

SI AAA logo



Oral history interview with Ted Gilien, 1965 Mar. 3

Contact Information

Reference Department
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560
www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions
www.aaa.si.edu/

Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Ted Gilien on March 3 and 5, 1965. The interview took place in Los Angeles, California, and was conducted by Betty Hoag McGlynn for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Archives of American Art's New Deal and the Arts project.

The original transcript was edited. In 2022 the Archives created a more verbatim transcript. Additional information from the original transcript that seemed relevant was added in brackets and given an -Ed. attribution. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Would you mind saying something, just anything?

TED GILIEN: I'm very happy to have you [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs] in the studio to talk to.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Thank you. I never can tell. This is a little Japanese thing and I'm never sure whether—

TED GILIEN: We've got a big stereophonic thing in the house.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: Double amplifiers.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Wonderful.

TED GILIEN: And Jeremy, you know, plays with this thing all day long and he records. He's a—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —a child that's going to be in the—

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: This is Betty Lochrie Hoag on March 3, 1965. [Recorder stops, restarts.] —third, 1965, interviewing Mr. Ted Gilien in his studio in Los Angeles. Mr. Gilien is a painter, teacher, writer, and lecturer, I imagine. And at the present time has a beautiful show at our new design center in Los Angeles, which I was fortunate enough to have seen earlier this week and was so happy I did, because he has some lovely things in it. Mr. Gilien, before we get into the Project period, which is what I'm supposed to be doing on people mainly, I'd like to ask something about your own life and work. Where were you born and when, if you care to tell us?

TED GILIEN: I was born in Brooklyn on Saint Patrick's Day, March 17, 1914.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And did you go to school in New York?

TED GILIEN: Yes. I went to Manual Training High School, and then I attended Brooklyn College evening for about seven years while I was going to the National Academy and the Art Students League, which was a very short period of time. Maybe a year and a half.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And then my father died, so. First job I actually had was working for the Brooklyn Sewer Department, as a draftsman, but I wasn't a very good draftsman, so they sent me out in a thing called property damage department, notating cracks in sidewalks. It was a kind of a made-project, but six months later I was on the Federal Art Project. And that's where the whole thing—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Started?

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I know that—I don't know how very well we can skip this and come back to it, since everything goes on from that time. I think I'll diverge from my usual—

TED GILIEN: All right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —technique and ask you about it, because there's so many things afterwards.

TED GILIEN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You were still living at home at that time, because later you did have a studio in New York?

TED GILIEN: That's right. I moved—the first studio I had was on 92 Fifth Avenue. I believe the building is gone now, but I was fortunate in being—you know, with many very well-known painters, I had a very small studio, right next to the elevator. And I remember paying \$18 a month, which I subletted half to a sculptor. And he, you know, brought these big things in and it was like a Marx Brothers comedy. I was a painting a big mural and he had these big monuments, and we finally—[They laugh.]—we finally—he moved to one studio and I moved to a very famous studio building, 30 East 14th Street.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: 30 East 14th?

TED GILIEN: And I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Your first one wasn't near Dick Andrews [ph] by any chance? Was it a Hans Hofmann student? Because he's described the same kind of thing. And every time the L came by everything shook and he had to stop painting and wait.

TED GILIEN: No, the studio I had on 15th Street—I was on the sixth floor, and I was in pretty good concrete. William Zorach was right next door to me.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: For goodness' sake.

TED GILIEN: And Noguchi was down the hall, and there was Nathaniel Kaz. And they were all using these air hammers, you know, for cutting granite. And they all were working in stone and they—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh my—

TED GILIEN: —talk about shaking a building, [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs] you know? This was doing it. Some of the poorer sculptors were always worried about the electricity and they would jump the meter and be very worried that the [they laugh] the electric man would come around and catch them, so that they were you know, quite nervous working with the hammers. But evidently it went out of vogue about a year later. They went back to hand carving.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But I will always remember that period of the sixth floor, you know, shaking to pieces, and trying to paint, you know, with holding one hand on the easel and—[they laugh]—[inaudible] like a subway train.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: This must have been about the early '30s?

TED GILIEN: About '33 or '[3]4.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And how did you happen to get on the Project?

TED GILIEN: I had done some painting that I submitted.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: To the Treasury Department?

TED GILIEN: To the Federal Arts Project.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:05:00]

TED GILIEN: And it was quite—not too hard for me to get on, because I was a sole supporter of my family at the time when my father died, so that even if I was a lousy painter, you know, they made room for me.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And the first job I had was an assistant mural painter on Ellis Island.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Whom were you assistant to?

TED GILIEN: I was—I think it was a man named Morris Beck [ph].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Morris Beck [ph]? I have to write these names down—

TED GILIEN: Right. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —for spelling—

TED GILIEN: And I haven't seen these people in many, many years. And somehow they let this project go and they took the assistants and they put them on the easel project.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see. You were assistant to him on a mural there?

TED GILIEN: Yes. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —my job consisted of not even painting the mural, it was just doing research—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —going across the ferry to the library and, you know, getting the material they needed, then spending all the time up in the art room until about three o'clock and then I would take the ferry back. [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.]

[Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] [Inaudible] kind of a—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What was the subject of it? Do you remember at all?

TED GILIEN: I remember vaguely. It was something to do with the Civil War.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. That would mean a lot of research.

TED GILIEN: Yeah. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Was that mural finished, or did you ever see it?

TED GILIEN: It never got done. They had another mural painter, Edward Laning, who was a very famous painter, who did most of the murals on Ellis Island. And once I left the—once I left the mural project, I had other activities—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —and I had just forgotten about the whole thing, although later on I did get a mural commissioned which was a—from a competition for the St. Louis post office.

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You competed for the post office [cross talk] in St. Louis?

TED GILIEN: That's right. I didn't win the job but—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: But you were given another one?

TED GILIEN: —they gave me an award for a mural in a St. Louis—it was in—as a matter of fact,

it was in Lee's Summit, Missouri.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Hm. Now there's some famous spiritual—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —program or something from—

TED GILIEN: The Unity or something.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: I think that's the one.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That's very—is that a large town?

TED GILIEN: No, it's a very small town. As a matter of fact, when I finished the mural, I sent it in in a wooden carton and they didn't know what it was. The postmaster kept it down in this big crate and I came, and I said, you know, I'm a mural painter. And he looked at me and he said, I don't know what a mural painter is, but I think that box downstairs is yours.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. [Laughs]. This was your oil on canvas all—

TED GILIEN: Right, all—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —ready to go.

TED GILIEN: —all wrapped up.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: So, I was there with two other people, who were coming out to California. So we found—we finally found a deaf paper hanger in Lee's Summit, Missouri, to help us hang the mural. And he didn't know what a mural was either, but he knew that a mural was something like wallpaper and that he could hang it up. So, we went in there at night, and he put this thing up, and we left the next morning. I took some pictures and that was that.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Did it hold? Did you ever go back to see it?

TED GILIEN: I never went to see it, but I'll tell you what, [inaudible] [something amusing -Ed.], when I got to be a combat artist, you know, during the war—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —I ran up to somebody in Japan and we were discussing, you know, the old projects and the murals and he said, You know, I've seen some lousy murals, but the one—the lousiest one I've ever seen was that one outside of Kansas City.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: And I said, you know, Don't go any further. [Laughs].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Laughs]. Oh, no. Was it yours?

TED GILIEN: It was so bad, you know, but—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —I had to agree with him, you know. [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] And I always said to myself, if I had the money, you know, I'd have—you know, bought it back, but—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —it was one of those things. Matter of fact, [inaudible] [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs] the original sketch was on the Missouri/Kansas border conflicts. And it was a little controversial.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I had a feeling they were still fighting the Civil War down there.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see.

TED GILIEN: So that the government advised me, you know, don't do this, do something else.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: Being a city boy, I did this pastore scene. [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] And there was a woman in the town who protested to the government because the horse that I painted wasn't a thoroughbred. And she said, We raise thoroughbred horses and we would never allow, you know, a man to curry a horse while a woman was carrying something on her shoulders. But—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, for heaven's—

TED GILIEN: —they said, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —sake.

TED GILIEN: —forget about the whole business. It was kind of an amusing thing that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —I told Matt Weinstock [ph] once when he had a radio show. [They laugh.] He used it. It was kind of a funny thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh—

TED GILIEN: But these things—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —[inaudible].

TED GILIEN: —were going on all the time, you know. People were protesting for, you know, very strange reasons.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Sure.

TED GILIEN: And I think Lee's Summit is directly in the middle of the United States. And it was, you know, which way to go? So, I just turned around and went to California.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, right from there?

[00:10:00]

TED GILIEN: Right from Lee's Summit.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: With the two fellows—

TED GILIEN: With these—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —that you were with?

TED GILIEN: —two fellows. And one of them—Ray Rice, who was a very well-known mosaicist and sculptor in San Francisco.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Ray Right?

TED GILIEN: No, Ray Rice, it's in—I think it's San Rafael.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: He was promised a job at Pomona College to teach sculpture, but evidently the thing got botched up. And he ended up, you know, washing dishes in the college.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Probably glad to have it at that time—

TED GILIEN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —[inaudible].

TED GILIEN: And the other one, Gene Tepper, who's a very well-known designer in San Francisco, has his own company, he used to be with Michael Sapphire [ph]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes.

TED GILIEN: —which is a very big advertising company. He was the vice president. He solved the whole problem by joining the army. [Laughs].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: And I think they put Gene in the cavalry. And it was kind of a strange history with Gene, I saw him occasionally. We were working in the San Pedro shipyard just at the time the war started. I remember going up to San Pedro and being stopped by the National Guard and saying, you know, the war started, and you can't get in there.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Hmm.

TED GILIEN: And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Did you have a job—[Cross talk.]

TED GILIEN: —without a pass.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —awaiting you there?

TED GILIEN: No, I was working in the shipyard. When I got out from Lee's Summit, Missouri, things were very bad. And I went to various art schools, and I said, you know, I'm a great mural painter. They said, you know, thanks a lot. And there was no jobs at all, so I went to work on a bull gang for 30¢ an hour.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What is a bull—

TED GILIEN: A bull gang is a house wrecker, actually. I had a 18-pound sledgehammer and I just walked around smashing concrete all—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —all day. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That's bull like the cow?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —with the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I just never heard the term before.

TED GILIEN: It's just physical labor.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Sure.

TED GILIEN: And then although I was, you know, quite in good shape, I could never keep up with these professional, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Wreckers.

TED GILIEN: —diggers, these Mexican men were very strong, very powerful. They could be 70 years old, keep going all day long, you know.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Good heavens. Imagine that.

TED GILIEN: Just a matter of environment conditioning.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I believe I was on it—I was doing this for about a year and finally the shipyards became very active. And then I did the same damn thing in the shipyards. They gave me a 18-pound sledgehammer—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Good heavens. [They laugh.]

TED GILIEN: —[inaudible] around.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You were a professional by then.

TED GILIEN: War [ph] work. Yeah, I was pretty strong.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: And you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, you still are, obviously.

TED GILIEN: —kind of funny incidents of—I think I'm the only man in the world who ever broke his own toes with a sledgehammer.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, how awful.

TED GILIEN: We were working on a—on what they call a hot job. One of the freighters came in and we were taking off the head and I had this big hammer in my hand, I put my foot up [but it slid off the side and I hit my foot instead -Ed.]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, no.

TED GILIEN: —and I hit myself in the leg. And I was sure that when I took my boot off, I'd just pour out all the blood, but it just cracked it. And just kept on. They said, we'll put a little tape on it. Just go back to work. But it was kind of an exciting period for me, you know, I felt I was really doing something. I'd try to paint, but it was impossible because I was working. Sometimes I got 54-hour shifts.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I was only a helper. And what I mean by 54-hour shifts—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, I was wondering, what—

TED GILIEN: We would go out on a job that was in the Pacific, you know. They couldn't bring it in. And we would just stay out there until the thing was, you know, ready to go—ready to get it to go out again.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. This was for the shipyards?

TED GILIEN: This was for the—

[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible] the navy?

TED GILIEN: No, it was called the Los Angeles Shipyard. They had many of them. They had Bethlehem, and they had—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: They were private shipping—

TED GILIEN: —[inaudible].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —businesses then.

TED GILIEN: I see.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see.

TED GILIEN: But they were handling, you know, government transports and things like that. And I was quite happy, you know, when the Uncle Sam sent me a thing [my draft notice -Ed.], I was

so happy to go and get out of that shipyard. [They laugh.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I want—excuse me just a minute, I want to get back to artists in San Francisco. Gene, what was his name?

TED GILIEN: Tepper. It'd be—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Do you mind spelling it, please?

TED GILIEN: No. T-E-P-P-E-R.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I was wonder if he was on the Project [inaudible]

TED GILIEN: No, he wasn't on the Project. He was a little younger than I was. I remember his family was a little more affluent than my family.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: So that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible] didn't have any at that point.

TED GILIEN: He was painting, not terribly serious. He went through the Art Students League Remember—as a matter of fact, he went to the Art Students League with my wife—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —who was from Oregon. And she had gone to the Portland Art School. And then she went to New York, and she was with Harry Sternberg for a couple of years as a monitor. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Interesting.

TED GILIEN: —she was a very good lithographer and sculptor and I think—[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, I knew she was with ceramicist but—

TED GILIEN: —my wife is quite a—you know, she's much talented than I am. [They laugh.]

[00:15:06]

I always say that. But she has no—the trouble is she has no ego, you know, when she does things it's because she loves to do it. And she never competes. And I think it's the only woman in the world I could be married to. [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] If I had to compete with somebody, you know, this would be—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I wonder if she had C. S. Price when she was in Portland. Did she ever mention—

TED GILIEN: I beg pardon?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Did she have C. S. Price as a teacher?

TED GILIEN: She may have—that's right. I remember her—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Speaking of him.

TED GILIEN: —that name. Sure. He was painting [inaudible] paintings. [Laughs].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: People just don't know very much about him and—

TED GILIEN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. No, I believe this is the man she mentioned. She knew a number of artists—a man named Louie Bunce who she talks about. He's a very well-known Northwest painter.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I've heard that name.

TED GILIEN: And so, you know, to continue from the shipyard, somebody told me that if you're an artist go to Saint Anita. They have a visual aids department. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: This was while you were at the shipyard?

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: Just before I was going to be drafted, I thought I would enlist so that I could get this thing—but the enlistment and the drafting came about the same day.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And when I enlisted, they gave me a series of shots, and then about a week later when they gave me the letter, you know, telling me I had to go get me another series of shots. So I think I'm the only guy in the world that ever had two series—

[They laugh.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You wouldn't dare get anything from that.

TED GILIEN: But I did get into this visual aid thing. And I did a very strange thing. I didn't understand the army life very well and I figured that being, you know, a mural painter, I would go the general and suggest that I do a mural in Santa Anita. And he said, Gee, this is wonderful —

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: He did say that?

TED GILIEN: Yeah. But I didn't know that my first sergeant wanted that job, so—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, for goodness' sake.

TED GILIEN: —about 10 minutes later, I was in an ammunition company.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: On your way away from Santa Anita.

TED GILIEN: They put me—no, they put me—it was a—the base was an ordinance base and they had had me in ordinance. And ammunition was part of the ordinance.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: And so, they sent me as a camoufleur. But strangely enough, when I went overseas to New Guinea, they needed—they didn't need any camoufleuring [ph], camouflaging. They had all the trees and the camouflage they needed so that, you know, being a—not a particularly good soldier, they reduced me in rank immediately. And from a sergeant they made me a private and all I did was just move ammunition around for [inaudible]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, then you were not a camoufleur.

TED GILIEN: No.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Because the information—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —my research on you—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —said you were one in New Guinea.

TED GILIEN: That's right. As a—for the record they said I was a camoufleur —

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —but there was—nobody needed them, you know.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: They had all the natural camouflaging in the world, so that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —the company I was with was strictly a labor battalion.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And most of the people in the company couldn't read except the non-coms and the officers. And it was just a matter of—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Back to the sledgehammer.

TED GILIEN: —yeah. Back sledgehammer.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: Moving the ammunition. And this went on—this went on for about four campaigns. And I kept saying, you know, but I'm a mural painter. And they said, If you're a mural painter, we've got a great job for you. You paint all the latrine signs, you know.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, no.

TED GILIEN: You do all the lettering on the boxes—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —and all the stenciling. And this went on for about two years. And during an air raid in Biak, I had one of those 105 shells, which weigh about 90 pounds, and they said, the Japanese zeroes comes down to strafe, I don't know what to do with this shell. Throw it at the airplane—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Good heavens.

TED GILIEN: —or throw it in the truck or drop it on—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —myself. And I kind of twisted myself, well, you know, very badly. And I kind of pulled my back out of place.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And then finally they sent me back to a place called Milne Bay.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Is that in the Philippines?

TED GILIEN: No, this was in New Guinea.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, still New Guinea?

TED GILIEN: Yeah. And I went all the way up and then I went all the way back.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. What part of New Guinea? The East Coast? West?

TED GILIEN: Well, it started in Finschhafen. There was only one coast. I think—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —let's see. I went from Finschhafen, I went to Hollandia and I was in that big invasion. Then I went to Biak and that's where I was hurt.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And then they sent me way back and I started to get better. It was all psychological in a way. I was getting, you know, very nervous and I had jungle rot and I had trench foot and I had—you know, you name it, I had it. And being—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah, two years is—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, being a kind of natural hypochondriac, you know, if I didn't have it, I thought I had it.

[00:20:05]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So, you might as well have had.

TED GILIEN: So when they sent me back to Milne Bay, they looked at my record and they said, You know, you're a mural painter, what are you doing in an ammunition company?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, [laughs]. They were telling you.

TED GILIEN: And I said, That's what I've been trying to tell you. So they put me in I and E, you know, Information Education.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: And I became the art director of the base, which was really nothing but doing cartoons for the newspaper.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: This was at Milne—

TED GILIEN: This was at Milne Bay.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —Bay? Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And then this thing folded up and the only thing left was the Armed Forces radio which was on the island. And there was two people to run it, myself and the engineer. And we had a big ball with it. We'd have variety shows with anything that we could grab hold of—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —until finally we were shipped out. The few remaining troops were sent to the Philippines. And then I got to transfer to this combat artists unit which I'd been trying to get on for four years. I finally caught up with them. [Laughs]. They said, Where have you been? [Laughs.] We'd like to go home. And this is where I met Joe Vogel.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see. Now this was under the Army Engineers, wasn't it? The combat unit?

TED GILIEN: That's right. That's right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And that's where Vogel [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: That's it. Now, Joe was originally with the signal core outfit in Europe, and when there were through in Europe, they sent him over to the Philippines and that's where we met. I hadn't seen Joe in 20 years, and we came into this room and I said, Joe, you know, what are you doing here? And he said, [Laughs] What are you doing here?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, where had you known him before?

TED GILIEN: I'd known him on the WPA.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, for heaven's sake.

TED GILIEN: You know, it's like one of those very strange—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Sneezes]. Excuse me.

TED GILIEN: —coincidences.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: And there was another man in town, man named Gene Chodorow who was on the WPA with me. He worked—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Shadoor [ph], like, Shad—

TED GILIEN: Chodorow. I think it's C-H-O-D, Chod—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: E-R—

TED GILIEN: E-R—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: E-A-U.

TED GILIEN: No, it's O.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: Chodorow.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Chodorow.

TED GILIEN: And as a matter of fact, he just had a show at the De Ville [ph] Gallery. He's a sculptor now. I think he worked on a mural, I remember, that somebody came in and painted out. There was a big scandal about this thing. I remember—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: A Federal Arts Project, you mean?

TED GILIEN: Federal Art Project.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And where was it? Do you remember?

TED GILIEN: This was on, I think it was at the LaGuardia Airfield.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I better get a hold of him.

TED GILIEN: Yeah—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible] wonderful.

TED GILIEN: —[inaudible] with Gene. Yeah. And I met him, and I hadn't seen him. And then I ran into him in Nagasaki. He was in the Marines.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Again?

TED GILIEN: With another guy. But the reason I went to Nagasaki, my brother, Sasha [ph], who was with the V-12 program was sent to officers training and they washed him out the last week.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: And they sent him to Nagasaki as an MP. And he was 17 years old.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, for heaven's sake.

TED GILIEN: And I hadn't seen him in four years, so that when I finally got transferred to this combat artists' project, it was a very important thing to McArthur. We had all this, you know, special jazz, you know, arm patches, and the flying priorities.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: Anything you could do. So, I took the advantage to go down to see my brother who was with the Second Marine Division, I believe. And I remember I hadn't seen him as a—you know, 17 years, then I saw him two years later and he was almost 20 years old. And you know, we kept saying, ["Gee, I'll be a son of a bitch! That's my brother!" -Ed.] You know, and we kept looking at each other and it was a tragic, tender moment.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, must have been. Yes.

TED GILIEN: And I did some work there in Nagasaki. This was—they came in right after the atomic bombing and I came in very soon after that, too.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, I see.

TED GILIEN: And then back from Nagasaki, where I got malaria. And I was in a marine hospital for about three weeks.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Pardon me. Did Mr. Boris Deutsch ever tell you about having been in Nagasaki on his way from Europe?

TED GILIEN: No.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: When it was a little village? Ask him to tell you sometime.

TED GILIEN: I will. I've known Boris—[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Very—

TED GILIEN: —many years, you know, and when I came out here—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —interesting story.

TED GILIEN: —he was one of the first painters that I met.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I remember the first time he won this big mural commission, you know, at the post office.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, the post office annex here in Los Angeles?

TED GILIEN: Right. And he was really all choked up. And I was very happy for him.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes. He worked about, almost four years on that.

TED GILIEN: I know. I know. Matter of fact, he sent me a series of photographs which I have of some of the panels overseas and it was, you know, the only connection with any art that I had. I think somebody subscribed for one of the art digests for me. And it would show up six months later all ripped, wet, you know. Couldn't even read it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

[00:25:10]

TED GILIEN: But when I got to the Philippines, you know, got transferred into this combat artists unit, I hadn't been painting at all. So that the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What, for two or three years probably.

TED GILIEN: Oh, it was almost like four or five years I hadn't had any contact with the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes. [They laugh.]

TED GILIEN: You know, any contact with any type of visual aid or painting or anything vaguely connected with this thing. But it sounded very important to be a combat artist. And I remember a strange thing about that, that all the people in the unit were officers. I was a sergeant at the time, and we went in to see the colonel and he made out the papers. They were going to make Joe and I second lieutenants. But there was a little corporal that found out that the day before McArthur had said there'd be no direct field commissions, so we couldn't get the thing. But it didn't make any difference.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What did—did they ever give it to you afterwards?

TED GILIEN: They promoted us one grade.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, they did?

TED GILIEN: But there was no more—no more field commissions.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Did you ever meet McArthur or see him?

TED GILIEN: Yes, yes.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Did you really?

TED GILIEN: I was in the elevator with him a couple of times in the Dai-ichi Building in Japan. I never knew what to do, whether to salute him or, you know, turn around and say, Hello, General. So we paid no attention to each other. As a matter of fact, Joe and I had a studio on the same floor that he had his office, so we were always being protected by his—the guys with the gold helmets.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: And we could never get any visitors, if you know what I mean. [They laugh.] It was terrible. But he used to show up every day—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You might as well have been officers.

TED GILIEN: Yeah, you know, who needed it. So while we were in the—well, from the Philippines they sent us to Japan. This was the next step up. And this was to cover the bombings. And Joe and I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Were you making drawings of the [inaudible]?

TED GILIEN: Yes, we were doing—the war was over by now and we were doing reconstruction drawings of the things in the Philippines. And it was a kind of a period where everything was hanging, and I was still very tired and very rusty—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know. And it was very difficult for me to get back to doing anything at all.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, were these oil paintings that you were making, that were—the ones that are sent back probably to the war [inaudible] in Washington, weren't they?

TED GILIEN: I'll tell you how they did this. We did a lot of sketches, Joe and I. And when we got to Tokyo, I think Joe and I flipped a coin who was going to be a big hero in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. And I got to be the big hero and Joe stayed back and he did—I think he did a lot of research on warehouses in Japan, you know. And he—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Laughs]. For the army?

TED GILIEN: You know, this is part of the—part of what was happening in Japan. Not all of it, but, you know, a great deal of—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it would be, with the army there.

TED GILIEN: Yeah. You know, it's a very big business. [Laughs]. Anyway, when I got back from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, you know, Joe had been working in Tokyo and he looked so—so well-fed and [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] healthy, and I lost about 20 pounds and I looked like a skeleton. But I was the hero. [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] And I had all the drawings and all the photographs and the whole business. And we actually didn't start to paint until we got back to the States.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. And you used your sketches—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —as a base.

TED GILIEN: And they wouldn't let us out of the army until we turned in 20 paintings. So they put us up in a Hotel America and they say, you know, You're going to stay in the army until you turn in your paintings. So we did one painting a day for about 30 days. He had a room, and I had a room and—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Which town was this now?

TED GILIEN: This was in New York.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, in New York?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, we went back to New York.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: For heaven's sake. He didn't tell me this.

TED GILIEN: Well, we went to Washington, but nothing happened there. And they really weren't interested, the war was over. But it was just a matter of turning in certain paintings. And I remember the stuff I did was all very symbolic type of inner type painting. Most of it they sent back to me, because it had nothing to do with the war. Had a great deal to do with Ted Gilien's confusion. [Laughs].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Do you—there's one of your paintings in the exhibit that is here in Los Angeles now that deals with this subject, one you painted in 1951. It looks like serpents, or ticker tape—

TED GILIEN: That's right, yeah. This is the series we did—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —just a ghastly thing.

TED GILIEN: Well, I did these things from drawings I did in Manila. This was—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That's what I wondered.

TED GILIEN: —the senate buildings were artillery bombed. And I had a lot of drawings so that I worked these things up. As a matter of fact, when I got out of the army, you know, I was still going.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

[00:30:14]

TED GILIEN: I must have painted 300 paintings of devastation. This is one of them. I'll show you a lot of them. I sold many of them, but people would say to me the war's over, knock it off. You've had it. But it was something that I just—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You had to get it out of you.

TED GILIEN: —I just had to paint it out of me.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah. Sure.

TED GILIEN: And it was just, you know, very compulsive type of thing I could—the only thing I could do, you know. Destruction and ruins, and just saved me from going to a psychiatrist—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —you know, I just saved myself.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: But once I had the series pretty well along, they found no need for it. Now let's see, what happened after that?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Did you stay in New York or did you come back to California?

TED GILIEN: We came back to California. And this was the strange thing—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You must have been married about then too.

TED GILIEN: No, no.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, no.

TED GILIEN: I wasn't. I got married kind of late in life. I was about 38 years old. But when I did get back to Los Angeles, I thought—you know, now I think of the fact that the reason that I've been doing certain things every, you know, where I stand in the profession is just physical— you know, if I had stayed in New York, I'm pretty sure I would have become one of the—the New York painters.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And the thing may have been quite different.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But coming out to California and not being, you know, environmentally around this thing—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You don't mean the people as much—or do you?

TED GILIEN: Well, [inaudible]—[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —it would be the people and the school, you know, the Abstract Expressionist school which was, you know, very big then. Out here—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —in California it came out, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Late.

TED GILIEN: —many years later. And it wasn't terribly important.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it must have influenced you before, being with people like Kuniyoshi—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and Jack Levine was one of your friends—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —at that earlier time.

TED GILIEN: I always had the feeling—I'm a kind of a literary painter.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: I have to paint—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes, you are.

TED GILIEN: —things, you know. And—because I have to paint series. Well, I find one painting is just like one word or a sentence. And I'll talk with you later about this big novel that I've been working on for—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes.

TED GILIEN: —a long time—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I want to get into that

TED GILIEN: —with my brother. It ties in very closely.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I was reading something about—that Herbert Read wrote. I was reading this morning something Herbert Read said in *Modern Painting* that made me think of your work. He said that at the time of the ominous shadow of universal war in Germany, that there'd been a split of painting into the two schools. One was the motif-less—

TED GILIEN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —object type like Kandinsky—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —went into—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and the other one was where there was a motive, which was a freedom to transform the real object—the motive—until it corresponds to unexpressed feelings.

TED GILIEN: Right. I think this is—[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And that certainly is exactly—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, that's the thing like—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —where you sit.

TED GILIEN: —the way I feel about it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: So that once I was back in California, I was at a kind of a turning point in my life. I started to work with Joe Vogel on some—a lot of screenplays and—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, did you? Huh.

TED GILIEN: You know, Joe is more involved now as a screenwriter you know, than as a painter. Although he does paint. But we did a number of scenarios that we never sold. And I decided that I'm not going to be the big renaissance man, I better go back to what I think I would like to do. And I think—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: Joe went to Europe, you know, quite soon after the war and he was writing—I think he was writing a lot of television things and movies. And I started to paint—sort of paint the war out of myself. And about in 1951, I decided that I'd like to do a book. And so, I got—I'll show you, it's a book I did, I'll give you a copy of it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible] love to see it.

TED GILIEN: It's paperback. It's out of [print today -Ed.]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Is this the one you did with your brother?

TED GILIEN: No, no.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Or is that a different one?

TED GILIEN: This is one I did by myself. It's [inaudible] 50, [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes. [Recorder stops, restarts.] I imagine it was just about at this time, then, when you first came out that you started doing this Picador series probably.

TED GILIEN: No, the Picador series came later.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Are they later?

TED GILIEN: It was after I did this war series, and I did the book.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see. The book is *The Price*?

TED GILIEN: The book is *The Price*.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: Now the series I started immediately after this thing was the big Maccabee series. And there were many, you know, reasons for doing this. I think that I was still, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Ted, may I cut you off?

TED GILIEN: Sure, go ahead.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Just one minute—

TED GILIEN: Anytime.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —before you get into that, I want to tell the tape what *The Price* is.

[00:35:03]

TED GILIEN: Fine.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It's the title of the book which you had published, which were your paintings done during the Korean War.

TED GILIEN: About that period, right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And do you want to tell on the tape what you just told me about the—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, sure.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Because I think it's interesting because—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, I think it would be.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —I'll have this microfilmed, of course.

TED GILIEN: That's right. I think that, you know, it should be told.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes. Please.

TED GILIEN: Although, there were, you know, editorials that were very violent against this type of thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: That it just wasn't—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Our involvement in it.

TED GILIEN: —the thing to do.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I felt that I had to do it, you know. And I would suffer all the slings and arrows if had to be. And—so I borrowed about [\$1,800 -Ed.], with my paintings as security and—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: To publish it?

TED GILIEN: To publish the book, yeah. [Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And then it was published here—

TED GILIEN: I had some good—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —in Los Angeles?

TED GILIEN: —I had some good sponsors, if you look at them. They're very good names.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, certainly—

TED GILIEN: You know, Abbott Kaplan, and [Dr. D. M. Morandini -Ed.], and many of these—Dr. [Donald A.] Piatt who was one of the big philosophy professors at UCLA. And these people thought the same way I did about it. And they were kind of sticking their neck out, too.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Where are the paintings from this series? Do you have most of them?

TED GILIEN: Many of them were sold. I've sold many of them. I have a number of them around,

but—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You have many of them in your show, I think.

TED GILIEN: I have one of them.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: I have the little fiddle player. Did you notice the little guy in the lobby?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: Because it's in the book here. It was part of the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —you know, part of the text of the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Good. Is there commentary with the painting down there? Because I don't think there's any reference to it.

TED GILIEN: No, not on that painting. But in the book, there is a reference to it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I'll have to read that later. Did you sell the books?

TED GILIEN: I sold the book. As a matter of fact—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Were you able to—

TED GILIEN: Well, nothing really was—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —come out even on it at all?

TED GILIEN: The people that sponsored these things—especially Dr. Morandini who was the head of the American Humanist Society out here, took these things to Washington.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Great.

TED GILIEN: And he gave them out to the educational departments of the people in the UN. And he practically gave out 1,000 of them. And he was very happy to do that with the idea that they may publish them in different languages. But there was no response. I don't think that the public relation or the pressure was enough to have them do this. So that I ended up practically giving this thing away. But, you know, I was very happy to do this. And the way I paid it back, I just gave people paintings for it. If they say 400 bucks, I haven't got the money, but I'll give you a painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it came out way ahead in the end.

TED GILIEN: Yeah, and, as a matter of fact, the other day I saw a painting I had given a woman many years ago from this thing and, you know, it's very nice to see this thing at the, you know, the middle of the room. And it's an old painting, goes way back, but you know, this woman who's not very rich managed to give me, I think, about [\$]5[00] or \$600 which she couldn't afford. And I gave her the painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. Well, it's such a shame that things like that can't show abroad. Do you know, Michael—no, Manuel Tolegian?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: We were talking about this—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —the other day in the state department exchange—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —cultural exchange—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —thing, and he was saying what a shame it was that so many of the things that then had been completely abstract, and they don't mean anything to people—

TED GILIEN: Right, right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —other places.

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And the—he's from Armenia, of course.

TED GILIEN: I know, I know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And they're crying [ph] to have him come over there. And he's, you know—he's a different school completely—[Cross talk.]

TED GILIEN: Yeah, he's—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —but his things are universal—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —what he's saying. So—

TED GILIEN: Very realistic painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —beautiful.

TED GILIEN: And he's a great easel designer. [Laughs.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes. Do you have one of his easels?

TED GILIEN: No, but Joe has one.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: He does?

TED GILIEN: It's one of these electric easels—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, I know.

TED GILIEN: —and they go up and down, and just—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I'm buying my mother one for Christmas.

TED GILIEN: This friend of mine—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: She's an artist too.

TED GILIEN: —Charlotte Ross [ph]—who I'll think you'll be interested to interview—she was on the Chicago Project.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, how great. Hey, you're a mine of help. This is wonderful.

TED GILIEN: Well, you know, I've been working on this book, and we've been, you know, researching everything in relation to the WPA Project. I consider myself—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: In your book?

TED GILIEN: This is part of the thing—the book itself is the story of an American painter. I'll let you read the outline that the company that we're working with will send out to publishers. And it's only half finished. It's about 350 pages. It's a half book but it's ready for submission now. It's a half book and an outline. And the beginning of the book starts in '35 and we take it up to '55. And this is how far we've gotten.

[00:40:01]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, that's exciting.

TED GILIEN: And then we'll take it on another 10 years.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, Ted, the Archives should be of great help to you. That's the whole point of what we're doing, is getting this material.

TED GILIEN: Yeah, and we—we researched the whole WPA scene.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You did?

TED GILIEN: My brother was younger than I was—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —but he's very bright. He used to be an English teacher for 12 years and he's finally decided that he has to write. He just can't go on, you know, marking papers on weekends. So he came around one day and he said, you know, I turned in my uniform. [They laugh.] You know, let's do something. So we started a few novels, kind of light things which are out now. Just to get our feet wet.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But when we suggested—it's a man the name of Ted Loeff [ph] who used to be with NAL.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What is NL—NAL?

TED GILIEN: It was National American Library. It's—I think the Chandler chain owns it now. They bought it up. He used to be their, I think, representative, or their salesman. So he started something that many companies have done now. They kind of commission you to do a book.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see.

TED GILIEN: And so when we came around, after he'd read the first couple novels that we did, he said, You guys can write better stuff than this kind of thing. Would you like to do it? And what would you like to do? And he suggested a kind of a strange story about a family of—family in Italy whose whole ancestry were models. Started with Leonardo da Vinci, you know, and the whole thing. And I said, Well, I don't know much about what happened in Italy, but I know about American painters.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I suggested that, how would you like a book on a contemporary American painter that had never been done before? And this guy really flipped, you know. He went, It's the best thing—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Why didn't I—

TED GILIEN: —I ever heard of. You know?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: So, we started work with this man. He wasn't very well. But his editor who we're working with now—used to be Ben Hecht's editor—is with the Hamilburg Agency now. And she picked it up. And we've been working with her now for about two years, about three revisions.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well is it a novel?

TED GILIEN: It's a big novel. It's a major—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Historical novel, actually.

TED GILIEN: In a way but, let me—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: Turn that off for a minute? Let you read this thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah. [Recorder stops, restarts.]—wonderful way to find your own self in society, too. And you have to—

TED GILIEN: It does. No, I find—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —imagine that [inaudible] about another person.

TED GILIEN: Right. I find it—I can do everything in the writing that I can't do in the painting. You know, I get a continuity and—and reevaluation and the excitement of knowing what's going to happen. It's a big, long thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Which, I don't think there's much you haven't said in the painting, if you don't mind my saying so [laughs]. I mean with each subject—

TED GILIEN: No, of course, this new series I've started—this ancestral history came from the book. It didn't go the other way.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: It's kind of a strange thing. We were working back, you know, '35, and I think I noted it in the gallery that my mother—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Had the old scrapbook—

TED GILIEN: —had all the old stuff around.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: Some art pieces. You know, she started when she was 65 years old. She started sculpting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Your mother did?

TED GILIEN: Yeah. And got some—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Why, how amazing.

TED GILIEN: —tremendous pieces. She was a kind of a—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, that's very interesting.

TED GILIEN: —Barlach-type. She didn't have the—the skill, but she had the fervor. And she had a total recall. She came from the Ukraine when she was 10 years old, but she could remember back, you know, like, 50 years of what happened. And when, you know, Sasha and I got married —

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —my mother was kind of at wit's end. So, we said, Come on mom, you know, come into the studio and do some ceramics, you know, and make some ashtrays. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Laughs]. She wasn't content with that.

TED GILIEN: —once we gave her the clay, you know, she started right out. Like, you know, full-grown, doing this big, you know, monumental pieces.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Is she still working?

TED GILIEN: No, she died a couple years ago.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: She only worked for about five years, but I got a big collection of the things. And she's in pretty good collections.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, that's very, very interesting. Was she out here in California?

TED GILIEN: Yes. Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. And what name does she—

TED GILIEN: Bacia Gilien.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I'll have to spell—or, I mean, will you spell it for me?

TED GILIEN: B-A-C-I-A. And as a matter of fact, [inaudible] [turning away from recorder] be interested—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, that's very interesting.

TED GILIEN: —in the things that she did. And she has more—she has more—

[00:45:01]

[Audio break.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: We're talking about these portraits—family portraits things. What do you—Ancestral series. And I don't think I told the tape what they were. They're drawings of your own family, of various members of them, and they're very strange. In fact, I particularly want to ask you about—

TED GILIEN: Oh, yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —*My Uncle Otto Who Died Very Young*. He's in a World War I soldier uniform and there's a cape behind him and two hands with nothing attached to them are holding the cape up. Now what is the idea of that painting?

TED GILIEN: Well, I remember my Uncle Otto. He was my youngest uncle.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And during the first World War, he was a 4F, or wherever they call them, and he wanted to, you know, join up but they just wouldn't take him. So he used to go out and hire uniforms, like sailors or soldiers and he'd dress up in these things and he'd take pictures of them, of himself.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, the poor fellow. How terrible.

TED GILIEN: And I remember, he was a kind of a strange—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —wonderful man. Was a streetcar conductor at this stage. And I had another uncle, and it was a big gag in the family about nickel for the company and a nickel for the— [They laugh] Kind of little larceny.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But the last time I saw my uncle Otto, I was going to National Academy and I—one of the hospital a number of blocks away was where he was at and I saw him a week before he died. And he was about 32 years old. And he was still, you know, very jolly and made believe that nothing's going to happen. So then when I found some of these photographs, this one of my Uncle Otto was—it's actually is a hiker [ph] uniform. He probably—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: —hired that too. And what you saw there was the figure of death putting the cloak on.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, I see.

TED GILIEN: Which I borrowed from Käthe Kollwitz—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —but I think that the painting—the drawing itself was, it's kind of a very personal thing. And in the series, I'm trying to keep away from the private jokes as much as I can. I'd like

to find things that are much more universally covering. If you noticed in the other drawings, it could happen to anybody's family.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes, right.

TED GILIEN: This one was a little more personal.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, you knew it was a symbol of something—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, this—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —to you, but I—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, the symbol was a death figure—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —with the black cloak.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see.

TED GILIEN: You know, taking this man.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: About to take him.

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: About how many have you done on that ancestral series?

TED GILIEN: I've done about 30 or 40 of them and I think that I'd like to do about 2[00] or 300 of them before I start painting. But the problem is, you know, economic all the time. And I can't indulge myself. I've got to make a living, so that—[They laugh] if there was some way of getting, you know, somebody to subsidize me and my family I would do nothing but indulge myself in this series and try to do a complete history in paintings. Which would go on I don't know how long. And I could just keep doing it until I'd be finished with them. So, when I find time to do these things, you know, I do a drawing. And I've started—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Work from that.

TED GILIEN: —some of the stuff about a year ago.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, you certainly are capable of keeping a sustained interest in achievement in something. This great Maccabee series of yours you worked on 11 or 12 years—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —I believe. And you had 148 in them about five years ago, I think. And then more recently, it said that—I think in the show, it said that you had done 30 battle scenes, 160 drawings, paintings, and ceramics as background work for the ones you'd finished. That's quite an amazing—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, I have portfolio, you know, just full of sketches and full of drawings. And then I did small paintings, preparations for big ones which I sell. They're much easier to sell, but then the these things are white elephants. But this has a very strange history.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You mean the Maccabees or your doing them?

TED GILIEN: The Maccabee—how I got involved in this thing. I did a set for Lion Feuchtwanger, he does—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: The writer.

TED GILIEN: —the *Devil in Boston*.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: And I did the set for the production. And I met this old man who was a fabulous writer and a great philosopher, [inaudible]. I remember sitting around a restaurant with some

other people—some actors—and he said he did his first novel, you know he was 14 years old.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Really? Wow.

[00:50:00]

TED GILIEN: But how it came about—he wrote a trilogy on Josephus. And Josephus was a biographer of the Maccabees.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, I see.

TED GILIEN: And there's a book currently out now on Josephus—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —which I'd like to read. And it was fascinating. Kept talking about the Maccabees. And the only relation I knew about the Maccabees, kind of a vague thing in my background about Chanukkah. So I asked, you know, Mr. Feuchtwanger about this stuff. And he was very, very vague about the thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. The whole history of the Maccabees.

TED GILIEN: [Inaudible] material. He wasn't going to sit down and, [laughs] you know, spend 10 years of his life explaining it to me. But at the same time, a number of things happened. Howard Fast wrote a book called *My Glorious Brothers*, which was kind of a popular thing on the Maccabees. But it was kind of a romantic thing, and it was very beautiful, but it wasn't—and so I found a book by a historian called—I think his name was Bickerman [ph]. He teaches at Columbia.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: With a B?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, Bickerman [ph].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And this was a short history of the Maccabees. And it was a very fascinating period in the Jewish history. It's not in the Bible, it's in the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I know. I did a lot of searching on it—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —this morning, because I never—

TED GILIEN: In the apocryphal books.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Didn't know about them.

TED GILIEN: And it was the thing that got me was the fact that the little guys, you know, beat the big guys.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And it was kind of a fight for the four freedoms, you know. And there's tremendous odds and they finally conquer the thing. And that they—and it wasn't a nationalistic thing, because I happen to be Jewish didn't mean that I did the Maccabees—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That wasn't why you were interested in it.

TED GILIEN: No, no, I was interested—I think for any minority, I think in every history—the Armenians with the Turks and the, you know, some other, the little guys with the big guys. And to me, the whole series was not a religious one but kind of a civil liberties thing of people wanting to get, you know, what they rightly deserved.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Incidentally, did you know that the Catholic church does consider the first two canonical—

TED GILIEN: I know they canonized two of them—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and the—

TED GILIEN: —Saint Judas and Saint Simon.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, did they?

TED GILIEN: Yeah. I found out later—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And another thing—

TED GILIEN: —on. [Laughs.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Another interesting thing about them, when I went to look it up in the dictionary—I didn't even know how to—

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —spell it and I ran—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —into the word macabre. And I found that it comes from the French meaning a funeral chamber, or it may have come from a certain man who painted a dance of death, or it may have come from the old Latin word, machabaeorum chorea, which means the dance of the Maccabees. So, it's possible that the word macabre is a direct descendant—

TED GILIEN: No, no. Actually, I think the derivation is from a Hebrew word meaning hammer. And one of the brothers, Eleazar—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: A family name?

TED GILIEN: —supposedly fought a battle with this big hammer. I've got a painting of it—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —and it's—he fought mainly with this big—almost like a sledgehammer. And he was killed by having an elephant crush him. He hit an elephant in the head and the elephant fell on him and crushed him to death, because he thought that the person on the elephant was the main general, you know.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Is that what your elephant painting—

TED GILIEN: That's what it was.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —is in the show?

TED GILIEN: That's these—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It's a powerful—

TED GILIEN: —Syrian elephants which they used—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —as tanks actually. They put the armament on their back and they, you know, ride into the group. With the Maccabees were the first guerilla fighters. And they weren't trapped too many—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: They were?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, they used to hit and run.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And most of their victories were done by getting a couple of thousands Syrians in a pass and throwing rocks down on them and crushing them, you know, in this way. And it was very heroic. Think it lasted for about 26 years. And then they got—this was the last time that Israel had their independence, you know, until the present time.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I didn't understand if they were fighting the Greeks or the Syrians.

TED GILIEN: No, they were fighting the Syrians. They had this—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see.

TED GILIEN: —Antiochus Epiphanes. And as I say, my history is kind of very, very weak except on the Maccabees which I did a little research on. And for some strange reason, I'm always getting people coming by and thinking I'm an authority on Jewish history, which I'm not. I know very little about it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Just this one section.

TED GILIEN: Just this whole thing that I was very interested in. And it may have been for, you know, other reasons than that. I got a feeling that one of the reasons may have been that for many years, you know, the Jewish people were always submitting to torture and getting killed. They never fought back. And the only time they did it was, you know, the Warsaw ghetto thing when they finally got out there. And this was the image of people finally turning around—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —and fighting back.

[00:55:15]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And maybe another reason may have been the fact that when I painted this, this was during the McCarthy era, you know, and it was—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really? When—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —it started?

TED GILIEN: This whole series in there. And it was something that, you know, you had to fight against, and you couldn't do it verbally so that the way I found of doing it actually was, you know, the good guys were fighting the bad guys. [They laugh.] And every time I killed somebody, you know, I was probably killing Joe McCarthy or some—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —something, you know, very similar to this thing. It's a kind of a vague thing. But there's no definitive definition of the way I felt about it. But I imagine it was—something was driving me along, you know, many different paths. And the first 30 paintings were all battle scenes.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Were they all night scenes? Because the ones in the show are nearly all those marvelous—

TED GILIEN: They were all, they were—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —blues and—

TED GILIEN: —they were all battling. That was—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —[inaudible].

TED GILIEN: —you know, something was happening. And it may have been the fact that when I got through with the devastation series, I was still fighting—

[END OF TRACK AAA_gilien65_8586.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Betty Lochrie Hoag on March the 5th, interviewing Ted Gilien. We're talking about the research that you did on the Maccabee pictures. And I was thinking that this rather indirectly goes right back to your first project on WPA when you did all the research for the Ellis Island murals.

TED GILIEN: Yeah. It's—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Probably where you got your first training in doing research, wasn't it?

TED GILIEN: That's right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: These things always tie together.

TED GILIEN: [Inaudible] to know what pictures to look for and what I needed. But in doing these things, it was the concept more than the painting, because after painting, you know, 20 years I think I was capable of painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Of course.

TED GILIEN: It was just finding the thing that I wanted to say.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Wanted to express. I was wondering about one thing, Ted. In one of the burial scenes, you have an interesting red circle in one corner. And I noticed you did the same thing, I think, in the one of Jimmy Dean, one of the other paintings—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —the same kind of red disc.

TED GILIEN: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And I noticed today that you have in some of them a—I think—what was it? A little red square. But it's a brilliant color that you used. And it must be a symbol to you of something. What is it?

TED GILIEN: Well, let me explain something to you. I think every painter has personal symbols.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: I remember in the first series of paintings that I did when I got out of the army, I was painting wild horses. It was kind of a release, you know, just releasing everything. This was—and I couldn't paint anything without—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Going out.

TED GILIEN: —having some wild horse, you know, jumping out somewhere.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: I can never explain it. You know, the psychiatrists that I know of always give meanings. It's just I could never agree with them. And I never tried to figure it out. And suddenly, this little red thing appeared. And it's kind of a symbol for me of striving, you know, beyond the physical—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —material things. Some kind of a spiritual reaching for. And it worked very well technically.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. Yeah.

TED GILIEN: You know, you paint a six-foot blue painting, and you put a little red in there, and you make the whole, you know, thing vibrate—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —because they just—because if you cover that little red thing—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I know. I tried it. The picture falls apart.

TED GILIEN: —and, you know, a little personal explanation to that. The guy carrying the coffin with the beard is myself. And I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: —had quite a beard. [They laugh.] And yeah, I outgrew it. But, you know, I say to everybody—every painter should have a beard once. And then, you know, when you're through with it—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible] don't outgrow it. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: —you know, and I didn't grow one until I felt secure enough as a painter, you know, to be able to get by with—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Justify it.

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That's cute. Well, it's—in that particular one painting, that burial scene is very beautiful. And when I first saw it, I thought it was a seal. And then, I realized it wasn't. But it's built up with an acrylic paint that you use as an undercoat in many of those paintings.

TED GILIEN: Many of the paintings.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: They're almost sculptures. They're so—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —thick when you come up to them.

TED GILIEN: Oh, this is part of the deal I had with Bocour. I was kind of a guinea pig for all his new products. And I was one of the first painters to use this Magna color.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, please tell the tape first about who Bocour is and your—

TED GILIEN: Well—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —association with him. That's interesting.

TED GILIEN: —Leonard Bocour is probably my oldest and dearest friend. [Laughs.] And I would say this without qualifications. And in my first studio, he was a neighbor of mine. He had the studio next to ours. And he—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: In New York?

TED GILIEN: In New York. He was sitting around during the Depression, painting. And he wasn't a very good painter, but he was a friend of a man named Emil Ganso, who was a baker.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Of bread, you mean?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, a baker—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —by profession. He was a very talented painter. He was a friend of [Jules] Pascin. So, Emil came around to see Lenny one day. And he said, You know, you guys are just sitting around here. Well, I'll show you how to make paint, how to hand grind this stuff. And he taught —he taught Leonard Bocour, whose name used to be Bogdanoff, and a friend of his, Irvin Lefcourt [ph], who has a place in New York called the—I'm trying to think of the little gallery that he has. They made a composite. Bo from Bogdanoff, and Lefcourt, of course, so they got the Bocour, but Leonard had his name changed legally.

And nobody knows about Leonard Bogdanoff. [They laugh.] They only know about Lenny Bocour. So as I said, he used to give me the leftover tubes, so the tubes weren't quite filled up. And I had these for many years.

[00:05:15]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: They're very, very fine.

TED GILIEN: Yeah. And we have—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —you know, kind of a wonderful relationship. He's a big benefactor now. When he comes out here, he's always taking us out. And we give him ceramics, anything he wants. If you want 10 paintings, I'll give it to you. You know, I'm pretty happy to do this. And I mentioned that the two used to exchange paint for paintings. And by now, he has this tremendous collection that he collected over the years by giving the painters who couldn't afford to buy it in exchange for a painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Very interesting.

TED GILIEN: He's come out with a new acrylic. He's very much aware of new changes in paint.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It this on the national market?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, very much. He's very big.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Available?

TED GILIEN: Yeah, it's—Bocour is the professional brand. Then he puts out a brand called Bellini [ph] and he does stuff with the May Company called Brill [ph] Colors. You know, [inaudible] get a label, because many—where he—where—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —where he really made it was the—a very strange coincidence that during the—after the war, they started to paint by the numbers. [Note: What Gilien means is that Bocour's business first became important during the war, etcetera. BH -Ed.] Remember that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —business?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: Somehow he got a commission, you know, to make the paint that came in the little packages. And he's turned out thousands of these things. And he had a special machine made to stamp these things in. But when the fad went away, he had this big, tremendous machine he didn't know what to do with. I think he has it just sitting around there.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: But there's a tremendous loyalty. These are some of the painters that have used his paint. These are all nationally known painters [He shows Hoag a list. -Ed.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What an impressive list.

TED GILIEN: And this—this just goes back, you know, many years. There's many more people that used this. And he's the only paint manufacturer that goes around on goodwill tours, and he lectures on paint at all the colleges. And I just—everybody loves this man, because he's not only a dealer, you know, he's kind of a great human—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —being. So, there's a—all these painters have tremendous loyalty, that they would—they won't paint unless have they Bocour paint.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, I think it's awfully nice to get this about him on the tape.

TED GILIEN: You should—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You—

TED GILIEN: You should be interviewing him, because he knows every painter in the country.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well—

TED GILIEN: And he—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —unless he was on the Federal Arts Project—

TED GILIEN: —yeah, and he used to supply—he used to supply the WPA with—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, he did?

TED GILIEN: —you know, with his hand-ground paint. But after a while, hand-ground paint became a big hassle. And you have to do it in great quantities so that they have big machines now—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —to turn out the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I'll have to tell the Archives—

TED GILIEN: —product.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and whoever's in New York can make an appointment with him, because he would be—

TED GILIEN: Oh, fascinating man.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —interesting to talk to.

TED GILIEN: You know, as I say, he knows—he knows all the painters, living and dead. As a matter fact, he supplied Jackson Pollock with all the—with the acrylic paint that Jackson used for the big drip paintings. And he used to make them up in buckets—you know, five-gallon buckets.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Incidentally, I interviewed his teacher the other day, an old man down in Laguna Beach.

TED GILIEN: Jackson?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And Tolegian [ph] too. Tolegian [ph] and Jackson were friends. And—

TED GILIEN: Yeah. I know Jackson—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —very, very casually, because when he went to the League, he was studying with Thomas Hart Benton. And for some strange reason, I got into a class of—[inaudible] Frank Vincent DuMond, which—a very sweet, old academician, nice old guy, but I didn't know him from anything. Just completely—it was completely wasted on me.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It'd be wasted on Jackson Pollock, I would think. According to this other teacher, he wasn't much of a student or—

TED GILIEN: I didn't—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —[inaudible] academic work.

TED GILIEN: —no, I didn't know him too well. I know that he was—he was a monitor of the Thomas Hart Benton class. [Mr. Gilien's young son enters the studio. -Ed.] And this is Jeremy. This Betty Hoag.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: How do you do, Jeremy?

TED GILIEN: Say hello to Mrs. Hoag.

JEREMY: Hi.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I saw a painting of you as a spaceman the other day. [Inaudible.]

JEREMY: What it said on it was a big, tall tale, right?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Was it? [Laughs.]

JEREMY: I never wanted to be a spaceman for a year.

[00:10:00]

TED GILIEN: Why not?

JEREMY: I don't know. [They laugh.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You made a good one in the painting anyway. It reminds me of several of your other paintings, which were interesting as kind of social commentary, ones in the show [inaudible] *Oscarama*.

TED GILIEN: Oh. But that has an interesting background. When Jack Levine was out here a number of years ago, he stayed with us. And I said—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: —to Jack—I said, You know, this is perfect, Jack, you're being a great satirist. This is—you know, so—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You knew he'd enjoy going there?

TED GILIEN: —yeah, so much [inaudible] of what you should do. And he said, You know, I got a lot of problems in the East, and I don't like Hollywood.

And I don't want to have anything to do with it, so why don't you paint it? And I said—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, that accounts for the feeling as I looked at it, I thought—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —of Jack Levine.

TED GILIEN: So, I said, You know, Jack, I'm going to do it. And we—you know, discussed technique, and Jack's a very sweet man in—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yes.

TED GILIEN: —giving you things. You know, he knows that if you use the same thing he does, it's going to come out differently anyway. But we were discussing, you know, the use of a Rembrandt palette. And that's what I used because Jack was a Guggenheim. And I think he went to Europe, and he spent two years just studying Rembrandt and Rubens. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I didn't know that.

TED GILIEN: —he just told me, you know, the thing he used and how it was done. And I almost did this by the numbers.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Isn't that interesting.

TED GILIEN: But Jack's a much looser painter than I am. But I imagine if Jack had done this thing, he'd have—he'd have made it, you know, sensational, dramatic, greatest thing—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well—

TED GILIEN: —you ever—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —you think you didn't. [Laughs.] I think it's a—

TED GILIEN: I don't know. I mean, there's very few painters that I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —very dramatic painting.

TED GILIEN: —you know, speak, you know, of—with this particular regard for Jack is one of them.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: Not because he's a friend of mine, but I think he's a man that's stuck to his guns—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know, through all this hysteria. You know, he stayed with it. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I think he gave the whole country a different approach to—

TED GILIEN: Yeah. And I've known—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —itself through his painting.

TED GILIEN: And I've known his wife even before I knew Jack, Ruth Gikow, she was a neighbor of mine.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yeah?

TED GILIEN: And she was a very fine painter, too. So, this was the story. And the original concept was—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Interesting.

TED GILIEN: —trying to paint people sitting outside on the—in the grandstand waiting for the stars to come by. But it quite didn't work out for me, so I went to the academy library, and I started looking through things. And I found an old photograph that went back to, oh, 1928 where Fay Bainter had won the first award. It was at the Coconut Grove. And everybody's standing around really solemnly, you know, and holding that little thing. And that gave me the whole key to the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —to the painting. So, I did a number of paintings on the—on theme. And I try to keep them recognizable, but not recognizable.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Did Levine ever see the finished painting?

TED GILIEN: I think Jack has seen a photograph of it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But, you know, being 3,000 miles away—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: The colors are important, the photograph doesn't show that.

TED GILIEN: —there's very little communication. You know, maybe every five years, I write to Jack, and I get a letter.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And it's one of those things. Unless you go visit, [they laugh] nothing happens.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Hard to keep up. Another one that was interesting was a picture done after Jimmy Dean was killed. And it says under that that he was a friend of yours—

TED GILIEN: Yes.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and you had seen him shortly before. Oh, that's another one that has your symbol on it incidentally. The sun—

TED GILIEN: That's the—well, this—I did this in reverse. This is an eclipse, the other way around of the, you know, symbolism.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: Suddenly, the light went out. And how I got to know Jimmy Dean was through a friend of mine, Sanford Roth, who was a very well-known photographer. He died a number of

years ago. And he's done many articles on Picasso and Braque. And throughout the whole word, he usually—he was assigned to do some essays on the thing Jimmy was in. I think it was the *Giant*.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes.

TED GILIEN: And Sandy brought him around one afternoon. I think Jimmy and I fell in love with each other right away, you know? It was just one of those things. And he could—he'd come visit. He was really just about ready to start painting. He was painting with—he was sculpting with Pegot Waring. And we had made arrangements, you know, I'm going to be around Monday and get the material—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —and we start working. And as I noted, his Porsche was sitting in the driveway. I think it was on—it was on a Friday.

And I—he was going someplace on Saturday morning. And there was this big headline. And, you know, it was, like, unbelievable.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, I bet.

[00:15:09]

TED GILIEN: It was just—and I'm not a sentimental person.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But this was kind of a traumatic experience. Other—when I met Sam [ph]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Because you had seen him as an emerging artist in your own field. [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: You know, so—no, I think Jimmy and I got along well because I never discussed, you know, what happened on the set. And I never tried to get nosy about—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know, the little intrigue that goes on in motion pictures.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And, you know, we'd sit around—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: He respected you for that.

TED GILIEN: —talk about music or talk about how it was, you know, at the zoo. Or—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —anything but motion pictures.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: I get—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it's a dramatic picture.

TED GILIEN: —it was a real—you know, a real shock for me.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: For a mean—it wasn't a dear friend, but really something that could've grown out of it. And I always resented the fact, later on, that they say, you know, Was Jimmy a kook? And he wasn't.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: He was a very sweet man that didn't want to get involved with all kinds of strange publicity and get to be a freak.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: In Hollywood, you're a freak if you don't, I guess. You know, I think one of the most amazing things about your whole show, to me, was the tranquility of your scapes [ph], your seascapes and pastures. They're just completely opposite of all your other paintings.

TED GILIEN: Well, the reason for that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: They're very beautiful.

TED GILIEN: —I think, is very simple. It, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Almost Whistler [inaudible]. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: Corot—my Corot period. [They laugh.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Your Corot.

TED GILIEN: And I feel—you know, I feel I need this. You know, after this very heavy, concentrated, you know, aggressive type of thing, I need a—some kind of a stopgap or some kind of a—to let the pressure off.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, I think you would after the other one.

TED GILIEN: And I find these things almost like a tranquilizer. And they spring from something very real that when I was on the Federal Art Project, on the easel project, I lived between the East River and the Hudson River. And I would go down there every morning, you know, and see these very tranquil, foggy types of things.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I must've painted 30 or 40 of these paintings. So, years later, you know, it's so ingrained, that when I—when I want to relax, and I want to just get away from everything else—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That's what you paint.

TED GILIEN: —I could paint these things just like breathing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That's interesting.

TED GILIEN: They have this relaxing quality for me.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, indeed they do.

TED GILIEN: So—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: The one of the bridge probably is one that is a return to thing. And I was—

TED GILIEN: Yeah, that's one.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —going to ask you what bridge it was.

TED GILIEN: Well, it could be any bridge. People say that I've seen that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It's a bridge.

TED GILIEN: I've seen that in Pittsburgh or I've seen this in Philadelphia. And if they've seen it, I'm very happy—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —because, actually, I've seen it up here. [He taps his head. -Ed.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Laughs.] Well, the one with the pasture with the lovely purple, [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: As a matter of fact, that won an award at the Barnsdall Park. Here's one of the medals.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. It was—I don't understand.

TED GILIEN: Well, they have an annual all-city show.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: The home savings and loan [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: Well, they give—they give the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Thank you, dear.

TED GILIEN: —they give the awards out. And they select a certain amount of paintings. And some are money awards, and some are honorary awards. And they give it a special thing here. It's the most marvelous paperweight I've ever seen.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well—[Laughs.] Oh, I'm—

TED GILIEN: And this pasture was one of the paintings that was in the show.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: That won one of those. Very nice.

TED GILIEN: I find that people react to these things immediately.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And there's no—I'm not trying to do anything to—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —provoke them or agitate them. I just want to, you know, make them rest, is the way I felt about it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: They certainly do that. Well, Ted, I see your family's gathering around.

TED GILIEN: No, no.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I think we'd better—

TED GILIEN: Let's continue. Jeremy, could you do me a favor?

JEREMY: [Inaudible.]

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: A couple more questions I wanted to ask you that I had written down here. One was, in 1947 *Art Digest* had an Arthur Millier article about a show that you were having with David Rosin [ph] or Rosen.

TED GILIEN: Rosen. This is David Rosen here. [He indicated ones hanging on wall. -Ed.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And—oh, is it? I thought it was a Strombotne.

TED GILIEN: No.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Which one came first? Rosen, probably, since he was exhibiting in '47.

TED GILIEN: Yeah, this was the first show—we had a two-man show. David, now, he was on the Project, he'd be a nice guy to—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, is he still around?

TED GILIEN: Yes, he's in Laguna. He's [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, good. I'm going down [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: A very sweet man. He's on, I think, the—he's got a gallery. And it's at 804, I believe, Pacific Coast—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Pacific Coast Highway?

TED GILIEN: —Highway.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, I'm so happy to have—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —that name. I have some other artists I want to see there, too.

[00:20:00]

TED GILIEN: This a painting I did of Dave about three years ago. And I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, it's your painting of him.

TED GILIEN: Yes.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it isn't like your other paintings.

TED GILIEN: This is what I [inaudible]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Except for the intense color.

TED GILIEN: Oh, I say that, you know, people have accused me of all kinds of strange—schizophrenic. [Laughs.] One psychiatrist [ph] called me a split schizophrenic.

[Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.] Like, I'm not only crazy, you know, twice—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —but chain me up.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: A whole lot of you.

TED GILIEN: But no— my whole explanation of this, I think that, you know, basically, a painter is a human being. And you have emotional reactions, you know. You love something. You hate something. Or you feel good, or you feel bad. Or you have certain—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Every situation, every person has a different reaction.

TED GILIEN: I think if you didn't have this, you become a very boring painter. You'd paint that same painting all the time. And it becomes, like, almost a label. And I've seen painters that have had shows in 1940 and 1960. It's the same painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And it may be very salable, but I—I can't buy this. Now I will work on paintings until I've kind of exhausted the theme or the—or the technique or whatever Then I have to go on. And I can never go back. Once in a while, I make an attempt of going back. And it's just something that I find very impossible, so that the only place to go—[They laugh.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Is forward.

TED GILIEN: —is to find something else. And sometimes, you know, I sit around for six months, and I—there's nothing new to add.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: And I just got to think about this thing. Just to do a painting, you know, I could do a painting. There's no great problem.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And it's something that I feel—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it's the motif—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —isn't it? That you—

TED GILIEN: Yeah. That's right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —have.

TED GILIEN: Of is it worth doing?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: You know, does it mean something to me?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But this painting here [inaudible], because Dave has an infantile paralytic—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: —leg. And it looks distorted. But actually, this is what he looks like. But the most fascinating thing were the trunks that he was wearing, the orange and blank trunks. And he shaved his hair off, and people say he looks like Mr. Clean.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: But they read all kind of significance into this, like, This man is walking away from life, you know, into the water.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: But it has nothing to do with it. It was just a very simple statement of being fascinated by a pair of bathing trunks.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. [They laugh.] It's fascinating.

TED GILIEN: And it has the stance of a man with a bad leg, you know? All the power's—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —up in the—in the shoulders—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: The torso.

TED GILIEN: —and the torso.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, when I see him, I'll certainly tell him—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —about seeing the painting, too.

TED GILIEN: Oh, he's seen the painting. This was at the Laguna show last year.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, was it? Oh, when Arthur Millier wrote the article about the show that you had with him, this was right after the war, and he said that you had both served in the war. Were you together?

TED GILIEN: No, no. He was in the Merchant Marine.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I see. And then, the other thing that I wanted to ask you about—Mr. Millier said that your paintings were allegories of man's spirit arising from the day's world destruction in color like Raymond remises [ph]. Now, I don't know this artist, B-R-E-I-N-I-M-I-M—B-R-E-I-N-I-N.

TED GILIEN: Well, there was a Chicago painter called Raymond Breinin.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Breinin.

TED GILIEN: I remember his—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I tried to look him up and couldn't find anything, so I didn't know—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —what Mr. Millier was talking about.

TED GILIEN: He's from Chicago. He was a very well-known painter. He painted these allegorical, smoky things, quite symbolic.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh.

TED GILIEN: And they were very beautiful. And Charlotte Ross would know Raymond Breinin.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I'll ask her about him. I want to—before we stop, I want to be sure to ask you a question about your personal reaction to the whole Federal Arts Project, whether you think it—I mean, we know it fed a lot of people. But besides that, as far as furthering the course of American art, artists, and all—

TED GILIEN: Well, I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —what you feel on that?

TED GILIEN: —feel very strongly about the Project, very—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: For or against?

TED GILIEN: Very for—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —because this gave people an opportunity to find out what they can—now, all the painters on the Project didn't become painters. But I think the few that did, you know, owe everything that they have at this time to the fact that they were getting \$23.86 a week.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And this is one of the—next to my serial number, this is the only—[They laugh.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: The number you remember.

TED GILIEN: —number I remember.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, you could count on it. That was the—that was the—

[00:24:54]

TED GILIEN: That's right. And you knew that if you go on painting, you know, whether you were good or you were bad, but at least it gave you an opportunity to find out whether you can. I remember, in relation to this, I was in the—in the South Pacific, and I picked up an old *Life* magazine. And there was a reproduction of a painting of mine. And a man had bought the paintings by the ton— you know, a lot of these paintings. And from, you know, many thousands of paintings, I'm sure that there were very valuable paintings today—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know, in that collection. It was kind of sad, though, in a way, to think that here I am getting shot at—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: —and strafed and bombed [ph]. I'm sitting here, you know, pretty miserable—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Being published in *Life* and [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: —and here I am, you know, and what can I do about it?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: But, you know, it kind of picked my ego up a little bit.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: You know, I showed it to my commanding officer, and he said, That's very nice, you know, Move the ammunition boxes.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I guess those weren't the times when you could do anything about it. You were speaking of La Cienega, which is a street where all—or so many of the galleries are in Los Angeles. And you were saying that you were very much against the policy of what makes the artist tick, having to be exhibited there?

TED GILIEN: I'll tell you what actually I resent in a way. The fact is that people buy paintings on La Cienega Boulevard and they—very few of them know who the painter is. They know who the gallery owner is. I get a feeling that they think that the gallery owner, you know, did the paintings.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What about the opening shows that the galleries have, though, to try to introduce the artist the public?

TED GILIEN: This is [inaudible]—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: These are pretty successful, aren't they?

TED GILIEN: I have a feeling. I might be—may not be right about this thing, but I think that a lot of the local painters are just window dressing for the gallery owners to keep in business so that they can handle an established painting. If they can keep the gallery open, they buy a Paul Klee, you know, they can make enough money with the transaction to keep the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Selling one of those.

TED GILIEN: —keep the gallery going. And I don't think there's enough, you know, grade A painters in this town to make this thing a big, exciting occasion every Monday night. There are good painters. And I think that there are many good painters in California that—my beef with the thing is I don't think they paint anything, you know, that they're very facile and they're technical and they know all kinds of things. But it's kind of paintings that don't relate to their personal life. I think it's art from art instead of art from life. It sounds cliché, but this is a feeling that I have.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: And the galleries—of course, I understand their problem. They need a commodity.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, Mr. Johnson—President Johnson, you know, has spoken—hoping to have some kind of government aid for artists. And I think it's going to be interesting to see what happens about that. And of course, this whole thing the Archives is doing, talking to the artist about it, is going to be interesting, the composites of what they have said about it. And frankly, I have only talked about two out of I don't know how many people who haven't felt that it was a perfectly

TED GILIEN: No, I think that—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —wonderful thing for [inaudible]—

TED GILIEN: They have this [inaudible]—I did some research on this particular project on a government subsidy. And in Europe, they have this—they have it in Scandinavian—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I know.

TED GILIEN: —countries. They have it in France. They have it in England. They have it all over. You know, and it's not a dirty word, the subsidy.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Direct outgrowth from the Medieval Church—

TED GILIEN: Right, right. Of course.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and the Medieval political things.

TED GILIEN: And this thing about artists struggling makes it very difficult to paint. You know, when you're worried about something to eat or something to pay your rent, you can't put your full effort in creating anything.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And if you're worried about La Cienega bringing in the prices, whether it's going to sell, even if you know it's good, it's hard on the young artists.

TED GILIEN: And I find that to be a gallery owner, you need no qualifications, you know? You could—you have enough money, you can open up a gallery.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Although, they say that they don't begin to make money for at least five years.

TED GILIEN: This may be true. You know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I heard that it takes them that long to be sure that they are going to stay open.

TED GILIEN: Yeah, the established—the established galleries are—you know, they're in business.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I've seen them come and go, open and close. And people get into the gallery business—one gallery owner that I knew, who's now in insurance, came out here and he was a lingerie salesman. And he said, What's a good business? And I said, Hey, go into the art business. It's a nice, clean business, you know, and you meet a lot of people. And he—and this man was a very decent human being, except he didn't know anything about paintings.

[00:30:23]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And immediately the decorators moved in. And he was selling some horrible, terrible paintings. And he was ready to fold up. And around—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: By the art and by the color dimensions [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: I ran into this man, and he said, You know, Ted, you know, I'll have to fold up. What shall I do? And I said—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —you know, I'll get you a couple of painters, you know, to sustain you with—for a while. And I did. I called up some personal friends. And we had one-man shows. And the image of the gallery picked up a little bit.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But there wasn't enough to go around and back into the interior decorations. And he just—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: He didn't know how to keep it up.

TED GILIEN: No, he couldn't get enough painters, so he was—I think he was very happy to go out of business. I think he was too honest, you know, to continue this operation. And then, of course, my beef is that they haven't enough art critics out here really, you know, to show any divergence in opinion. Like, in New York, they have, you know, 10, 12 art critics.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, is that because we don't have enough newspapers?

TED GILIEN: That may be. Possibly. And there's a particular attitude that critics have anyway. You know, they like certain things. And they can't be all things to all men.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Sure, they can't help but having their—

TED GILIEN: No.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —taste.

TED GILIEN: No, and this is their job. And this is the way they make a living. And painters, usually, that can't make it as painters, they can become very good art critics. I—I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: But they don't.

TED GILIEN: No, I've never heard of a—you know, a top-notch painter that was a critic. He's too busy painting, you know, to go around criticizing. And they're not even criticism. They're just reviews. And it's just a man personal conditioning or attitude about what he likes that he expresses in print. And it causes a great deal of controversy and hard feelings. You know, I— personally, I try not to even know the critics. It took me years until I got on kind of a very good relationship with Arthur Millier. But this took, like, 10 years—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really?

TED GILIEN: —you know? And we finally got to be friends. And just as we were getting to be friends, he retired. [Laughs.]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I'm going to see him two weeks, incidentally.

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I heard from that yesterday.

TED GILIEN: You know, Arthur's a very sweet man, but he had, you know, 20, 30 years of this thing, and it was too much. And he wanted to get back to his etching. And everybody was picking on him. And I think he—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Poor guy. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, this—again, he was [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: That's right. But Arthur would—did things that a lot of critics don't do. If he couldn't do any good for you, but he wouldn't do anything bad for you.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really? How wonderful.

TED GILIEN: You know, if the show was so bad, he wouldn't even review it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: You know, he would never—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I certainly admire his integrity [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: Yeah, he would never clobber anybody—for some kind of personal, you know, vendetta or something, because he didn't like them. He tried to be as objective as possible.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Wait and give them another chance.

TED GILIEN: That's right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, that's wonderful.

TED GILIEN: And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I'm glad to know [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: He's an old man now. He's—Arthur's 70, you know?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And not in good health.

TED GILIEN: No, I got to know him up at Idlewild, one conference. Artists Equity had a thing, and he had a—he had the bungalow next door. And this was the first time after 10 years that we finally got to talking. And, you know, man-to-man, there was no odd criticism or anything.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And he had some very interesting things to say about—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —painting, but people in general. Some little lady from Glendale, you know, had become very hysterical that Arthur didn't put her name in the paper. [They laugh.] You know it—and everybody wants this. They paint, you know, with everything they have. And suddenly, you don't receive the remuneration or the moral support that you think you should deserve.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Of course, I think that's one of the problems today. We have so many schools of painting, so many different philosophies of painting. It would be very hard for anyone to be able to be objective about every one of them.

[00:35:08]

TED GILIEN: It's pretty difficult. As I say—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —a critic, you know, either lacks certain things or he becomes used to certain things. And then, they start off by being very unsure about the thing. A new fad comes in. You know, the Pop stuff came in.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And this kind of throws people back a little bit. But if you see it enough, you become —

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Immune?

TED GILIEN: —either immune to it, or you try to realize, you know, what it is. And now, I find it—Pop art amuses it, and I find it very funny and amusing. I think it's entertainment. And I like it. But when it has all kinds of connotations, great symbolic, serious, metaphysical meanings, you know, I can't buy this thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And when it becomes vicious—I mean, I've seen some Pop art that's quite vicious, you know, hypodermic needles and all kinds of—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —things that are very disturbing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: I find it—I'm not going to say don't do it. My idea—or my feeling about this thing is that you do whatever you want. I don't have to like it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: You know, I'm never going to say that I'm going to censor you. You shouldn't do this type of thing, because I don't think this is necessary.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Did you see the *Art Forum* article on *Sex in Painting*, the show in San Francisco? The new *Art Forum*?

TED GILIEN: You know something? I don't read the art magazines anymore.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, don't you?

TED GILIEN: Never.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You haven't the time?

TED GILIEN: No, I have all the time in the world, but I can't—I can't justify the reading of it with the explanation of the painting.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: You know, when I look at the painting, I say, This is something. And then I read about it. And if I didn't know the painting, I would never be able to connect these two things. I think that the—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Like poetry, the painting should say what it's going to say without words.

TED GILIEN: That the people that write the criticisms love to write, you know. And they make up all kinds of terminology. And it's become an essay of how well they can write. And the painting—

[Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs.]

is just something to jump off from.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And then, of course, you get the powers that start this thing. You know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —there's big elements in there that make the commodity.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: With reasons for [inaudible].

TED GILIEN: You know, and you could make a man—if you publicize a man, and you keep getting his name in the paper every day you're going to make people very insecure in their own feelings about this. They read about it, and they say, This man's a great painter, and he's doing certain things. And they say—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Why don't I emote? [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: Right. Why don't I get this feeling?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And then, they say to themselves, You know, if this man said it's so, it must be so, because he knows more about painting than I do.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And, What's the matter with me? And I don't think anything's the matter with them. I'm not blaming it on the people that look at it. I think that the—everybody's involved in this thing. And with the Pop stuff, I think it's kind of a transitory thing. I don't know how long it's going to last. Maybe in 10 years from now, they'll look at this thing as historical, you know, like the Dadaists, which was much more honest, I think, in their approach.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And these kids, you know, go leafing tin cans and—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know, junk sculpture and stuff that you find all over. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It gets awfully tiresome to look at—

TED GILIEN: It does.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —after a while.

TED GILIEN: It's not—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —it's not an original thing anymore. And I find that—now we have Op art, and this is an interesting development, which I've seen on the cover of a—of a medical—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: What did you call it?

TED GILIEN: It's called Op art.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yes. Yeah.

TED GILIEN: You know. And I've seen this done with a—with an IBM machine on a cover. And you can't tell whether it was done, you know, mechanically or done, you know, personally.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And I like the mechanical stuff much better. It gives you all the illusion of space—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: [Inaudible.]

TED GILIEN: —and the color. So that the thing I'm hoping for is that eventually, you know, you get out of the—out of the forest, and be able to look back at it. We're so close to it. And I feel like—I always feel, personally, in the studio, like, this is Noah's ark. You know, and I go out once in a while to see what's happening, and it's still pouring and raining. And it's thundering [Betty Hoag McGlynn laughs] out there. And I just want to come back—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know, and wait until the storm is over.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And this may go on for the rest of my life. But in my kind of pessimistic way, I still feel that, you know, something good has to happen.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:40:12]

TED GILIEN: You know, we've had periods of painting where nothing has been done of any great value. But we always manage somehow, you know, to overcome it. Somebody comes through with it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Spirit of the country—

TED GILIEN: Yeah. Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —is such that it has to, sure.

TED GILIEN: So that the only thing that the painter can do is just, you know, paint what he believes in.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And sometimes, his number never comes up. You know it's like the roulette wheel.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: You like to feel—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: As far as success goes.

TED GILIEN: Right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: I've had people say, you know, You have all these great paintings. What are they doing in the studio? And I said, you know, I don't want them in the studio. I'd like other people to see them. I've enjoyed these things. I've enjoyed doing them. I've enjoyed looking at them. You know, but what am I going to do with them?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And everybody is ready to, you know, tell me what to do with them. And the only thing I want them to do with the thing is buy them—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —you know, and enjoy them.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Sure.

TED GILIEN: But, of course, the paintings are of such size. I think they get killed in a—in a house. They need kind of public, you know, viewing if they want to be seen. So, if your mural painting became an exciting thing again—you know, a necessary thing, you know, this would solve a lot of—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, maybe Mr. Johnson's idea of having the government back in art again will bring us more—

TED GILIEN: Well, I hope so.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —mural work for public buildings.

TED GILIEN: I hope so. I know that Jacqueline Kennedy was really in there and punching away—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, yeah.

TED GILIEN: —you know, with everything she had for this type of thing. It was a beginning. It was just—you know, it was tragic circumstances.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: As far as I know, Johnson has never asked Heckscher's advice, or hers or—

TED GILIEN: No.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —anything about that. Well, I must get home—

TED GILIEN: All right.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —and I wanted to ask you first, if there's anything else you wanted to add for the tape.

TED GILIEN: As I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Especially pertinent to the Project. I think we've covered it pretty well.

TED GILIEN: Well, this other little thing—[inaudible] it's a novel. We've covered [inaudible] the material. It was a little rough. I remember I was in a—in a sit-down strike. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, really? In New York?

TED GILIEN: Yeah. I was in that big strike. And they had— 218 artists were locked up in this little room. And they got pretty well, you know, shaken up. And all they wanted was their jobs, you know—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —just to rescind the pink slips. And the whole thing—just the fact that they were in the building, and the manager came in and said, You don't belong here. Get out. Then, they said, We're going to sit here until they rescind the pink slips. And he said, You're on private property, and so, they sent these—sent these goons up with a rubber jackets and, geez, they really—I—you know, I got hit. Not as banged as some of these other guys did, but it was pretty rough, you know? It accomplished something. You know, they did keep their jobs, for a while, anyway.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: I've read some of the art from some of the magazines—

TED GILIEN: Yeah.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: —that say—some of the artists that say [inaudible] magazine. [I've

read about it in the old *Art Front* magazine. -Ed.]

TED GILIEN: Yeah, it was very—it was a—you know, an interesting period of artists sticking together. There's—we haven't got this out here. There's little pieces, little—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: —pockets of people, but no great feeling of artists loving each other.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: No rapport.

TED GILIEN: No rapport at all. As a matter of fact, the situation is so competitive that they can't relate to each other.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You mean the market.

TED GILIEN: The market.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: And if somebody comes into town to buy a painting, and he doesn't like your painting, he would like somebody else, you're not going to get a referral.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: It's like—and this has happened to me. And I felt very strongly about this stuff.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: And this did happen at that time?

TED GILIEN: No, that time, it was—there wasn't enough paintings sold.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: No one was buying anything. [Laughs.]

TED GILIEN: Nobody's buying anything, so there was no—you know, nobody competing with each other.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: Except they were doing it for the—you know, you did a painting, and they paid you a certain amount of money for it. And wherever it went, whether it went into a high school or a college or into a public building, it wasn't the fact that you were competing against somebody else.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. They were free to be working.

TED GILIEN: Right. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Must've been wonderful.

TED GILIEN: It was kind of bittersweet. You know, the whole—the whole thing was—when you look back in retrospect you like to think of the good things.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But I remember having a studio on 23rd Street that was ice cold and very depressing. But you could get a spaghetti dinner for 20¢.

[00:45:00]

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: So, the—it had a compensation. And the artists liked each other, you know?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: They helped each other. And I wish it would happen again.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But I find it—in my own social life—that my whole acquaintanceship now is not with painters anymore. It's with writers, people in the theater, with anybody but painters. And not that I wouldn't like to bring this thing together again, but it's the man making the first move.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: And nobody likes to be rejected. You know, this is kind of a basic thing.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, it must've done a lot of good.

TED GILIEN: Hm?

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It must've done a lot of good at the time.

TED GILIEN: I think that the WPA, you know, it—I owe everything [laughs]—I say this, but I owe everything, you know, that I may be today to the fact I—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Your angel, WPA.

TED GILIEN: That's right. I had five years, you know, of uninterrupted painting. And I could frankly say—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Pretty marvelous.

TED GILIEN: —it wasn't good painting, but at least it was something.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: It was a beginning, you know? Because I don't know what would have happen if I wasn't on the Project as a—let's put it this way, when I got out of high school, my grades were so bad, I couldn't get into a—I could get into a—any college at all except some kind of a night school. And—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Yeah.

TED GILIEN: —my father had three degrees, one in architecture, civil engineering, and—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Good heavens.

TED GILIEN: —math. And here was his son, you know, kind of a dummy, who was more interested in weightlifting than he was in anything else. And it was quite a problem.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: You inherited the art from your mother. Although, it hadn't come out in her yet.

TED GILIEN: Oh, no. My father's a much more sensitive, you know, intellectual—

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Oh, was he?

TED GILIEN: —than my mother—father—than my mother was.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: You know, he was a great student. And he— all the world's ills were on his back. He was always feeling sorry for the whole world. And, you know, being a civil engineer, he had the sedentary job of sitting on his butt for 20 years and finally got arterial—you know—sclerosis. And he just died. And I never really got to know him. I was about 18 years old. But when I look back at it, you know, I realize that if I had known my father, you know, I'd have appreciated him much more than I thought I did at the time.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

TED GILIEN: But this is—this is past history and that all there is to it.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: Well, I certainly have enjoyed talking to you this afternoon.

TED GILIEN: Well, I've enjoyed talking to you.

BETTY HOAG MCGLYNN: It's a wonderful tape. And thank you so much, Mr. Gilien.

TED GILIEN: Thank you for coming.

[END OF TRACK AAA_gilien65_8587_m.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]