is very complete. And all the changes and qualifications take place at that point.

Now, that, in reality, is probably the point of greatest intensity of concentration. First, the idea, the imagery that I've talked about before. And then the turning that to the panel. But I think all of the qualifications of that immediate imagery, that immediate concept, take place in the development of that drawing on the panel. Once that drawing on the panel is established, then this process of relatively routine--

MR. DANOFF: But consuming.

MR. WILDE: But consuming, right, that's right--a complete involvement in it, but relatively unthinking, perhaps, except in the kind of thinking that's involved simply with the process itself, actually.

But the intensity of the development of the idea takes place in the drawing. And that always happens. That even happens if I do the drawing on the panel from a previous drawing, which is--that's a very strange quality in that sometimes I doubt my veracity when I do it. But if I had a preparatory silverpoint drawing, which is done on a prepared piece of paper. and then I do the same subject on a panel, I redraw that whole thing. I don't trace it or copy it in any way. I simply redraw it again. And it's important that the spirit of the original drawing be transferred, and I won't be satisfied with it until it is. In other words, it's a little bit different because the creativity has happened in the original drawing. When it's transferred, it's redrawn, so to speak. But there's an insistence to get the same quality of spirit or aliveness in the drawing on the panel, which is--even though it is done from the drawing, which had already been accomplished, actually.

There is that process of going out, washing out that very, very complete drawing and then really obliterating it

with paint when I do it right on the panel, you see. It's destroyed, which I guess is in a way nothing other than just a perverse insistence, and I go through that process, regardless. Actually, because many people say, "Why paint on that? Leave it the way it is."

MR. DANOFF: What do you do? What kind of panel to begin with? How do you treat it? I mean, what kind of wood or--

MR. WILDE: Yeah. Usually a birch. Usually, a solid birch. You can't get it, or at least I can't get it now very, very large. Or else I use birch plywood. If I go over a certain size, which I hope, I have faith, has a certain kind of stability that will persist--maybe not. But that is the panel I use. And then--

MR. DANOFF: Do you draw right on it without giving it any treatment?

MR. WILDE: Oh, no. No, no. That's the basic panel, which I give--use a traditional gesso, rabbit skin glue gesso. First of all, a glue sizing and then a gesso coating. And I use a ground that is, oh, probably a quarter part oil and the gesso in the rabbit skin glue solution gesso, so that the panel that I work on when I get to it isn't too absorbent. In other words, it already has a little oil in it and it doesn't soak up the oil too intensely.

Then I work on an elaborate--after that, of course, you sand it. After it's hardened, sand till you get the surface that you want. And then the silverpoint drawing directly onto the panel. And washing that out to the point where I feel it's sufficient to develop the painting.

MR. DANOFF: Why silverpoint?

MR. WILDE: I have no idea.

MR. DANOFF: Why not silverpoint?

MR. WILDE: Why not silverpoint? I guess. Yeah. I like it. That's all, primarily. It's very, very responsive to the gesso panel. If you ever have tried drawing on gesso panel with a pencil, you get a very, great intensity. In other words, it tends to get squishy and not precise. And I guess that's why I like this. I like the feeling of the silver on the gesso. It's a very terse, sharp, precise method. And any other media drawing on the gesso panel would be much too broad or blurred, much too unspecific, so to speak. So I guess there is a reason why I use the silverpoint, although the primary is--I sort of like the idea of using silverpoint. And as you say, why not use it? So that's probably the basic reason for using that.

MR. DANOFF: And then do you use a number of glazes when you're painting?

MR. WILDE: Right. Right on. Then the silverpoint drawing is isolated. And what I use for that is a very, very weak varnish solution. In other words, maybe 10 per cent mastic varnish with turpentine, just enough so that the silverpoint--because the silverpoint is soluble in oil, you see. So, if you don't do that, the silverpoint drawing will simply disappear as you work over it. So there is that isolation.

And the reason I keep it very--the varnish very thin, of course, there is the theory that you lean over--fat over lean instead of the other way around. And if you've got the varnish on there too much, the oil--the varnish dries more rapidly and the oil would likely crack in reference to the varnish. So it's a very lean usage. And that isolates.

And then I begin my glazes. And it's a matter of glazing in or filling in or some of my critics saying tinting in an area. And then I build it up with whites. You begin to model the form with whites. And the glazes deepen it. The whites pull it back up. The glazes deepen it. The whites pull it back out. The glazes begin relatively specifically, and as the painting progresses, the glazes tend to become more--not universal, but more, they cover a larger surface. And eventually I will sometimes glaze a whole panel with a certain tone, even though all the color--there are individual colors involved. But I'll simply go over the whole panel with a tone of gray-green or whatever, and then work back into it again specifically. When I say "work back in," building up the volume or the form again with the opaque.

MR. DANOFF: Is this the way you were taught?

MR. WILDE: Right. It's sort of the way I think I developed in a sense myself. It has some relationship to egg tempera. And I did do some egg tempera painting as a student, with both Jim Watrous and Bill McCloy, in the traditional sense. And that's the process of egg tempera. In other words, it's a building up, although egg tempera can be totally transparent. But also, egg tempera can be used with opaque whites, building up opacities against transparencies, this sort of thing, back and forth.

I think really--I really think I sort of evolved as this technique of painting, myself. It might be like somebody else's. It could be like any number of people, I suppose. But I don't think I really got it from anybody else. It



sort of was a transition from the egg to the oil. And the process of the egg being a series of overlays of layers and layers and layers rather than the single, you know impasto. That I developed in using oil in the same manner. So it comes from that, I think, in a sense, actually. But as I say, there might be a million people working the same way; I have no idea. But I don't think that technique was in any direct sense gotten from anybody. And I hope it's a substantial one.

MR. DANOFF: Have you used panel for a long time?

MR. WILDE: Yes, for a long time. Very seldom I used some canvas, not very much. And I did a long time ago, I used some Masonite panel rather than wood panel. The wood is a caprice. It just--I like the idea of wood instead of the Masonite. And I guess it's a reflection of the idea that Masonite is a manifestation of one of those insidious modern things that I don't like very much.

[Laughter]

So I avoid it as much as possible. Although so is plywood. You know, there's absolutely no difference.

MR. DANOFF: Why don't you use canvas?

MR. WILDE: Canvas, of course, is the traditional method. I don't like the--I like it all right when I use it with a very heavy gesso. But then really that's antithetical to the canvas, because it has almost no give, you see. And by using a heavy gesso on canvas, I can get that very smooth, polished--not polished. It's not really a polished surface. But it's a very smooth surface. I can get that kind of surface on canvas, but then the gesso gets so damned thick that you're running into, as soon as there's any kind of pressure on the canvas, you run into cracking of the gesso. And I've had a little problem with that in certain paintings.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: And really, canvas wants a very thin coat of--as a size, a very thin coat of an oil-based medium rather than a traditional gesso. In other words, canvas, if it's sized to the extent that you lose its texture, which I don't like, you're running the danger of getting it on there so thickly that you're going to have some cracking with it, actually. So that's, I guess, the primary reason.

MR. DANOFF: A little bit about drawing, about how you make those, still erase a lot?

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: Yeah. Oh, yeah, sure.

MR. DANOFF: Going back to the bombing?

MR. WILDE: Oh, sure, I do. I think there might be a certain kind of delusion that my drawings are absolutely a direct--and they are not. They are worked and worked and erased. And now, of course, when you're drawing with silverpoint, you don't erase with an eraser; you erase with sandpaper or steel wool. Actually, is the media used to eliminate. But that's used to a certain--very often, I do like to leave certain elements of the evolution of the drawing visible, in other words, not to remove all of those.

But my drawing is, in a sense, though perhaps skilled, it's not virtuous. In other words, it's not the kind of drawing--although I respect that tremendously, it's not the kind of drawing of Degas with the--it's once and that's it. It doesn't possess a great deal of virtuosity. It's labored. And it's reworked.

MR. DANOFF: You sound like you like that?

MR. WILDE: I like it. Yeah. No, I do. I like the things that happen while that's going on. I like the idea of reconsideration and representation. I like the idea of searching for the--and that mysteriously just right sort of thing. I think I personally, I'm wary of the presumption of saying "one time is right." One time is a tentative estimate. The second time is another estimate, which maybe is a little bit better than the first time. The third time is another reconsideration, which might be just a little bit "better" in quotation marks, than the second time, et cetera all the way down the line. But I like that process of reconsideration of a drawing, and I do it a great deal, actually, in the evolution of the drawing.

And as I say, there may be a certain presumption. People look at those and assume that these were done only one--you know, just the one single time.

MR. DANOFF: They kind of have that look.

MR. WILDE: And that is not the case, actually.

MR. DANOFF: By the way, would a little bit of El Ropo bother you?

MR. WILDE: No, no, no.

MR. DANOFF: Okay. I'll open up the door. That way so we can get some of the smoke in there.

When do you decide that you wanted to make your painting rather than drawing? How does that work? I mean, how do you decide that you want to make--is it wrong to think of drawings as somewhat more primary with you?

MR. WILDE: I think they are. They are more, yes. Even though, as I just indicated, the drawing is also worked, you know.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: It's not a--the drawing, the element of virtuosity in a drawing, even though on the whole in drawings there is much more of it, I think, in my drawing that is not the instance. So there isn't all that much difference in process, although the drawing is still less involved. It is--it's sort of the skeleton of the painting, I guess, in a way. In other words, the process is the same. The structure is the same. But it only goes just that far, and then it stops.

MR. DANOFF: But you decide that some things you want to have color? How do you decide that you're going to paint a thing rather than draw it?

MR. WILDE: That is an interesting--the decision is made in--it has nothing to do with subject or anything else. The decision is that now I am going to draw. And I draw for six months or four months. And the decision is, now I'm going to paint. And I paint for six months or four months. And that, I think, is more what it is actually than any specific reason for--I mean, any good reason for taking it one way or another.

There are certain things, of course, that need color, right? And I think that is probably more true with objects other than figures or whatever it might happen to be. Although that's not really true. I guess if I decide that I'm going to do drawings for this six months, I probably will deal with a slightly different sort of thing. I mean, the subject--

MR. DANOFF: Subject?

MR. WILDE: Even though there's going to be a similarity, there will be a slight change of emphasis in the treatment of the subject. And if I, on the other hand, decide I'm going to, for these three months, do painting or whatever, the emphasis will move a little bit away from that. Generally speaking, I think in viewing the work that--not completely true. But on the whole, the still life, particularly the natural object still life, that's more--I do that more in paint. The figure and the figure not just by itself--sometimes just by itself, but in conjunction sometimes with objects or certain kind of situations or whatever. It's a little bit more in drawing. But there's a huge area of overlap where it's not one way or the other.

MR. DANOFF: Do figurative works tend to be more fantastic? Or not necessarily?

MR. WILDE: Yes, I think so. I think so. Although I like the feel in the best of the still lives. And that--even though there is no overt manifestation of it whatsoever, that there is a certain element of fantasy.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: In other words, that there's a certain quality of sort of unrealness about the emphasis of the reality. That's one of the precepts of the school--and I guess it no longer exists, but sometimes you hear it still talked about--that I have from time to time been associated to. When people wrote about me, I think as the magic realist, where you do reality, working with reality, but it's imbued with a certain kind of super-real magic, so to speak, in a way, in that sense having some relationship to surreality, although without any of the Freudian or deep psychological involvement that's in surreality, actually.

But I guess that is sort of the one core or essential quality of the group of painters which I have been associated with, which apparently critically no longer has any recognition at all. There's the so-called magic realist. But there used to be shows. I was in an exhibition in the early '60s called the Six American Magic Realists, you know. And it was an American Federation art show that traveled all over the country. So, you know, it would be like saying now, today, Six American Conceptualists or whatever.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: The same thing is going to happen to them, you mean?

MR. WILDE: I suppose. I don't know. You never know. You never know. It could very easily. I guess it depends whether it gets in the books first or not before it disappears.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: Who else was in the show? Do you remember some of the other people?

MR. WILDE: George Tooker .

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm. Was Bohrod?

MR. WILDE: No, Aaron wasn't in that. Oh, he very often is associated with that.

MR. DANOFF: Yes. In his book he talks about magic realism.

MR. WILDE: Yes.

MR. DANOFF: I'm not deserting you. I'm just looking for more matches.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: Vickrey, Robert Vickrey [phonetic].

MR. DANOFF: Oh, Robert Vickrey. Right.

MR. WILDE: There could have been--I get a little confused because there could have been other shows that were associated. There was a Canadian painter, Alex Colville. I don't know if you've heard that name.

MR. DANOFF: Scoville?

MR. WILDE: No, not Scoville. Coville, C-o-v-i-l-l-e.

MR. DANOFF: There was a truck painting or something like that.

MR. WILDE: Well, he does--he sort of paints dogs and against very plain, terse backgrounds that look like that might have been done by Pierre Della Francesca, but in the twentieth century. They're very--there was a--I was surprised just recently to see a definitive article on him in one of the art magazines.

MR. DANOFF: *Art International* maybe?

MR. WILDE: Maybe it was.

MR. DANOFF: That's what I was remembering. That's why I was thinking of a truck.

MR. WILDE: That's right. As if they could have been almost done by--there's a certain Pierre Della Francesca there.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: Only in a modern dress. But that's sort of unusual. That's not the sort of thing I'm used to seeing of his. And it in a way is more, you know, contemporary in its subject usage. In his earlier, work, the work that I knew, he would usually strip it pretty much of any contemporary association. In other words, it would just be a dog against the snow or something like that.

MR. DANOFF: Did it bother you to be typed for a while as a magic realist?

MR. WILDE: Not at all. It doesn't make any difference, you know, what they call me as long as they spell your name right. I don't think that's a concern. I think it is--I suppose it is with certain people. It's very important that they have, you know, a certain association--that they're associated with a certain group or whatever.

MR. DANOFF: The fact that there were a group of artists who could be--or that there were artists who could be so grouped maybe means that there were a number of people who had absorbed surrealism?

MR. WILDE: I think so.

MR. DANOFF: And in various parts of the country.

MR. WILDE: Yes, yes, right, exactly.

MR. DANOFF: And because did you feel consciously that you were part of this magic realist group? Did you know you were part of a group?

MR. WILDE: Only after it sort of took place.

MR. DANOFF: Yes, that's what I would imagine.

MR. WILDE: You see, I had no association with any of these people. I mean, I got to know some of them later in New York and met some of them and got to know them fairly well, and even had some correspondence with some of them. But in no sense was there a conscious school or group. And I suppose that's the reason that it simply went out of existence. There wasn't any interplay. In other words, there were perhaps 10 or 12 or 15 American artists who would have been considered at that time magic realists. And I don't think any of them ever knew any of the others except in a very informal sort of distant way. Perhaps they met. Perhaps they were conscious of each other.

MR. DANOFF: Did it bother you living in Madison? I mean, in the sense that you may have been feeling isolated? Or you didn't feel isolated because you felt, as you said before, things are about the same everywhere?

MR. WILDE: No. I never felt isolated. No, it doesn't--there are certain things that are problematic to me. So--that are difficult for me, which would enhance that idea or support that idea. That is, I--on the whole, I dislike talking about art, you know. And I know that if you're with groups, they talk about art. And I guess it's because ultimately I have a sense of privacy and that sort of thing and almost a reluctance to share ideas, or perhaps a disinterest in other people's ideas. I don't know what it is. But I've never approved of it, except in a distant way. In other words, I've always--we used to have long conversations, Karl Priebe and I--his knowledge of art history is fantastic. Nobody was ever aware of that, but he had a tremendous--we'd spend hours talking about, you know, Renaissance painters and that sort of thing and how much we loved them. But we never talked about our art, you know, never. It was amazing. Never touched on it at all.

I think on the other hand that the groups that are closely associated personally, where there's an intercourse continually between various artists in a certain group, that their talk primarily is about their own work and what they are after, what kind of ideas they're after and that sort of thing. Insofar as I know, that has never really taken place at all in my experience. We would talk about other people's work, or talk about things more and more often, things that interested us, even outside of art.

But never, never about our tint, or aims, this sort of thing. And I suppose that's one of the misfortunes, you know, why this took place, because there was no--it wasn't documented, in a sense. That is, our interest. There was no conscious effort to spell it out, so to speak and to spread the gospel. Very little sense of what--of the prophet or pariah or anything else among the people that I knew, or myself.

MR. DANOFF: But you did very well in being in all those Whitney biennials, and those University of Illinois shows and the show at the Metropolitan and the Modern.

MR. WILDE: Yes. Well, that was simply because I had a gallery in New York at that time, you see. And I don't know. It was the gallery that--it was people who were deeply or closely involved with some of these. A lot of them I never even knew, you know, but they knew me.

[Laughter]

I mean, I met--Lincoln Kirstein, for instance, very closely associated with the Modern Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and who was intimately involved with the gallery that I was with for a time. And what's interesting in that sort of thing, he was a patron of Tooker and Jared French, as well as an early patron of Wyeth, actually. It was interesting, that kind of--a very strange kind of interest. It was a pristine reality, and simultaneously an interest in sort of the strangeness that sometimes permeates that kind of work. When I say "strangeness," I mean strangeness only in the sense that we were talking about before, the magic of realism, you know, where realism sort of goes beyond simply itself and takes on a certain kind of magical quality, actually.

But the fact that there was no really intellectual conversation or communication between people who were like the five other painters that were involved in this show. As I said, I never had any contact with any of them. I met a couple of them. You know, that's it. There was no association.

MR. DANOFF: There was no Cedar Bars. There--you know [inaudible].

MR. WILDE: Exactly. No. Yeah. I was trying to think of that name, and that's what I couldn't think of. You know, there used to be a couple of little nightclubs in Chicago some of us hung out in. But what we were mostly interested in was in hearing the jazz and the music and whatever and talking crazy stuff. But never about art,

really. I think there was a mutual respect, you know, to a certain extent, at least.

I really think it has something to do with the intense individuality, perhaps, which I still suffer from. When I think about it, all those people did, too. And that is that if anything seems to even be to a certain extent widely accepted or approved of or seems on the edge of being accepted, there's a certain tendency to turn against it somehow. I think that--which I still suffer from. That quality, I think, pervaded to a certain extent most of the people that I was associated with, to a large degree. I really think that the group of Glasier, Priebe, Abercrombie, Julia Thecla, a few others, if we would have had--if we could have found a Boswell [phonetic], you know--

MR. DANOFF: An anthropologist [inaudible].

MR. WILDE: Yeah. If one would have come along at the right time.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: There was somebody who was very close to that. And that is a longtime friend of myself and all of these people, and that was Dudley Huffer, who is--now teaches English at the University in Oshkosh. But who did some writing at an early time, who did a couple of privately published books which were involved primarily with the work of--more the personality, I think, rather than the work, but to a certain extent the work of Karl, myself, Gertrude Abercrombie, Sylvia Fein, another artist who came from Milwaukee originally and went to California. Published privately in the early time. Was on the edge of that, but then he himself became interested in drawing. And gave up the writing pretty much completely. And now draws continually and doesn't show--doesn't show. He has thousands of drawings and he never shows anywhere. And has certainly pulled out of any involvement in the art world, completely. Doesn't exhibit, but he works continually. Those are interesting situations. But that's neither here nor there.

But the point is that, if at the right moment an advocate or an apologist had appeared, it could have made all the difference in the world. And I think sometimes those things are capricious, really. And now, on the other hand, it seems to me that any, so to speak, of people that I've had some association with, and myself as well, that if there's any kind of historical survival, it's just sort of going to be a capricious individual accident, you know, that there are enough pieces around that someday somebody is going to fall upon and say, "Well, you know, this has some importance" or whatever.

MR. DANOFF: Some people feel that for the past--since the late '40s there has been such a New York orientation, powerful movement followed by powerful movement, or perhaps powerfully promoted movement followed by powerfully promoted movement--

MR. WILDE: Yes, yeah, yeah.

MR. DANOFF: --that a lot of younger artists are really put off by that. And there's a lot more activity happening in the regions, whatever that means.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, yeah.

MR. DANOFF: That is of interest to critics and that things are somewhat decentralized and somewhat less interested in glamour and somewhat less interested in making it in conventional ways with the traditional promotion. I don't know if you feel [inaudible].

MR. WILDE: Right, right. Well, I think to a certain extent I think there's a realization on the part of most individuals who have a certain kind of sensitivity to it that the end product of that sort of thing, of course, needs to be limited. In other words, only so many superstars can be created. You can't--if you know what I mean. No matter if there are 50,000 artists who really, in a sense, are probably all of roughly the same real value, the same real merit, you can only take how many of those and make superstars out of them? In other words, promotion can only result in that many. And I think it's simply the facing of a reality that there's only going to be a certain number who receive that kind of treatment, actually.

And it's all involved, I think, with the whole precept of the tradition of art history and the mainstream idea, you know, that there are certain key individuals. And of course, you're very aware of this with your background in art history. I don't know how you feel about it. But there are the key individuals who are, you know--everything is based on that, and everything evolves around that. And outside of those key individuals, everything else sort of falls by the wayside. You know, the Rembrandt in the early seventeenth century, early middle-seventeenth century--then everybody else is somewhat secondary. And that, of course, is true in terms of production, et cetera, and that sort of thing.

But then again, there are hundreds of works of art that are probably equal, if not superior, to many of the

Rembrandts, you know, and by completely anonymous names that you never hear about. And that whole theory, I think is carried up into the present time, where there are the huge figures, you know, really do--everything moves or changes according to their precepts. The whole structure of the history of art shifts and this sort of thing because of the work of a certain person, which is absolute nonsense in reality.

[Laughter]

You know, there's no question about it. It's really hyped. And that is carried into the present time. In other words, I really blame most of it on old Melflynn, the German who developed the whole theory of a stylistic evolution in work, that Rembrandt slowly got hazier and hazier and mushier and mushier, and that's influenced some way, and that got to this person, and they came directly from that, that sort of business. I don't think it really works that way, actually. I think there are certain nationalistic characteristics that reappear. There are certain Germanic qualities, there are certain French qualities, there are certain Italian qualities. There are certain American qualities, I think, that appear again and again.

But I don't think there is this one thing happened because something else happened first, and then that happened after that. You can work out that kind of theory or that kind of precept, I think, by using illustrations. But I think somebody with a deftness could, you know, do just the opposite and work out the same sort of theory.

MR. DANOFF: Do the opposite, yes. I often wonder if the history of art in this country would be written differently if what the Milwaukee Arts Center owns were in the Metropolitan, and what the Metropolitan owns were in Milwaukee.

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: It sure would.

MR. DANOFF: And then everything that's in the Milwaukee Arts Center now would be super-famous and determining the course of art history.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, yeah, I think it could easily happen. In other words, you're pointing up that art is really made, to a certain extent, by certain people who are writing about it, I guess, to a large extent. At least the awareness. I sort of, as you can suspect, I sort of stay out of it. I rarely look at an art magazine, except when somebody tells me particularly I should, you know, if there is something in it. And I do occasionally--I do like to look at auction prices. They interest me. But not the theory or anything like that. But I guess the amount of activity in those is fantastic. You know, the richness of the publication and that sort of thing is crazy. The color reproductions, all very important, all very terrifying.

And then going back to what you stated before, that there are many, many, I think, of the younger people, and not even the younger ones particularly, who simply decide that they want to stay outside or they must stay outside or it's necessary to stay outside, or they can do nothing else but stay outside of the mainstream. And they simply have to get off the thing.

But I think the potentiality of support is there. In other words, I think Wisconsin can, for instance, support 100 very fine artists. And that's only 100 of almost none. At the same time, there are some--there is a great deal of quality, where there, generally speaking, is no recognition or acceptance, you know. So--but I think that that exists. And high-powered--I've always been turned off by high-powered gallery people. To put it very, very frankly, mostly by high-powered gallery women. They turn me off.

MR. DANOFF: Women. Now, let me change the tape.

[Laughter]

[End cassette 1 of 3, Side B]

[Cassette 2 of 3, Side B, is music.]

MR. WILDE: In a sense, that's one reason I did them, you know, simply because they hadn't been done that often, the apples. They were to take the most happening kind of subject matter and to do it again. That's not terribly different. I think some that some of your people in the show that you have right now are doing a little bit the same sort of thing, a very common, the pop subject and trying to do it. And interestingly, the Jim Dine now doing the models and squash, you know. What's that? [Inaudible] all the way from Zurberan and back and forth. It's been done a jillion times, but doing it.

And again, that's an interesting expression of faith, that you indicated that with his work, that his work does have that quality of the individual person, the individuality that some of the other artists seem to wish to dissolve or diminish completely.

MR. DANOFF: They work very hard personally to be impersonal.

MR. WILDE: To be impersonal, exactly. Right. Exactly.

MR. DANOFF: Some of those earlier paintings like the real big one at the Milwaukee Arts Center, the one with the figure pointing up in the sky--is it right to say that you're not doing those kinds of paintings, I mean with that kind of subject anymore? [Inaudible] kind of subject?

MR. WILDE: No, no. I think it has out-served. For some reason or another I could not do that now. In other words, I indicated before that I have no concern and no interest in evolution or progress or having to do something different and this sort of thing. But I think you do, inevitably, it happens. That my work now is much different than it was in a much earlier time, even though occasionally I will repeat something. But I think technically it has changed. And there is a certain attitudinal change as well.

I think there are certain kinds of things that are no longer meaningful or that I simply could not do. That is one example, I think, there as well, the *Wildeworld* painting [*Wisconsin Wildeworld*, 1953-1955]. That is a painting I certainly simply would not be capable of doing at this time. It was absolutely valid and meaningful at that moment. But it would not be now, and it would even not be repeatable or reconsiderable. Let's put it that way. Because I did mention before about thinking about--

MR. DANOFF: The drawings?

MR. WILDE: Yeah, of doing a series of what's called *Work Reconsidered* which I think is a grand tradition in art. And sometimes it's not done often enough, where you simply repeat something that you did at a much earlier time and see what happens this time. But I think there's a certain realm of things that that might be feasible in doing. In other words, at this moment there are certain drawings that I did in the '40s that I feel a certain kind of sympathy to or a certain reaction to that they would be doable or redoable or reconsiderable at this time. There are certain things that would not be. And the *Wildeworld* would be an example of that.

MR. DANOFF: When you did the *Wildeworld*, did that have some sort of like specific allegorical [inaudible]?

MR. WILDE: Yes, it did. Very clearly. And it was done for that. It was simply sort of a statement of my position at the time. And the facets that are involved, in a very obvious sense, that I the observer and my three worlds, which are fairly clearly presented and separated--one is the world of the provincial, of the region. For that, the painting--it doesn't mean much unless someone can see the painting, but you can see the painting. But you know what it is in these.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: In looking at the painting, to the left is the small-town street, simply a presentation of the provinces, provincial. In the middle is sort of the natural world basically speaking. In other words, the landscape, the environment. And to the right is the classic world. In other words, the historical world, the world of tradition. And at the same time, that world qualified to--no, each world to a certain extent by little caprices--in other words, in the historical world, the world of tradition, classical tradition there are some nudes, which sort of pop up irrationally. In the regional, provincial world there's a naked lady walking down the street next to a man and pops up rather irrationally. And also the same thing is true in the natural world. In other words, those elements--in other words, I could not accept anything quite as clear-cut as saying the three elements that are really me at that moment--I think in the early '50s when I did that. Clearly me at that moment, those three elements: provincial, natural, classical. It can't be quite that easy. There have to be other little things that have to come in and twit it just a little bit.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: Such as the appearance of the nude.

MR. DANOFF: The naked lady.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, that's right. The naked lady.

MR. DANOFF: Don't see too many of those in the provinces walking down the street.

MR. WILDE: No, not usually. That's sort of it yeah. That did have an unusually specific--it was sort of a statement of my situation at that moment. That's all. Of my aesthetic condition or whatever it happens to be. Then I think probably more than most things I've done that have sort of a message to it to get across. As a young man, I guess, sort of examining his situation at a certain given moment. That's a very common thing in the history of painting, I think.

MR. DANOFF: Right.

MR. WILDE: I think it is. You find that very, very often, actually, where that happens. So that's about it on that one.

MR. DANOFF: Yes. I mean, even people who aren't painters do that examination.

MR. WILDE: What?

MR. DANOFF: Even people who aren't painters do that same examination.

MR. WILDE: No, no, exactly. No, I think everybody does.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: In all of the arts, you find it. You talk about the art because there it's manifest. You know, it's made visible. It's seen. It comes out some way, either a book or--in a sense, autobiographical, but not really, the early novel, James Joyce, *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or whatever, the same idea. And that's a very traditional concept, I think, actually.

MR. DANOFF: Okay. So you're working on the seasons or the months. Any other future projects? Or that's plenty to think about?

[Laughter]

MR. WILDE: No, usually they come one at a time. They come one at a time. I'm working on a--I don't know if this is any moment, but I've been working for the last two months on a portrait. It could be a fairly important portrait commission or might not. There's a--it might not work. I'll have to see what happens.

But I'm doing it simply because, first of all, there's a certain challenge in doing it. I'm not a portrait painter. And when the people asked me to do it, I inferred--not inferred, I told them I was not a portrait painter. And they insisted. It's a thing that I've been working with, and it's something of a problem. It's--I felt an obligation because the subject is an old and long-time friend who happened over the years to get himself into a very important position. But I'm not saying what it is. But I've been working with it, and it's really an interesting kind of challenge. It's something I haven't quite done before. And devoting more time to it--you know, I could have done eight other painting in the same amount of time than I'm doing with this.

I think every once in a while people do this sort of thing, work with a specific kind of portrait, even though that is not their thing at all. Or--I shouldn't say "portrait"--specific kind of project which may be a little bit out of their--like a Jack [inaudible] large murals in the government building or whatever.

MR. DANOFF: Refreshing to do something different.

MR. WILDE: That's right. It's a change.

MR. DANOFF: It's a challenge.

MR. WILDE: Yeah. It's a challenge and a change. So I've been preoccupied with that. But as I say, I've got this going along pretty well now, so I have begun this new series, which I find, you know--this is also refreshingly exciting after the really hard work of working with this portrait, which is still at the same time a rewarding sort of thing. We'll have to see what happens to it. If it works out, people will hear about it. If it doesn't--

MR. DANOFF: They won't.

MR. WILDE: They won't.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: If it works out, you might be besieged by others.

MR. WILDE: I think I could resist. I think I could resist. That won't be a problem.

MR. DANOFF: Well, you answered all my questions. Is there anything else that you wanted to add or go back to talk about?

MR. WILDE: No. I don't think there is. I'm just wondering if there's anything in total that I would like to say. I think on the whole we've covered most everything.



MR. DANOFF: There were some nice things said in total as you were going along, actually.

MR. WILDE: Yes, right, right. And the thing I always dislike, which happens occasionally, is that I find myself ending up not saying quite exactly what I wanted to say. You probably have that experience, too, whatever the situation, whether it's just a conversation with somebody else or--

MR. DANOFF: Or a lecture that didn't go quite right.

MR. WILDE: Or a lecture, right, a lecture that you wish you would have put this in and you didn't, or you wish you would have said it just a little bit of a different way.

MR. DANOFF: Right.

MR. WILDE: I think on the whole that the--excuse the stuttering, but I'm trying to phrase something that is a little bit difficult.

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: That's all right. I've cleaned my pipe.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, okay.

MR. DANOFF: [Inaudible] pipe cleaner.

[Pause]

MR. WILDE: The artist in America is in a--it's not the easiest position in the world. There's an elemental distrust and sort of a--not really quite place for the artist in America. I think historically the place is made very warm and welcome. But I think momentarily there tends to be a rather difficult environment for the artist to exist in, on the whole.

MR. DANOFF: Is it harder now than 20, 20 years ago?

MR. WILDE: Probably a little bit easier on the whole, but in a way also harder, I think, simply because I think two things happened simultaneously. And one is, while the acceptance of the artist has certainly intensified or increased over the last 20 or 30 years, certainly, that acceptance at the same time has proliferated to a certain extent, you know, the activity. So whether there's really been any elemental change or not, I don't know. In other words, there's much wider superficial acceptance, at least. Whether there's a much wider profound acceptance in that, I don't know.

MR. DANOFF: You mean now there are more people--now it's more fashionable to have art--

MR. WILDE: Yes, I think that's a way of saying it.

MR. DANOFF: But the quality?

MR. WILDE: The quality? Well, the quality is there, I think. I don't think that's changed much. I think the level of acceptance has perhaps changed a great deal. And with the widening of acceptance to a certain extent there is a diminishing of the level of the quality of the judgment that's being made. In other words, there are more things that are to a certain extent, at least, accepted or even recognized or even adulated, which unfortunately if standards were perhaps just a little bit more acute wouldn't be taking place.

It's all part, I guess, of the great deal of what's happening in the world as a whole. In other words, the ability to sway opinions through the forceful use of certain kinds of communication devices which take place--the greatest art media, I guess, insofar as the modern world and the recognition of the technical changes that are taking place is, of course the medium of television. Undoubtedly, and of course, simultaneously with that is the abysmal quality of the general stuff that is produced and the resources that go into that, which are, you know, totally--you hear or worry about \$100,000 items in your budget. And you have, you know, money devoted, millions by the minute for something of that sort. That's disillusioning because, in a sense, potentially at least, it's an art form, you know.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm.

MR. WILDE: But yet, by the same token, you know, with general acceptance of painters, which is very, very interesting because your people in this exhibition that you have here now, the pop artist tradition, they still are painters, you know, in a sense in a traditional way: that is even though there are radical departures.

MR. DANOFF: Liechtenstein is still painting with a paintbrush.

MR. WILDE: Exactly, yes. And Ado is still making forms in three dimensions and this sort of thing. It really is a highly traditional process. That traditional precept or basis of work is so very, very widely accepted today, which is--on the other hand, as I say, is good. You know, there's no question about that. It's strange, though, in a sense, how much later this happens, in a sense, really that traditional artists out of which this has all come, the nineteenth century even, were not accepted, you know. Those things which seem so highly non-revolutionary, in a sense, were simply not at all--you think of, well, Matt Gold [phonetic] or whatever, there was simply no recognition whatsoever in any broad sense.

MR. DANOFF: Um-hm. Sure, sure.

MR. WILDE: And today these things that are proclaimed revolutionary things--in other words, they aren't simply that. They proclaim to be completely revolutionary--find great and total acceptance, a great and total audience, at least insofar as, you know, strong social and financial kind of backing that they receive.

MR. DANOFF: Do you think that that adversely affects the artist to have that kind of acceptance?

MR. WILDE: No, no, I don't think--no, I think it's great. I really do. No. In other words--

MR. DANOFF: You don't think the terrible acute suffering and struggle and starvation is--

MR. WILDE: No, no. No, no. That's what I was saying. I think it is--in that sense it's better, I think. In other words, there's a certain kind of level language about it that is manifest in the one media, which is the most universal art media there is, and that's the media of television, where the level is so abysmal. And that is the one avant, the one really technically advanced media there is, literally. While the traditional media, which profess a certain kind of revolutionary attitude are so relatively widely accepted, there is sort of an intellectual problem that exists there in a sense, although I think on the whole it's good because it allows these people to do precisely what they want to do. I mean, it allows for that kind of very radical departure, where, you know, they can actually do things which are manifestly ugly. You know, in reality, like the [inaudible] was doing these cutout kind of--

MR. DANOFF: Oh, yes, yes, yes.

MR. WILDE: These more recent cutout cardboard things, you see. That can be done simply because of the wherewithal to do it. There need be no consciousness of inability to do it because they are going to starve to death if they don't it, that sort of thing. So in a sense it allows, so to speak, every man to do almost what he wants to do. While there was a time where, literally, if somebody did that, their life was doomed to a certain amount of abysmalness through nonrecognition and that sort of thing. And so in that sense, it's all to the good, I think.

The one thing we haven't talked about at all, and that is a little bit we touched on, and that is--I don't know if this is of any importance. But I always--I have a feeling way down deep that even though this wideness of support is good, I think it's the libertarianism in me that questions, generally speaking, the support of the arts by any kind of governmental structure. I think it's because of the--as I say, the libertarian idea of the inferred censorship that somehow will be almost inevitable.

Now, that, of course, is also true whether patronage is private or public or government; it doesn't make any difference. Yet at the same time, it seems to me, again in the tradition of Jeffersonian democracy and libertarian--that's something that the government is a no-no. They cannot do it. But the private individual can. He can censor by not supporting. The government can censor by supporting certain things, and it becomes a vehicle which I think is perpetrated with dangers.

And yet, by the same token, there are other things that bother me a little bit, and that is the amount of that money which is absorbed by nonproductive things--the administration of the fund, you know. In the state here, for instance, the budget up till this year, the total budget had been--

MR. DANOFF: For the Wisconsin art support?

MR. WILDE: Yeah. Totally just for administration. None of it went [inaudible]. It was just administration of federal funds that they passed on.

MR. DANOFF: Right, right.

MR. WILDE: But the total budget, which was close to \$1 million, was totally for simply administration of federal funds, which weren't all that much. It took \$1 million to distribute about \$4 million worth of federal funds. It seems there are some problems with that.

MR. DANOFF: How would you feel about if someone that you knew or one of your students applied for a state art support grant or to take a leave of absence to do a project they wanted to do?

MR. WILDE: I would support it simply because it's there. I mean, that sounds--there's some incongruity there. But in other words, it did exist and therefore, because that money is going to be handed out anyhow, I certainly would--if I had a student whom I thought deserved it, I'd be happy to write a strong letter in his support because I'd rather have it go to him than somebody else. That's all.

But I don't know if the capability of judgment is there. It's what I call in a sense the greater scrutiny of private money. You know, it looks with a little harder eye. It may be wrong, it may be right. You know, you can't tell what it's going to do. But it looks with a little tougher eye, a little more carefully. It inspects more intimately before it makes that decision because it's a decision that--you know, where the immediate effects are felt, to a certain extent, regardless of the amount of money involved. Even though it's huge amounts of money, it's still your money that could be put somewhere else. It doesn't have to be put there. So I have some difficulties with it.

Yet, I think--and when I talk about this, of course I'm talking only about the sheer level of creativity. I have completely different feelings about the performing arts. On the other hand, I would like to see that supported at a much higher level, albeit I think in a much more direct level. I think there's too much folderol in getting the money there.

MR. DANOFF: But why would there be any less potential censorship with the performing arts?

MR. WILDE: Because the performing arts are working with work that is already done.

MR. DANOFF: What if the artistic director of the ballet company--can he now potentially feel pressure to program--I don't know--*The Stars and Stripes Forever*?

MR. WILDE: No. I'm sure that's true. I think it's less true.

MR. DANOFF: You think it's less true.

MR. WILDE: In other words, I think the potential for indirectly inhibiting creativity lies with the support of creativity. And again, that's an incongruity. But where by supporting a certain kind of creativity or quasi-creativity, there's an inferred censorship or nonsupport of other kinds of creativity, which I think can be very negative. I think in terms of the performing arts, of course, the thing that's involved there is the work of art already having been made, and no question about that that can be manipulated. In other words, performing only the things that expresses certain kinds of points of view. But that's awfully damn hard to do if the thing is already made or has been achieved, particularly if it is in reaction to some kind of relatively--well, relatively wide acceptance. In other words, not universally, obviously, because that's never going to happen, but at least recognized as having some moment of some importance in a relatively general or universal way. But there are problems in that, too.

But I still think, and you're indicating that you're doubtful to a certain extent--I think there's some difference. That is--that is like anything else can be manipulated, to a certain extent. I mean, it's not quite as precious a thing. From the point of view of the element or the idea of pure creativity, that already has happened. And so it's a little tougher. I think it will stand a little more abuse and manipulation, a little bit more negative emphasis--"abuse," I guess, is the best word--than will that creative individual spark, actually.

MR. DANOFF: I guess my doubt only has to do with my experience here as I know it. If there's a project if someone believes in doing and the institution has proved that it might be possible only to do it by helping--by getting some support from the government, and then--

MR. WILDE: Oh, sure, sure, yeah. Well, no, that of course--it's now institutionalized.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: And therefore, we have to react in the best way possible to it. In other words, I think that there is no concern about reversing anything that has happened. I don't think it will. I have some skepticism about what has happened.

MR. DANOFF: Yes. I see. Sure.

MR. WILDE: And at the same time, the future of what will happen, I think, it's possible that it can be slightly redirected. And there's an interesting thing that happens. A quasi-democracy in function, like the National Endowment artist grants, fellowships. Those are supposedly democratized because they are determined by a jury of peers, this sort of thing, which on the surface sounds very, very good, I think, actually. And in a sense, I

think that might be better served if it were done in a more blatantly patronizing way, where the government simply arbitrarily made the decision that this guy was to do that or this one was to do this, which they do, even now, to a large extent. You know, there are many murals in government buildings, sculpture. Many of the government buildings, et cetera, that are simply not arbitrary, but, you know, lateral decisions that are made by people that have nothing to do with the art world. There's no pretense of democracy in that kind of selectivity, you see.

In a way, it could work more effectively. Because I don't think there would be the element of negativeness. In other words, now there's a universal relatively--at least, I think there is; I'm not sure. But everybody I know tells me that they're applying to the National Endowment for the Arts every year for something.

MR. DANOFF: That's right. [Inaudible]

MR. WILDE: And, you know, in Wisconsin, I suppose, in Madison alone, maybe 80 people apply, and one maybe or one-half gets it every year. Which is an inferred negative reaction to what everybody else is doing, perhaps, in a sense. In other words, while if the one guy--if somebody in Washington decides that Joe Blow in Madison is going to do this, they put him in there and do it, and then there isn't that sense of--

MR. DANOFF: Rejection.

MR. WILDE: Yeah, that's right. That's right. I think in a sense that might be a little bit easier.

But my feelings about it aren't clear cut. I think--I guess they are fairly clear cut; they're not easily expressed. And I think really what it amounts to is I think it needs some--it needs a jaundiced eye to be watching it. And hopefully there are a few that are keeping their--because it--some of these things, there's a general acceptance that they are good. I know when the hearings were up for the State Art Board this year, I wrote a few letters. Among others, I wrote a letter to Kleczka, Jerry Klatch who is the Chairman of the Joint Finance Committee. And to my amazement--first of all, I wrote a letter to Dreyfus and got a letter back saying, "I thank you for your letter, and I'm always appreciative to know that somebody is supporting the arts."

[Laughter]

MR. DANOFF: Ah! Oh, no!

MR. WILDE: Or something to that effect. Well, when I wrote to Kleczka, I got a long letter back and very what seemed to me--and I don't think he would have taken the time for it if--or else he had somebody good to write it for him, I don't know. But if there hadn't been a certain amount of thought behind it, stating that he was delighted to have my letter because it expressed many ideas that he had way down deep, but was afraid to express them because in a certain sense he was reluctant.

MR. DANOFF: Didn't want to get attacked by the opposition.

MR. WILDE: He didn't want to appear to be anti-art. That was the thing.

MR. DANOFF: So coming from an artist, it was--

MR. WILDE: It meant something.

MR. DANOFF: Yes.

MR. WILDE: Now, whether that will change his position at all, I don't know. But as I say, I guess really, the more the merrier. The only way I think I feel about it is that I hope somebody with a fairly jaundiced eye is watching what is going on in that area because I think it can very easily become crazy. You know, I've had some experiences with the arts board and some of the arts councils that are very disturbing.

MR. DANOFF: Like Kafka?

MR. WILDE: Yeah, yeah, yeah, somewhat Kafkaesque, right. But that's probably not a very important issue.

Certainly the state can do a great deal more for the arts. But the problem is how to do it. How is it to be done? I guess. That's the critical matter. In this country we have a funny way of falling over our feet when we start dealing with things like that, I think, really. I guess because there's a tradition of you know, government staying out of the arts, or the arts staying out of the government and that sort of thing, that that's all something that shouldn't be involved, shouldn't take place, this sort of thing. And it's a little bit heavy here, I think, on the whole. I suppose a great deal of what's going on, in a sense, is simply awkwardness with something with which people who are involved are completely unfamiliar with it. This never happened before. And a lot of it is going to go awry from that point of view, actually.

Okay?

MR. DANOFF: Great. Terrific.

MR. WILDE: Think we have enough?

MR. DANOFF: Signing off.

[Off the record]

MR. WILDE: There are just a few things I'd like to add as an addenda. First, in reference to side 1 or the first part of the tape when talking about the family history, I neglected to say anything about my mother's family, which also goes back early in Wisconsin history. In other words, both sides of my parents' family go back early into the nineteenth century. And in that sense, I'm truly a Wisconsin product. Both sides of my mother's family--that is, her father's and mother's side, the Luehrs was her mother's side, L-u-e-h-r-s, and the L-o-t-z was her father's side, Lotz. They immigrated to Wisconsin to the eastern central part of the state around Manitowoc and Plymouth in the 1840s as well. And I just wanted to add that.

[Off the record]

MR. WILDE: In addition, where I was talking about my early high school associations and my teachers there, I mentioned a couple of people's names specifically. And I'd simply like to add the name of Fred Logan, who was my teacher at Steubin Junior High School. I think probably he was instrumental in an early introduction to the arts. In other words, I took art courses there, but Fred Logan was also an artist at that time in Milwaukee, as was his wife Clarice. And I think they both had some influence on widening my interest in the arts, and I wanted to add that as well. That was at Steubin Junior High School before I attended high school.

And then in addition to that, living on 49th Street, besides Karl Priebe at the time that I was in high school, was Owen Gromme, who is well known as a wildlife artist. He lived on the corner of 49th and Vine, just a half-a-block away from me. And it was an interesting thing because at that time, as I indicated earlier, I had a very wide interest in natural history, as I do now, but I tended to do more bird drawings, that sort of thing. And very often I would visit Owen then. And he was still working at the library then, although he had begun his paintings for his *Monumental Birds of Wisconsin* series of that time. And I think in a certain sense he had some influence on my early development.

Then I was talking about an arts organization and activities in early Milwaukee, here in Milwaukee when I was a young person. And I did mention the Walrus Club. And as I recall, that was the correct name, that it was an organization of artistic activities in Milwaukee that--it had a wide interest. It was not only in painting, but in the drama, literature, et cetera. And associated with that as well, I might add, or perhaps in a certain way directly, were a few other names I'd like to mention. That is, Charlotte Partridge and Miriam Frink who for years ran or directed the old Layton Art School. And Elsa Albrecht, who was a good friend of my aunt Toni Miller, who was at the old Milwaukee Teachers College, which is now the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. She was an art teacher there. She also had some influence on my early development.

Then other artists in the Wisconsin scene, or particularly in Milwaukee, whose work I was acquainted with and I was very aware of, Peter Rotier. Rotier and Hola Rotier-Fisher [phonetic] and Todd Zoboter [phonetic], who was a Racine artist who was very active and very--almost had something as a young man of a national reputation. I believe he passed on early. And then Ruth Clemens, who was then Ruth Miller, really, my present wife's sister who was married to Paul Clemens at that time who was also influential. And I was acquainted with her work.

And then at the university, I did mention Jim Watrous in the art department and Jack Van Cort [phonetic]. I'd also like to add Ronald Stebbens [phonetic] who was an old-liner, an old-timer there in the art department. But he was an anatomist. That is, he taught a strict anatomy course, which really I didn't do very well in because I couldn't quite understand why you had to learn all those names. But it did give me some knowledge of muscle structure and that sort of thing. It gave me a great deal of interest in the human body, which I've continued all the way through my work.

And then associated with the Glasier group, I mentioned a few names, and I'd like to add a few more. Lloyd Garrison, I believe I did mention. Then there was John Goss, who was--I believe in sociology or economics and later went to Harvard. There was Carl Bricken, part of that group; Binar Johanneson [phonetic], the pianist, and Nate Van Vitsinger [phonetic], who was in the law school. They were, as I say, part of the group that were part of this informal salon that Glasier had, held weekly or biweekly in Madison over the years. It was an extremely interesting and unusual group and very influential on a young freshman and sophomore at the university, undoubtedly as I was at that time.

I mentioned before Hale Taylor and Fred Burkhart as others. Then I mentioned Dudley Huppler, of course, as

part of my early Madison association, and Ann Helperin and her husband. Ann is an important dancer on the West Coast, and her husband now an important landscape designer. In Chicago I had a little difficulty thinking of names, and then a couple more have come to mind since of my associates there. And one was John Pratt. And he was the one who very early did extremely interesting paintings on glass. That was way back of course in the '40s, as part of the Chicago group. And then Kathryn Cook, whom I got to know fairly well, who was the curator of painting at the Chicago Art Institute in the '40s and perhaps into the early '50s.

In side 2, there are a few things, one correction I'd like to make. I mentioned that silverpoint was soluble in oil, in talking about preparation of my panels. And I guess that's really not quite correct. This is in reference to listening to the tapes earlier. And actually, the silverpoint is not soluble in oil. But the oil imprimatur--that is, rubbing the colored oil surface on the panel, would have a tendency to blur or smear the silverpoint. And therefore, I isolated it before I added or used the imprimatur on the surface.

Then in reference to the New York people that I knew and got to know there, I mentioned several besides Tooker. I mentioned Tooker and my dealer there, of course, Edwin Hewitt, who gathered about him a group of so-called or sometimes referred to as magic realists, or at least to a certain extent realists, people like Ellis Coldwell and Richard Mayhew or others--Jared French, Paul Cadnis [phonetic], of course, is very well known. And not associated with the Hewitt Gallery, but others I knew were people like Vickery and Bernard Perlin, whom I had some associated with while I was--during my visits to New York, which were fairly frequent at that time, at least once a year over a period of 10 or more years, and sometimes more than that.

One side 3, we had some discussion, or you asked me, I believe, whether I considered myself to be a regionalist. And I indicated no, not really. And although I have a deep association to this region and deep roots, which is the term you used, I believe, I did not consider myself a regionalist. In other words, certain interests that I have, and I neglected to say something about where I live.

And I feel, really, it's truthful to say, as has been said about me in certain instances before, I think, I believe Tracy Atkinson once mentioned it. In a way, I could have lived anywhere. In other words, I doubt whether my work would have changed or would have changed substantially whether I was living here in Evansville or in the country near Evansville, Wisconsin, or around Madison, or around Milwaukee, or whether I lived in New York, or whether I lived in California or Florida or wherever. I feel that the importance of the locale is relatively minimal, and I think certain characteristics of my work which sort of transcend region, the region in which I live.

Then at the end of side 3, I was going to quote--and I started quoting Chagall and talking about subject matter, the nude, and how the nude has become so common in many contemporary forms. And I think we even talked about *Playboy* magazine and that sort of thing. Sometimes it seems that it's a hackneyed subject. But as I said, I was going to quote Chagall, and that didn't quite make it, as I remember, in listening to the tapes. Somehow, that quotation was cut off.

It was to the effect that the subject matter of the painting, his painting--he considers this, and I certainly agree with his point. This is nothing new; just, Chagall put it well. And it simply is that it's not what he paints, but how he paints it. So I think the subject matter in that sense is relatively a minor consideration. It is on a certain level an important consideration on my part and from my point of view and certainly most artists who use subject matter. But eventually, it is a relatively unimportant consideration, because I think really, the ultimate thing is, as I indicated before, the individuality of the hand, the signature, and the style of painting, which really is the critical consideration in the end.

Then on side 4, we were talking a little bit of the support of the arts and the way it has proliferated in our day, greatly increased acceptance of art. But unfortunately, that great increased acceptance tends to be at I think what I'd have to call a relatively low level. For instance--and this is simply a vocal thing. But I know it's taking place over the whole country. So I can state it. And I think it has a validity. That is, this so-called Madison Art Fair, which is held on the square every, I think, early July, where there are over, I think over 100.

And talking about--I was talking about the government or government support of the arts, the federal support of the arts, or state, or whatever--official support of the arts. And I indicated grave questions that I have about that and the inference of censorship. That is, what is selected is approved in a certain sense; what is not selected is not approved. So there is an implied censorship involved, which I had talked about before. And I was a little bit not quite totally forthright, because I would like to indicate something which bothers me a great deal. And that is simply the fact that I--if I do--am fortunate enough to have a respectable or substantial income from my painting, that of course is taxed at a very, very high rate. And in other words--

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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