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Oral history interview with Hans Barschel,  
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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Hans J. Barschel on September 14, 1994. The interview took place in Washington, DC, and was conducted by Robert F. Brown for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. 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

ROBERT F. BROWN: —I think you can say anything. This is an interview in Brighton section of Rochester, New York. This is September 14, 1994, with Hans Joachim Barschel. Robert Brown, the interviewer. Okay.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —I was born in 1912, so I'm 82 years old now.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, and you were born in a suburb of Berlin?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: In Berlin, Charlottenburg.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Charlottenburg.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And maybe you can say a little bit about your family background. Were you living—was your father in a profession in Berlin?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, my father was [inaudible] first after the war, especially, was working at Siemens in Berlin.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Siemens. Yeah, okay.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And then eventually he went to Brandenburg [inaudible], was caught [ph] in Brandenburg, and worked in an automobile factory there, the Brenner Boer Werker [ph] Brenner Boer Werker in Brandenburg.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In Brandenburg.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative ]. This was after World War I?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. And so I—

ROBERT F. BROWN: —he was an engineer, then, was he?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He was a civil engineer, yeah, and at the end of—close to the end of his life, he was building airplanes, trainer, trainer for Hitler's big [inaudible], you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, really?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mentioned—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Arado, they were called.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What were they called?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Arado.

ROBERT F. BROWN: How do you spell that?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: A-R-A-D-O.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative], Arado.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was some abbreviation.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And it was a jet plane, or was this—you mentioned—[00:02:01]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: This was a propeller plane. It was a trainer.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But he helped to develop a—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, he helped to develop the jet planes, yeah. The jet planes, which the first ones would just go up and then discharge their machine guns, and then had to go back down. They couldn't stay up a long time.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, they couldn't sustain the propulsion?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, not sustain, no.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now your father—what was his name?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Wilhelm.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Wilhelm.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: But then he has a long, all sorts of—in Germany, they had all sorts of different names. I have three or five other names.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, wow. Well, now, what were his family? Were they professionals too, or what was his background?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, his father was a *Rittergutsverwalter*, actually. It was a big estate's supervisor, or superintendent, whatever you want to call it. And I think in the Sorbic area of Germany.

ROBERT F. BROWN: The Sorbic, the Sorbs?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And he was partly of Sorb extract—?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He was very definitely a Sorb, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And they spoke a certain dialect and—?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: They spoke more than a dialect, a language of their own. Very Slavic language. And uh, well, you were at a loss when you traveled there and they would talk to you in their languages. It was—it had nothing to do with German.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So his father was sort of a steward or a manager of large country estates?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. He was a supervisor, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And your father than grew up in a rural area. [00:04:00]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very definitely, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Huh, huh. What led him to go on to [inaudible]?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, he was the oldest of a family of eight. Everybody had lots of children there. And he was most anxious to go to Berlin to study in a *Technikum*, engineering, you know, and become a civil engineer. So he went to Berlin, he first had to learn German. And then he went to Technikum, which was a technical high school, and became a civil engineer.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Hm. So he wanted to get away from the rural area. He didn't—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah, he didn't like this at all. He wanted to be somebody. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Huh. He would have led a very modest life if he'd have stayed in the area.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, very much so.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What was the area, the Spreewald?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The Spreewald. Yes, you're right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: South of Berlin, so that's where he was raised.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, your mother's background was a bit different. Her father was, what, a foreman or a—well, you said a *Werkmeister* or something.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: *Werkmeister*, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: He had a factory. What sort of factory?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: First he had to build typewriters and some other office supplies. This is what he started with, and then came the war, and uh he was involved in the war as a *Landsturmmann* [ph].

ROBERT F. BROWN: What was he?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: *Landsturmmann*. This was a reserve, kind of. And they got stuck in Baranavichy, and this was on the border between Poland and Russia, somewhere. [00:06:00] They got stuck, and it was actually very friendly with the Russians who were on the other side of the creek there, you know, and were taking a swim together [laughs] and all of this was really—they can see the [inaudible] of wars [ph], because you can be a friend with everybody if you want to. Unless you're a sourpuss, something like that. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: So he was a very easygoing man—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, sure.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —very tolerant.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. They had a good time there, swimming with them. Also knew the name of the creek there. And they never went further. This was the end of the war there for them.

ROBERT F. BROWN: His job was—he was in a factory. Was he a skilled workman, or was he a manager?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He was first a skilled workman, of course, after being released from the Technikum as a student, and then he became—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Your father.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, and then he became *Betriebsleiter*, as they're called, somebody who manages the affairs of the business. It's often the technical end of the business.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did your father and mother meet in Berlin?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: They met—there was a *Werkmeister's* club in Berlin where my grandfather, whose picture you saw there, was a member, and—with his wife, and they took their daughter Elisabeth also to one of the doings there, and she met my father there and obviously fell in love with him and married him. [00:08:02]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, what social status would the *Werkmeister* have had, would you say?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: *Werkmeister* or *Betriebsleiter* would be a hair up the middle class.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Middle class. And were things like that very important then, at that time, very—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah, very much so.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —very important what you did.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. My grandfather was a *Werkmeister*, which means a person very close related to the work which is being done in a machine factory, for instance, and my father was a *Betriebsleiter*. Big difference there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: He was more of a management person.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did your parents ever talk about these things?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, my father talked quite often. He probably wanted me to become a Betriebsleiter too. And there was a terrible disappointment when I became an artist.

ROBERT F. BROWN: I guess he was very proud of what he'd done.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh yeah. He was a—did a very good job, too.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, during World War I, was he involved in the war, or did he just continue—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, this was the time when he was in Baranavichy. Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Your father?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, my father.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, it was your father? I thought it was your mother's father.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no, this was my father.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Your own father.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: How do you spell the place where he was?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Baranavichy. How would it be spelled, I don't really know, but—

ROBERT F. BROWN: The Polish [inaudible]. What are some of your earliest memories? You were born two years before the war.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —war started, yeah. [00:10:00]

ROBERT F. BROWN: What are some of your earliest memories? Do you recall the war breaking out?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I remember when my mother—

ROBERT F. BROWN: —You would have only been two years old.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, I was a small boy, and my mother took me to a campsite where he was stationed for initial training when the war—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Your father?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: My father. When the war started, you know. And there was a campsite, and we were permitted to visit him before he went into the army, actually, into the war. And this was in Silesia somewhere, close to the Polish border.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you remembered something had happened, something [inaudible].

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, I remember especially this is strangely enough very Catholic, this area.

ROBERT F. BROWN: That part of Silesia, you mean?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. And there was some festivity. I think it was in honor of those who were buried there. On the cemetery were candles everywhere, and I remember this up to today, the candles glowing there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Was your own family fairly religious, or? No?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Not really. I had a funny experience there. I was thinking a great deal of it recently. They took me as a little boy into the very typical church, Protestant, Lutheran church in Pankow, where we lived at this time, and this organist, he has the habit of always starting with a really very noisy organ. [00:12:00] You know how noisy they can get. [Laughs.] And this shocked me already. I didn't like this. And then I saw almost naked—was a beautiful wooden sculpture. It was actually on the side of the main entrance area there. It was a Christ sculpture, and it's beautifully done. This I realize today, but I didn't like it at this time that the son of God should undergo such terrible treatment, you know. It didn't work. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: When your family moved from Charlottenburg to Pankow—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Pankow, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —the other side, north of Berlin, right?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. He was—my father was then Betriebsleiter of actually wagon—you know, they made axels for wagons and automobiles there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Axels?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So was that a different sort of community than Charlottenburg? Was Pankow?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was more like here in Brighton. It was rural suburban area, yeah. But Charlottenburg was very much a city.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, you mentioned that these were times—of course, you even remember during World War I, I think you've said you remembered military things but also the city itself, the Kaiser coming through. Do you recall some of that?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. Oh, yes, [laughs] I remember this, and the policeman at the intersection of the so-called *Knie*, it was called, or "knee" in English. This is now a very elaborate place in the rebuilt Berlin. [00:14:11] And the Kaiser would always come down the Charlottenburg [inaudible] with [inaudible] signal, and the policeman with his white gloves, he would stay at attention. It was too funny, really, to see that.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And the Kaiser came, what, in an automobile?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: In an automobile—[inaudible] limousine. Big, probably bulletproof windows and so on. [Laughs.] Yeah, so I—

ROBERT F. BROWN: That struck you as ludicrous even as a child.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, [laughs] absolutely.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Why do you think it did? Do you think you were amused by the respect people showed toward some other people, or you found that a little silly, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Somehow, I was always instinctively against militarism, and this policeman saluting the Kaiser, you know, this was a strange thing. It's just happened [ph] when I was a young boy.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You said that time you began school, presumably, about the end of the time the war ended, didn't you? Did you start school?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah. Yeah, that's right. I started school. The school then was [inaudible] in Berlin, you know, in 1918.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, and what recollections do you have?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, I have some terrific recollections. The soldiers wanted to get into my school in Charlottenburg as quarters, and the iron door to the school was closed, so they ran it down with their trucks. [00:16:11] And the next [laughs] day when we went to school, you know, us kids there, the classrooms were full of soldiers. And it was very strange. And they sent us home. So we went home and reported, and was a bewilderment [laughs] along there. And then there was quite a bit of shooting and mortar fire and all this.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Even in where you lived in Charlottenburg?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Even there, yeah. It hit—one shell hit our roof, and I was thrown through a wall, and I was pretty badly injured, and I ended up in the Red Cross—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Clinic, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was a clinic, yeah. Like here, Strong Memorial or so on.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, a hospital.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Actually a hospital, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Emergency.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. It was my first encounter with nurses, so of course since I was a boy and small and kind of cute, [they laugh] and I had a good time there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So it was pretty violent and frightening.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, it was quite violent, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And a frightening time.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Do you remember how your parents responded? How did they—or was your father still in the military?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: My father was then still in the military, on the way back, and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: And your mother—did you have brothers and sisters?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, I was living with my mother exclusively at this time. I think she took it quite well, actually, but was always worried about me. [00:18:04] How I took all this in. And when the mortar shell hit our house there, I had a badly fractured leg and it took quite a while. This was a complete fracture, you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did people understand why there was fighting? Did your mother explain to you why there was this fighting?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was probably—in the opinion of my mother and my relatives, they didn't like the Kaiser and what he stood for, you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, they didn't? They thought, what, he was—?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very militaristic and chauvinistic, you know. And didn't have to say anything good about him.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And so the fighting was between monarchists and—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Of remnants of the army, actually, what you would call monarchists, more or less, and the so-called *Kapp Putsch*. K-A-P-P, and Putsch was—you know what this word means [coup].

ROBERT F. BROWN: That's the word.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And this took place. The soldiers, they all belonged to the Kapp group, and the others were Socialists and workers and so on.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did it settle down after a while, or did it go on for many months?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, after the Kaiser had fled Berlin and his *Schloss* there and landed in Holland and [inaudible] there, this ended everything. [00:20:13] And the Weimar Republic came and gave order to it very fast. The Weimar Republic.

ROBERT F. BROWN: They changed things?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah. There was no reason, actually, to get rid of the Weimar Republic, except for Hitler, who had the idea of taking over.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, yeah. Your father, did he get home by this time? Had he gotten back?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, I still remember, the streetcars were always full to the limit, and I remember him standing on the platform of the streetcar, and my mother and I would always expect him, and then he was—they called it *reklamiert* [ph] from the army. It was on a leave of absence, and for Siemens, working there as a *Werkmeister*, you know. And he had to take the streetcar to come back to Charlottenburg. Siemens was a little bit on the outside of Charlottenburg, located.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And this is after he'd left the army.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you remember the streetcar then.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Then you moved to north of Berlin sometime after that, is that right? From Charlottenburg?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, Pankow.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In your schooling, did you—can you desc—what was the curriculum, say, in your younger years? [00:21:56]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Younger years was a basic school, you know, just as they have here, and probably a little rougher than they have here. And uh—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Were the teachers—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —there were three years of this, you know, and then you would meet another examination for actually high school, you know, the upper grades.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And did you—did you choose at that point to go to a technical school or what?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, at this point, with the guidance of my mother's younger sister, who was a very brilliant woman, I choose to make use of my talent and to become a designer.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You had talent? I mean, you were drawing?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah, drawing constantly.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh you were. And had you had any instruction in this, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Not yet, no. And my aunt took me to one professor at the *Kunsthochschule* in Berlin, and she showed my work and so on, and he liked it very much. And he told me to make certain drawings, maybe it was about a dozen drawings, of certain subject matters and then come back and he would see whether I could be taken there, could be accepted by the *Hochschule*, by the basic school. And this worked out very well.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well then, you first went to a municipal art school.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, yeah. Two municipal schools. First one, which was strictly artistic, was *auszeichnen* [ph], and art—well, painting and drawing and all this, you know, and then to the other, which was strictly engineering and had a course for designers, actually. [00:24:19]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So you studied—you went there—about how old were you when you went to the municipal art school?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I can't tell you this—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Maybe thirteen, fourteen?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, no, I was older, because I had to be finished with my school. I was 17.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, okay, so the school you'd gone to, what we would call high school.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, at the end of the high school—

ROBERT F. BROWN: What kind of school was that?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —you would be 18.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And what kind of school was the high school that you went to? Was it a technical school or an academic program?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, it was an academic school.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you had languages and history and—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. It was very interesting. The last year, I took actually at the *Falk-Realgymnasium* in Berlin, which was in the city proper, and this was interesting because all the diplomats who were stationed in Berlin took their boys to have the education there.



ROBERT F. BROWN: At that—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: So I was in very good surrounding and [inaudible] flat I had two Russian friends, [laughs] and one was a Cossack and one was Katan, and I don't know what the other one was.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Katan, K-A-T-A-N?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And this was at a certain *gymnasium* in Berlin?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was Falk Gymnasium.

ROBERT F. BROWN: How do you spell that?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The Falk, F-A-L-K, from *falke*, the bird, and Gymnasium, you know. [00:26:03]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, so this was a program that was very strict academically.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh yeah. And there was an art teacher who was very much interested in what I could do, because I did some very unusual things there—crazy things, as the other students would call it—and he suggested to—I think my mother or my aunt was requested to see him, and he said, "He should quit already with 17 instead of 18 and should begin to go to the municipal art school." So he saved [ph] me here, actually.

ROBERT F. BROWN: By that time, you'd decided you wanted to become an artist.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah. It was very interesting. I had at Siemens, since my father was there, had me there, I had taken a psychological, psychoanalytical test for—they were testing all sorts of children of the engineers and so on to whether they would be good to become part of Siemens or something else. And they figured, and the city of Berlin made the same test, that I should be a designer. So it was very interesting.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So that was pretty good—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was good for me too, with my parents and my father.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, you went—you noted here that in 1929, when you would have been about 17, I guess, you went on a trip. You went to—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Who did you go with? [00:27:58]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I had inherited a sizeable amount from my grandfather when he died—

ROBERT F. BROWN: This was your mother's father?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And this was—yeah. And the aunt of—the younger sister of my mother and her husband had decided to take me and the cousin to Europe. We had some money, and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: This was the aunt who was interested in your art.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, and she was also the first executive secretary in Berlin.

ROBERT F. BROWN: First executive secretary?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, she was a personal secretary. You know, women were not permitted to be in any profession at this time, and she was so brilliant—she was really brilliant—that a bank director took her as his personal secretary, and she was now by railroad and so on traveling within—all through Europe, you know, and being his secretary. Typing and shorthand and all that.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But women were very limited by that.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very. It was supreme limited, actually. It was impossible unless somebody as a private person, like the bank director, took her as a secretary.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And this was true even under the Weimar Republic?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you went off on this trip with your cousin, his mother and father—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. And we started, actually—we had [inaudible] to start, to get on the boat at Hamburg proper and had this wonderful trip down the Elbe River to Altona, and the next day, we were at Altona, we saw all the emigrants which tried to quit Germany and get on the boat, you know, to America. [00:30:12] I saw all this, and not knowing that I would be one of the next persons to do the same thing. And then we went from there to Plymouth—no, to Southampton. And from there to Southampton was all very strange to me at this time, and also English, because the British don't talk English as the Americans talk English, you know. They have terrific accents and all this.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Had you learned some—had studied some English?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, I studied some English, especially speech English, by one of the newspapers published a brochure, a thousand verse of English, thousand verse of French, and so on, so I took the thousand verse of English and learned all these—they had some nice typical expressions, you know. But it was more or less American English.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But what?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was more or less American English. And from there, we went from Southampton to Isle of Wight, and this was very nice, very, very interesting.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You found it very different, you said, from Germany.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Not only the language. What else was different? The way the people behaved, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The way the people behaved, and the way the food was served, and what kind of food was served, and so on.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Was there hostility on their part toward you people as Germans?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no.

ROBERT F. BROWN: There wasn't? [00:31:58]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no, none whatsoever, because we approached them also right, you know. Just makes a difference.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, were your aunt and uncle, were they very kindly toward you, or were they strict people, or what were they like? This aunt who was so brilliant.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: My uncle was probably more strict, and the interesting part, you know, was he had only one leg. He had lost in the First World War, in Belgium, his other leg. But he could get around very well on his crutches. And he was more strict than my aunt was with us boys.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Your aunt really encouraged you. Did you talk with her quite a lot about various things? Was she—?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah. There was a gentleman who showed all these movies from America, as it was then, with New York and looks like skyscrapers and the subway and the suburbs and so on, and she would always take me to these movies he showed, you know, to see already that the world is not just Berlin. And this was always very interesting.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, you went on then to, I believe, on this trip, to other countries, did you?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You went to France?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. We went then from—after the Isle of Wight, we went again a few days in London, which I liked very much, and then from there to Paris.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you like Paris?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I kind of liked it, but it was too noisy, too savant [ph] for me, you know. [00:34:06] It didn't have the stringent discipline of London. But it was very, very nice, was very interesting. And from there we took

an express train to Chamonix in the French Alps, and that was a very nice experience. The first heated swimming pool there. They get the water from the glacier there in Charmonix, and they had to warm it with the electric—because they had lots of electricity there. And I saw avalanches coming down from Mont Blanc and heard the sound of them [laughs] and all these interesting things.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, you went—and then you came back, and it was time to go to the [inaudible].

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Interesting thing was in Charmonix, there was the elevator boy, this teenager, in the elevator of the hotel, he always took interest in us boys, and he told us the most naughtiest jokes in French always. [Laughs.] It was unbelievable. And things like this. Things I still remember. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: And your French was good enough to understand him.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Was good enough, yeah. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, then you returned to go to art school, is that right, about that very time?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And this is where you studied with—did you decide you weren't going to be a painter or a sculptor, but rather do something—applied art?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, applied art and design, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And design. And how did—how did the school—what was the curriculum at the municipal art school? What was the coursework like? [00:36:06]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, the first—the basic training was really artistic. It was drawing, painting, and artistry, also, and—well, it was—at school, for instance, house painters could easily enter if they had a good report from their master, you know. And there were quite a few intelligent boys who took first house painting and interior art, exterior painting, to make a living, you know, and then used this as the recommendation to study there, and they became great painters.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Really?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mean fine art?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, fine art painters.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, really?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, times were very hard, weren't they still?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So your good fortune—your inheritance was exceptional, wasn't it?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: A dream, I suppose, during those years.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. Just came at the right time.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, yeah. So you did fine arts instruction, and then you said there were two parts to this school, then you went on into an applied arts, design?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. The other school was more in the northeast section of Berlin and was—[Phone rings.] Oh, I don't know what this was.

[Audio Break.]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The municipal art school was a special experience for me because of George Salter being my teacher.

ROBERT F. BROWN: George Salter.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, George Salter.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And was he a leading teacher at that time? [00:37:59]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, he was not only this, but he was the greatest book jacket designer, which Berlin always had any time. He was a very sensitive artist, beautiful, the way he designed his book jackets. And he was a great inspiration for me, in what he could do and with whom he could work. And I got my first book jacket assignments from publishers in Berlin. And I helped him to get away from the Nazis. He was Jewish, and he had already fled to Baden-Baden, and the Nazis were after him. And I informed him secretly, and he fled from Baden-Baden to America.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, what was he like as a person? I mean, how did he—was he—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very charming person.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Very charming.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, very charming.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And would he set assignments and you would follow them, or how did—did he work with you quite a lot?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah. Of course, we all tried to design book jackets, because he was so good in this, but we could design anything. We could select anything which we wanted to tackle. And—like posters and certain illustrations. It was a real delight to be under his guidance there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did he—in the beginning, did you do very basic things? Did he have you go through exercises and studies and—? [00:40:00]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. Well, the municipal art school, the first three years, were, as I said, mostly artistic, but also there were classes already in design, and he would conduct these classes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Lecturing, partly?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, actually working with us.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Working with you.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And were these very—were there a lot of students?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Were there quite large classes?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, quite a few students, because to study was the only thing to do at this time. It was very difficult to get jobs, and so they studied and got a nice education.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And was it free, or was it fairly inexpensive?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Almost free. It was probably—I paid enough just to buy a broom for the custodian. Very, very little.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Huh. And how many years were you at the municipal art school?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The basic training is like three years, and then three more years with the advanced classes in design.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So this was all before you went the—to study at the high school, at the fine arts school.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you had six years—so you were—let's see, you went to there in 1930, so you were—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was six years.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You were about 23 or so when you were—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, and it was 1933 when I left, and then Hitler was in power already, and there was all sorts of commotion because none of the artists wanted to accept him. And the new director, they—he was a rather delightful older man—they didn't accept him, and there was quite a bit of tension. [00:42:06]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Were you involved at all in political matters at this time?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Not much at all, no.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Nor was your family at this time?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So fairly quickly, you found that—as you said earlier, that Nazism is—you looked on with disgust.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. The other branch—I always said to my mother and to my wife, the other relatives were all Nazis, which I had. And there was a cousin of mine in Schleswig-Holstein who was—who became a—was a lawyer and became a politician, as most lawyers become politicians, or most politicians become lawyers, and he was also definitely a Nazi admirer, and he was assassinated.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, he was.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Before—before Hitler came to power?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no, after Hitler has.

ROBERT F. BROWN: He was assassinated?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Hm, hm. So these were pretty tense times, then.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You went down to the—the graduate studies, these were in design, were they, with—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —Ernst Böhm and—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Böhm and Hadank.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Hadank. And both of them were quite well-known?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very well known, yeah. Hadank, famous for his Ravenklau cigarette packages, which were fantastic, really, really, exquisite. And Böhm was more nature-oriented, also designer. [00:44:02] He was good in pattern designs and fabrics and so on.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So you—in that—those three years, then, at the Kunsthochschule, under—particularly studying with Böhm and Hadank, did you narrow it down to designing for certain things, or was it still a rather general—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, I tried to have experience in almost anything.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. And were you assigned things that possibly would have commercial application? I mean, would you do projects on the outside?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, and Hadank always saw to it that you give yourself the assignment, what you wanted to do.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh. So these were pretty progressive teachers, then.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes, very. They—actually—what I have done, I had a special course which I developed at the RIT called Creative Drawing, and this was a course, like an artist's course, in a classroom without walls. We

would always go out to [inaudible] or some other place and sketch there, and this is where the word *creative* comes in. We would come back with all sorts of sketches and then would apply this to something that was not at all related to the sketches, but where we could use some of the material which we sketched. You know, like a student, if you meet with Barbara [inaudible], she can also show you a painting which one student—[00:45:59]

ROBERT F. BROWN: At school, Rochester Institute—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. She has it hanging in her office there. And he came up with [inaudible] evolutionary subject matter, very much involved, you know, from his sketches he made before.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In nature.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, in nature.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And this is a principle that you learned, that you were taught, in Berlin.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, I developed this course, and I—

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HANS J. BARSCHEL: —my friend Bikir, it was Bikir Arpag, the one you met here.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. How do you spell his name?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: B-I—actually, the right pronunciation is Bikir Arpag. Arpag.

ROBERT F. BROWN: A-R-P-A-K?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: A-R-P-A-G.

ROBERT F. BROWN: G, Arpag.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And he's your colleague you had at RIT.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: At RIT, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But this goes back to Berlin, where you also were encouraged to sketch and then to come back, and certain elements of those sketches from nature—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: You used those but developed something entirely new.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Entirely different.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What do you gain from that? You both learned to observe, but also to, what, [inaudible] imagination?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Imagination, yeah. Creativity was the word. And this was all lost eventually. And I—

ROBERT F. BROWN: It was all lost?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, with Bikir's help, we worked out an assignment for the Kunsthochschule in Berlin now. We worked an assignment where they would sketch in the *Tiergarten*, which is a central park of German, near the Brandenburg Gate, and there are also little ponds with goldfish in there and all this, and lots of trees which they replanted. And then to develop this into a major picture of Berlin, of modern Berlin, with modern subways, modern skysrise houses and so on.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you mean you—this is years later.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, this was now. This year, we sent this over to them, and they were very grateful to get the assignment. [00:02:03]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Because the municipal art—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: We worked it out in Germany now.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Because the municipal art school had lost this way of teaching, you said?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: A long time ago.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: What they were, they were—as—to follow—what is this famous French artist which has figures flying through space and—well, they were following him as an idol.

ROBERT F. BROWN: When, back when you were in school?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, right now.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, right now. Marc Chagall?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Chagall, yeah. And they have sent me—I have it now at the archive—they sent me—they give out—every year, they have like a magazine, they call it a magazine, and it's the Kunsthochschule and the *Musik* Kunsthochschule. It's together, which makes it very interesting. And—

ROBERT F. BROWN: But under the Nazis, a lot of this was changed, is that right?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you, you finished there in 19—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —thirty-three.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —thirty-three. Yeah, and did you have—was it about that time that you had a trip to Paris? Sometime during those years. You mentioned in this one interview that you saw the posters of A.M. Cassandre.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh yeah. This was during the famous trip that I took with my aunt and uncle through Europe.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, the earlier trip.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And I saw—on one of the empty walls of Lafayette department store, I saw the first Cassandre, which I admired. It was a lady with a summer hat and very graciously executed, and she was standing there. And I admired it. It was fantastic. [00:04:04] And then I saw his poster—I think I have it in there—the *Étoile*—now, *Étoile du Nord*, in a different magazine—the *Étoile du Nord*, the north star—for the railroad, for the [inaudible]. And I saw this in travel bureaus in Paris.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I was very surprised to learn that he actually was Russian. And again, I saw the Germans better be careful with Russians, because they are brilliant. A good Russian is a very good Russian, you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Was—of course, this was your first time out of Germany.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: These were all astonishing things. After you graduated from the Kunsthochschule in—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Berlin, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —Berlin, then did you have work?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I freelanced. I freelanced. And I showed you the locomotive, the picture of locomotive. And the great railroad artist at this time, he had died.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Where, in Germany?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: In Germany. He had died in July 1933. And now they saw my locomotive and they liked it, and they gave me the first poster assignments for the German government railroad.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So this—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And so I was busy freelancing.

ROBERT F. BROWN: This one here, this poster, on the strength of this, they brought you in.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: This is one that you just did as a student project, or? [00:06:01]

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right. Yeah, as a student project to be accepted by the Kunsthochschule.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, and it was a masterpiece of German technology and this new railroad.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And it was fortuitous, but the man, the other artist, had died, and so they brought you in here.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And how were they to work for?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: And we also—I formed a group—we were together, a few artists, about three artists, and we had a representative there. And then the—after we did very well with the *Reichsbahn*, they gave us an Olympic—Olympiad assignment, because on one station, the [inaudible] *Bahnhof* in Berlin, all the dignitaries for the Olympic games and all the athletes and so on would arrive there. And so they gave us the assignment on three wooden—huge wooden panels there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Who gave you the assignment?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: The Reichsbahn.

ROBERT F. BROWN: The railroad, the Reichsbahn?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: The Reichsbahn. And three huge wooden panels to show what actually Reichsbahn is. You know, it's not only fancy travel for vacations and so on, but it is also—well, all sorts of junky assignments, you know. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Hauling freight and—

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: —Freight and so on. Yeah, right. [00:07:56] And we had this—we had large—some also the black-and-white picture, because color film didn't exist at this time, and just [inaudible].

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, you [inaudible] all these, yeah.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So did this have quite a favorable reaction to this huge poster, these huge panels?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Oh, yeah. Even as soon as the war started, then—this brings us back now to '36 and the war started around '37—they took them off and had hidden them somewhere, and I understand that they were preserved. They took them into the *Reichsverkehrsmuseum*.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Into the which?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Into the museum which has all the traffic things in Berlin.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, Berlin—I mean, you lived through from the Weimar time to the Nazi time.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you participate much in student life? Wasn't it a rather rich life at that time, or had, before the Nazis came?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: No, it was—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Or were you pretty much at home?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: I was pretty much at home, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What differences were there when the Nazis came? You stayed on at home?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.



ROBERT F. BROWN: After you were—when you opened your own design studio, in 1935, I believe, you-but you lived at home?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. Were you beginning, though, the sense that there was—maybe you should make different plans and change your life?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mentioned helping your former professor, Salter.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, you see, I had a prediction from—

ROBERT F. BROWN: You were aware of these things.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. I had a prediction from a gypsy girl when I was nine years old. My—I was on vacation on the island of Rügen, and my aunt and I, we went on a Sunday walk there, and suddenly we saw a camp of gypsies there. [00:10:14] And a young lady came towards us in some sort of a dancing step and asked, strangely enough, my aunt for permission to read the palm of my hand. And I tell you, you wouldn't believe it. She predicted my life all the way, all the way to America, even. It was unbelievable. She told me that things in Germany would get very rough and I wanted to get out of it, and there would be kind of chilly and disgusting November day, and I would walk through the forest of Berlin. There was one place where I could take the bus to the end stop and then get out and walk along a very nicely paved road to the end stop of the subway on the other side. It was about three miles or so walk. And I would walk this path and I would then—I would then notice where I should go from Germany. That I should go out of Germany and where I should go. So I went this path.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You did this years later, then, you followed—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, I was nine years old when she read a prediction—

ROBERT F. BROWN: —and years later you remembered this.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, I very much remembered. And I heard an organ grinder playing at the distance. [00:12:05] And he played nothing but American tunes, "Sonny Boy" and everything. I got to him, and you give an organ grinder 10 cent—10 penn—*zehn pfennig*, 10 pennies. I gave him a dollar bill—a *Mark* bill, you know—and said to him, "You make my life. You don't know it, but I'm going to America." And next spring, I was gone. I took the subway home, went to my aunt, with whom I lived, and said, "I'm going to leave next spring."

ROBERT F. BROWN: You lived with your aunt at that time?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, with my aunt. She was a [inaudible]—she was a postal secretary. The post in Germany takes care of the telephone service, and she was a supervisor of the telephone service in Charlottenburg.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you told her. Did you tell your parents you were going to leave?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, and you discussed it.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. My father didn't like it. He talked of soiling my own nest and so on, you know. [Laughs.] He had to be conv—he was convinced later, when the bombs fell, you know. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: But at that time he felt you were leaving, betraying them or—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You had to do all this very quietly, didn't you?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But you—there was—you weren't under threat of being brought into the army?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah, I was already—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, you were.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —practically drafted. And I got an—a vacation, an army vacation, actually, to study certain

things in England. [00:14:06] But I didn't stay in England; I went from there to America.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, is that—that coincided with your leaving? You left then?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: When you had this vacation.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right. Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You left in April of '37 and went to—took the train to Holland and then to England.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah. And I had an interesting ex—I don't know that I talked about it already. On Trafalgar Square in London. Well, I came—I arrived in London, and the campus [ph] is right next to the train there, and I went to my hotel, which I was already in 1918, so this was a little bit familiar with me. And as soon as it got—

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mean you'd been there in 1929, wasn't it?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: In '29, yeah. And [laughs] it got suddenly very quiet down on—it was one of the major thoroughfares there in the inner city. And I looked out of the window, and there was hardly any of the red buses still going there, the rush hour was over. And in the distance I could see on the street the column of Nelson—you know, the famous Nelson on Trafalgar Square. And I was kind of drawn to this and went out of the hotel and down the street and walked to Nelson's obelisk there. [00:16:00] And I looked around; I saw more or less where older, retired men were sitting around the fountain bowls there—there are two big fountain bowls. And I looked up at Nelson, and somebody suddenly talked to me, and he talked cockney. I could hardly understand English; cockney was very far removed. And I could understand him. This was always strange. And he said to me—it was like an average gentleman—he said to me, "You come from the Continent." They always say whoever comes from Europe comes from the Continent. And he addressed me also—the cockney people, they say "governor," they got to call me the governor—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, if you're dressed nicely.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: [Laughs.] It was so funny. And yeah, "and on your way to another continent, and you will be very successful there, and you will like it," and all this he told me. And he said, "In '39, there will be a terrible air raids, bombardments from the sky, and this church"—this white church, which looked like an oversized English wooden church, you know—"this will go up in flames, but don't you worry; it's all going to be rebuilt." Actually he told me already, then, that Hitler would lose the war. I knew then already that he would lose the war. [00:18:09]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Gosh. So this was the second prophecy.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right. So I turned to him, you know, and after he told me the church would burn and be rebuilt, and he was gone. He was disappeared. And I always thought I talked to God in Trafalgar Square, in my [laughs] memories. It was like that. It was just unbelievable.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, you then hardly stayed in England but went on to—

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Well, from Trafalgar Square, when I heard this prediction, I was so anxious to get my—I still didn't have my tickets to the boat and all this, and I couldn't take any money around, so I had to what they call *Gutschiene* book, where I had everything—every meal, every haircut, every shave and so on, I had slips in this booklet, which you could—as money.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you were covered to go to America?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: To America.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you had permission to go there? There was no problem if you wanted to visit there?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Not from the Nazis. They only had permission to go to England, and from then on, I was secret. And right from Trafalgar Square, there's a subway station of the Tube there, and I took the fast [inaudible] of the Tube to Piccadilly Circus, and to a side street, a very small side street, was Jewish stamp collector—store there. [00:20:07] And I was supposed to see him. I was informed secretly to see him and to get my *Gutschiene* book there for all my meals and my travel expenses there, and I would get also the American visa there. So I had all my papers. And I went to the store, and I was so anxious [laughs] to get this, and very fortunately he spoke German also. He was a German Jew. And he reached under the counter, and there it was. And I had my passport. I had to show him my passport, you know. I—

ROBERT F. BROWN: And once he saw—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, fine.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, how had you arranged this? Had friends back in Germany arranged it?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. My uncle, of course.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Your uncle?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, this connection with the bank, though the bank.

ROBERT F. BROWN: This was your favorite aunt's husband?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. He had it all arranged, secretly arranged.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you went directly, then—in fairly short order you were in New York, in May.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: In very short order, yeah. I was only a short time in London, and then to Southampton and got on my boat, showed all my papers, and I was all right. And to go in first class, you know [laughs]. I couldn't take any money out to do this gimmick. I had got enough money to be the king of Manhattan. [Laughs.] This was —[00:21:57]

ROBERT F. BROWN: But when you got there, how were you able to survive? Somebody took care of you?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, this cousin which went with me through Europe, he was there already.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, he was already in New York.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, he was already in Newark.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In Newark?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And he was on the pier with his fiancée waiting for me. And they got me there. And it was on a Sunday when we arrived, and paper flying around. You know, I saw this in Manhattan, and then they took me down in the subway there. This was the one which goes to Newark, Manhattan and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Through Hoboken, maybe, and—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right, just [inaudible]. And it was unbelievable, the way she was—the train was going the speed and all this. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Huh. It was unlike anything you'd found in London or Germany.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no. [Laughs.] It was unbelievable. And then the cars interconnected; you could go from one car to the other, and all this sort of typical New York things.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you had, I assume, certain fantasies in your mind—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, sure.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —about New York City.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, but none of it was—

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you were looking for this sort of thing.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Something very modern and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: And it was partly modern, wasn't it?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But it was also a very bad economic time.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The skyscrapers were modern.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In fairly short order—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: This was actually at the end of the Depression I got—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, and still things were pretty bad, anyway.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. [00:24:01]

ROBERT F. BROWN: But I suppose back in Paris and Berlin was in very bad shape.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. No, this was already you had a few pennies there, you could go to [inaudible] cafeteria and could have a nice breakfast and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Where's that?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —all this in Manhattan, New York, you know. In Paris you couldn't get anything.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Shortages, huh?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And I suppose the behavior of people was in striking contrast.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Also, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: During the Nazi years, when you were in Germany, were people quiet? Was it a sort of—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —everything was very—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Cautious, cautious.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —cautious? Okay.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I had this friend in this famous school where all the diplomats' boys were—

ROBERT F. BROWN: The Falk-Realgymnasium?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, who became actually fighter pilot officer later, and his mother was very much against us. But when I visited there, his mother liked to see me because I had the same opinion she had about Hitler and about the whole regime. Then she would always take the telephone and put it to bed on a cushion, so they couldn't—because most of the telephones were already *aufgeschaltet* [ph], as they called it. You could hear although the—

ROBERT F. BROWN: —receiver was down—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —[inaudible] down—

ROBERT F. BROWN: —they had [inaudible] listen.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —they could hear it, yeah. It was unbelievable, I tell you. [Laughs.] It was—"Wait a minute, I have to bring my telephone to bed," she would always say. [They laugh.] Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, you fairly soon in New York met a Dr. Robert Leslie. [00:26:00]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Uncle Bob.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Uncle Bob, you called him?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He wanted to be called Uncle Bob.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And what was he? What was his background? Because this all lead [ph] to work for you.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He was the partner, actually, very active promotional partner of Composing Room, Incorporated.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And what was that?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: A typesetting outfit. And he was known for helping immigrant artists, you know. He was known for that.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Really?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. Was Uncle Bob. Who was 103 years old when he died, not too long ago.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Really? Well, what was his background that led him to be so generous toward immigrants? He just had a—he was a very generous person?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I think it was partly also through his wife, who was a quite, a well-known doctor, physician, you know, especially for people who didn't have any—much money to pay. And—but he was just crazy about foreign designers, Uncle Bob.

ROBERT F. BROWN: When you got—what did you find in terms of the design quality in New York when you arrived, as compared with what you were familiar with in Europe?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: For instance, *Fortune* magazine was—

ROBERT F. BROWN: *Fortune*?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, was very baroque.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Very baroque?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. The cover designs were very baroque.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mean too involved and complicated, or? [00:27:54]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The design I made, which is also of the—wait a minute. There was—oh, the suburb of New York, the—which is the suburb of New York which goes out to the—Forest Hills and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Queens.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Queens.

ROBERT F. BROWN: The borough of New York, yeah.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And I designed—they gave me—I saw them with my portfolio, and the wife of the owner of *Fortune* was the art director then, and she gave me the assignment to have something with the Queens Boulevard Expressway.

ROBERT F. BROWN: The Queens Boulevard—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: —Expressway.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —Expressway.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And I did this, and quite realistically, and she liked it, but in the meantime, Francis Brennan became the art director, a gentleman, and he saw this design and he made some suggestions of—modernizing. He said to me, "Hans, don't forget they hired me here to turn everything upside-down and to establish a new style." And he made a suggestion how I could make this very, very modern, and from that design on, *Fortune* was modern, the covers and everything else.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In general, did you find American design to be behind what you did in Europe?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: At this time, it was behind, yeah. [00:30:01]

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you did sort of a variety of book jackets and posters, and so forth.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, for pharmaceutical companies.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you received—the second year you were there or so, the third year, 1938 you got an award from the American Institute of Graphic Arts for one of those *Fortune* magazine covers.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: That's correct.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Was that a very nice—

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: This was the cover.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Was that a very nice, psychologically a very nice thing for you?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Very nice, oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did this work pay well? I mean, that you did. Were you able to make a pretty good living?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Six hundred bucks at this time was like \$1,200, \$1,500.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So that was not bad.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Oh, not bad, no.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What—you were a member, beginning in '38, at the New York Art Director's Club, and what did you find that—what was that? At that time, what—

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: I was only a member for a short time, because it was too clubbish and not really very professional.

ROBERT F. BROWN: No?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: No.

ROBERT F. BROWN: I see, just people having a good time?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Having a good time, yeah. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you were intent on working hard and getting ahead.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Oh yeah. I was already working hard.

ROBERT F. BROWN: That was your main thing.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Then came the wartime, in '39, and did that affect you? I mean, except for, you know, in your mind. Could you hear from your family at all?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Through the Red Cross, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You could?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Until 1939.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right. And otherwise, I just had to have a special, an *ausweis* card, you know, identification card, with my picture and I think there was a fingerprint on it too, for the FBI. [00:32:11] This was the only inconvenient side, because they knew I was an escapee from Hitler, so I had no problem there. And only once, when the Nazis were landing, covert [ph] in a submarine there in Long Island, then they check up with me too, and they had me down there, at headquarters for fingerprinting and interview and so on. This was all Germans who were in Long Island.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you live in Long Island, or?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah, I lived in Forest Hills at this time.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, at that time, during the war, there was no question—were you a citizen, or did you become one?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Oh yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You'd become an American citizen?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yes. It took me—because of the war, at this time I was not yet a citizen. It took me seven years because of the war to become a citizen, from '37 to '44.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mean because—as a German, you mean, they didn't want to make you a citizen?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Well, because Germany was involved in this war, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you were a German national.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Right, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So during the war, there was no question of your entering the war, fighting in the war?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: The Germans tried to get me back, but—

ROBERT F. BROWN: But did they—were they—

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: —not success. So their *Botschaft* in New York, you know, their embassy in New York.

ROBERT F. BROWN: They would try to contact you? [00:34:01]

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, during the war, you continued to—with your design career, and at some point, I think in '43 or so, you met—you were on vacation and you met your wife, the person who became your wife.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah, in '43. I was out in—this was in Garnet Lake in the Adirondacks.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Garnet Lake.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah. And I was out on the lake, and there was painting and sketching there, and come back home, and on the patio—they had an open patio there—

ROBERT F. BROWN: They had a—what was that, a—?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Patio.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, patio.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah, an open patio, and where you could see who was sitting there, and there was an attractive young lady sitting there who became later my wife.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And what was her background, and what was she doing?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: She was then already 10 years—she had married very young, and she was 10 years married then and had just divorced and was all by herself. And she was married—quite decent—I met him—gentleman from Switzerland.

ROBERT F. BROWN: From?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: From Switzerland, and uh, it's very hard to live with Swiss people, obviously.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Really?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: She was a gourmet cook and always prepared one of her meals, and he came home and he had hundreds of books and sat down and read a book and didn't care what she cooked. [00:36:05] And just, just threw the switch there. And just when she was—destiny, you know—just when she had her divorce and was alone and lonesome, maybe, she had me. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, following—then you married following the war, a few years later.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Maybe we are five years engaged, actually. I was still too much involved in my design activity. And then eventually I decided to get married in Washington, DC, because the gentleman that both of us knew from—she knew him from Bremen, where he was a father of the children she was taking care of as a baby nurse—

ROBERT F. BROWN: She knew him from where was that, Bremen?

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Bremen, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In Germany.

HANS J. BARSCHTEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: She too was German, wasn't she?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. And I knew him as the art director for the North German [inaudible], the promotional director of the North German [inaudible].

ROBERT F. BROWN: North German [inaudible].

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And he was so-called Aryan, but he had a Jewish wife and he had to quit. And he was in New York. And he said, "If you ever want to legalize your affair, then come to me and I'll be your best man, and I'll fix you up in Washington, DC." [00:38:01] And we had a wonderful wedding, actually, in the brand-new—the district court building was brand new then, and the justice of peace had wonderful flowers and plants, and we were married there, and then they took us for dinner and—for lunch first, and then dinner in Silver Springs, you know. It was just around Christmas time, and I could visit all the museums there, and then came home. And this was very funny when we came home. I was sitting in the cab from—in Pennsylvania Station, coming from Washington, Pennsylvania Station, in the cab, and most cabs were very, very ramshackle, you know, they were in very bad shape.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah, most cabs, yeah.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And Marga was sitting left of me because we got in through the left door, and I was sitting on the right side, and this was a Puerto Rican driver, and he knew exactly when the light would change and coming from Pennsylvania Station, we had to go to the East Side, he was always, just when the light changed, make his turn quick. And he made his turn into Lexington Avenue, and he lost the door on my side. [They laugh.] And my wife was hanging on to me, that I would not go outside there. [They laugh.] He thought nothing of it. He picked this door up and tied it up with strings again, you know, as it was before, and we eventually came home on East 58th Street. [00:40:07] [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, you, in '49, became an art director with the City of New York Department of Health.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, Bureau of Public Health Education.

ROBERT F. BROWN: This was—you ended your time as a freelancer.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. More or less, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You decided—perhaps marriage indicated you should have a steady salary.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, most of all it was the promotional director of the *CIBA Symposia magazine*, which is also pictured in this.

ROBERT F. BROWN: CIBA.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Who hired me there. They needed somebody to supervise the bureau of public education graphic section there, after the health department, you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You worked for CIBA as well as New York—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I still work for CIBA, yeah, and did cover designs. And he hired me there, and I found it very nice surrounding, actually. It was the most—I always talk about the most integrated society which I found in the health department, in this tremendous building there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Most integrated?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Most integrated.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mean—what do you mean? Great variety?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: There were—we had people—we had black people, green people, and brown people and so on, and they all worked so beautifully together. And I really liked this. I got the assignment there, special assignment, to show how much the New Yorkers give blood to—the Korean War was on then—how much they give blood to Korean War. [00:42:08] And I needed, of course, to show and as a container there large enough, which showed—blood would show how much was given. And there was a chemical department there, a chemistry department, was a tall black man, very friendly, and I told him what I needed, and he said, "Don't worry, I have everything for you ready in a day or so." And he had to build the container and all this, and he had the blood made, and it really looked like real blood. [Laughs.] It was a funny assignment.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you decide to—you told me earlier you got up here to Rochester in 1952 because you



got a job design for a press printing house here.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. Yeah, yeah, right for an offset printing house.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But were you also ready to leave New York City?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, I was ready, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You and your wife did not care for it anymore?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, no. We had enough of the canyons.

ROBERT F. BROWN: The canyons, huh. You liked to be out—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Out in the open field, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did she share your interest in nature and—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very much so. Very much so.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. You think that that interest in nature is sort of a Germanic thing of your—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —lifespan. I mean, it was very romantic back earlier in the century, wasn't it?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Walking in [inaudible].

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Like some of the operas and Beethoven and—they're all nature admirers. [00:44:05]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. So you came here, and that's when you first began teaching. You taught at night school at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: How did that come about? Did you have a friend there, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: One of the designers at Great Lakes Press, he got—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Great Lakes Express?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. Or Press, rather, yeah.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Great Lakes Press, yeah. He got an assignment with, in—well, for the Ford Motor Company in Dearborn—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Dearborn, Michigan.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Michigan. And he asked me whether I would take his evening class in advertising design. And, well, I did, and also with Marga's push and this starts me at the RIT. I had about 40 students there, mostly from Kodak. They're very—all—you know, Kodak would pay for it, and thought maybe in design is a new future, you know. [Laughs.] Something better than just making film.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Were they pretty good students?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, very good students.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But these were older students, some of them?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: All older students, and they would—at the end of each session, they would arrange for a steak outing and, yeah, just park here at Ellison Park and then the other parks there—

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you'd have a picnic or cooking out steaks, huh?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: We had a picnic, yeah, yeah. [00:45:58]

ROBERT F. BROWN: So did you—how did you teach? You'd never taught before, had you, really?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, but I had the flair for it.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, you found that out.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And of what did that consist, would you say? What accounted for your flair?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, this flair is that you take an interesting of people, first of all, those you teach, and have patience. If it doesn't work the first time, it will work the second or third time. And just mentally [ph] success.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you'd teach them to be patient—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah—

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HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Let's talk now about—you did teach in the evening classes when the young man went off to the Ford Motor Company. What was his name?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Bruce Anwen [ph].

ROBERT F. BROWN: Morris?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Bruce.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Boris.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Bruce, B-R-U-C-E.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, Bruce Anwen. And he—did he—he introduced you, then, to people at the school, at the Rochester Institute?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: To Stan Witmeyer.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Stanley Witmeyer. And Witmeyer, what was his—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He was director of the School of Art and Design, which is now—also has a new title.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And that was—he was the person who ran the art and design curriculum.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. Yeah, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And what was he like as a person? What was your first impression—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very pleasant.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —impression of him.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, very pleasant person. And then I was introduced—after I talked to him, Stan Witmeyer called over to the craft school, which was in the old building still, and I was—and I saw Mr. Brennan.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mr. Brennan, who was that, Harold Brennan?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Harold Brennan.

ROBERT F. BROWN: He was director of the School for American Craftsmen.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Craftsmen, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative], at that time.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: But he also had to give his yes and no when new instructors were hired for the art school.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And did he? Did he approve of you?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Immediately, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Immediately. Yeah, yeah.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And I—before I even got into the art school, during the—when they had their summer vacation, I arranged for the first exhibition of all my professional work which I did in New York and so on. [00:02:07] It was quite an exhibit.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, indeed?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, and I was, of course, after this, was shown and the students saw all this, I was in, of course.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. So they suddenly realized what they had.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, what they didn't have.

ROBERT F. BROWN: This is about 1954—and what they lacked. Was their own program fairly meager at that time?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, because the instructor was also not a person who was trained in design.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Who had been doing the teaching?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I don't know his name. Mr. Witmeyer could tell you this.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you began full-time teaching. And how did that differ from teaching in the evening division? How—were the students different? Were they younger students, many of them?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, first of all, younger students. Then, Mr. Witmeyer told me, "Forget about anything which you see here, as we have done things. Do it the new way." And rearranged two classrooms set up for the workshop. This was the first-year students. And I handled this like an advertising agency studio.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Which means what?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Means there's certain assignments, of course, but—and certain deadlines. Yeah, it was the day before yesterday deadline. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: The students were put on notice, they had to produce, huh?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Yeah. This was the difference. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: So it was not to be an easygoing art school.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no, not anymore, so much was—

ROBERT F. BROWN: No more Bohemia. [00:03:59]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No more Bohemian stuff, no. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: So what kinds of projects did you develop for them in those early years? Do you recall? Were there—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: This was always practical projects.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mean, in other words, they began with basic—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Related to their environment and to their life which they lived. Always practical assignments. It was something which they never had before, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you continue with the—what you described you'd done in Germany, sending them out to do sketches, and field trips?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: This was number one.

ROBERT F. BROWN: That was at the basic level.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Creative drawing. But I have also design for production, I had then advertising

design, creative drawing, and all sorts of things.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you find they were quite gifted, or—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —and well prep—not, probably, well prepared, but gifted, right?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Quite gifted, and quite willing to do all sorts of strange things.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Strange things?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. [They laugh.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, you'd been in America a number of years by then, but—and you were aware, I guess, that American students didn't have the academic preparation that you would have had in Germany.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. I knew this, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And so—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Mr. Witmeyer informed me about this.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So you had to take into account [inaudible].

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right, sure.

ROBERT F. BROWN: But on the other hand, as has often been said, were the American students more open to variety—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —than you had been, or was generally the case in Europe?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. I was open to varieties, as, even as a student, but not the others. [00:06:05]

ROBERT F. BROWN: You had a fortun—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: But my students were.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You had a fortunate upbringing, I think, with your aunt and all, didn't you?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Rather indulgent and kindly family?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: There were various exhibits you would have from time to time, of your own work and of student work. What was the role of those exhibits? Was this to show the whole community, or the school, [inaudible]?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The intention actually was to show the progress which was being made now with the new kind of curriculum and so on. And this was very obvious. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: People were happy with this, were they, the progress?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very happy, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: There was nobody left that was going to be jealous?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, because other young instructors, professors buy it [ph] too, because they also felt very liberated and a little bit more interesting.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So it was a very wonderful environment, then?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: A lot of other youngish, or outside people being brought in to change things.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And who was the head of the institute during these years?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Dr. Ellingson.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Mark?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Mark Ellingson, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And he was a very liberal and progressive leader.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes. Right, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Had the school—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: He had already then in mind the new college, you know?

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, the new—movement to the new campus out in the farm country.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The campus, right. He didn't know where it would be, but he wanted to have a new college actually with new buildings and new labs and all this. [00:08:04]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Huh. Were the older quarters becoming very crowded?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Very old and—yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: When you arrived, was RIT a school with a national reputation, or was it not that well known at that time, say, in the early 1950s.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It probably was not very well known.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And under Dr. Ellingson, this—things changed.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: This made a difference, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: How did he achieve that, do you think? What was the principal reason that the immense changes occurred?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, he had basically an idea of what he wanted, and he wanted a college which could advance into a university eventually. And he wanted to have it in kind of a rural setting, not in a city. They tried this [ph] also, but they couldn't get space. But he was basically a progressive thinker as an executive for the school.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did you get to know a number of the people who were teachers at the School for American Craftsmen?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Which had been brought up here only a few years before you.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes, I knew them all, and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Can you recall some of them?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: My wife could take—you know, the wives of teachers at the art school could take a course in woodworking or silverworking or whatever for nothing, you know. And Marga took woodworking. [00:10:04]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did she? Who would she have done that with, woodworking? Tage Frid, perhaps?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Who were some of the people you knew best on the faculty at that time? Some of the craftsmen—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, some of the craftsmen—

ROBERT F. BROWN: —that you got to know pretty well.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, there was of course Frans Wildenhain. We were always together.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, you were? You were very close.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: He was somewhat older than you, but similar background.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I'll tell you about a very funny experience. We had lunch together at a famous Reger's Place there at Main Street.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What place?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Doesn't exist anymore. Reger's Place.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What was it called?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Reger, R-E-G-E-R, Reger.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Reger's Place.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Reger's Place. And we come back to the craft school, and there's the summer secretary, which was always there to fill in, and he introduced me to her, and he said—once said to me, you know, "Ms. So-and-so has a fantastic voice," and he said to her, "Why don't you sing something for her [*sic*]." And she was actually an opera singer. It was unbelievable. She sang a [inaudible] from Mozart, something. It was unbelievable. [Laughs.] And I was delighted.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What was there about Hans that kept you so close? Was there—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Frans?

ROBERT F. BROWN: About Frans Wildenhain, yeah. [00:11:59]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: [Laughs.] Frans—Frans, and then also with—Frans admired probably the escapee from Hitler in me, and my German [inaudible], and so that—and is a silversmith also.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Who, Christensen?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Christensen, yeah. And since Brennan noticed that Christensen and I were very close, he sent us on a quite extensive trip to various New England colleges to see, to interview the people in charge, what they would like to have done better than they had before, or something which they had done and it didn't work out and so on, you know, to make a little survey before we went into the new college there.

ROBERT F. BROWN: This was Brennan, sent you and Christensen—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, and Christensen, and we became really close friends then.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, Christensen was a charming man, but he was very—rather formal in some ways, wasn't he?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes. [Laughs] Yeah, he was. Yeah. Well, he was a Dane.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, they tend to be that way.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right, and this was the first time that the Dane and the [inaudible] were friends, you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: I guess you were saying, the historic, ancient invasion by the [inaudible] of Denmark, how Danes resented it. He would joke about this sort of thing.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, sure. [00:13:55]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. Did he remain—and maybe you all remained, in many ways, Europeans, as opposed to really becoming western, New York people?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: I mean, you still feel a little apart from the area, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes, yes. Definitely.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Now, Frans was rather outspoken, wasn't he? Frans Wildenhain.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Do you recall—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, sure. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Pretty blunt, wasn't he?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, and the things he criticized, and there was never everything perfect with him.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. Well he had to—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Now, we were—I remember, for instance, my friend Kurt Fernau, who painted this painting there—

ROBERT F. BROWN: What's the name?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Fernau. Kurt.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Kurt.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Fernau. F-E-R-N-A-U, Fernau. Kurt Fernau wanted to see and to photograph the mural which Frans had designed and installed at this pharmaceutical company—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Strassenburg.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Strassenburg, right. So we all went together, and—yeah, we were on our way to Strassenburg, and my friend Kurt was sitting in there, and I, and Frans was driving. And was probably driving a mile over the limit, and the policeman came and give him a ticket for driving too fast. And I was very upset, actually, over this, because it's scandalous to give him a ticket for driving maybe a little bit too fast. [00:16:07] And so he was—had to see the judge.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, Frans had to see the judge?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Frans, to see the judge, and I give him a memo from me, in which I very politely informed the judge who Frans Wildenhain really is. And I mentioned the fact that he is so damn good as a potter and whatever he does that the town of Henrietta should only be too glad if he drives too fast, you know. And the judge, fortunately he had also a sense of humor and throw the thing out. And Frans invited us then to a dinner in his place in Bushland Basin [ph]. [They laugh.] His second wife was still alive, and she cooked us a very nice dinner.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Had you met—you'd never met his first wife, Marguerite—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: No, no.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —but Marjorie, his second wife.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right. And she and Marga were friends.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You then worked with Harold Brennan, who was a very good—you knew him pretty well, of course.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And how would you describe him?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Gentleman, real gentleman.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And then after him, there were other changes. There was a new head of the craft school, right?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And I know mostly of the craftspeople, and there were these younger ones that came along

and—after Tage Frid left, there was later Wendell Castle was one that became a big name. [00:18:07] Did you know him at all?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. Oh, yeah. And his strange furniture. [Laughs.]

ROBERT F. BROWN: And then Albert Paley, who was the [inaudible]—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, I also met him. Yeah, he is wrestling steel and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Right, but these are people that came on after you retired, for the most part, are they? Or the later years.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: The later years, my later years.

ROBERT F. BROWN: I was interested to know in recent years—your wife died in 1989, and then in 1990 I believe you set up a fund, about 1990, at RIT, to sponsor I think visiting lecturers and teachers?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: What led you to do this?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, the need of having people from the outside in, in these—and to give lectures and maybe slideshows of certain things which were not known to the present student group, you know. This was the reason. It's worked out very well.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Great, good. This is something you had in mind for quite a while.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Has it—when you were teaching, before you retired, did you as much as possible have outside people—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I had all sorts of outside people, yeah. Not even related to design.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Excuse me.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Not even related to design, but maybe an engineer from Kodak or something like that, you know. A film and model [ph] maker, and they took us—they first had their lecture, and then they took us over to Kodak and had a guided tour, you know. [00:20:10] I always was for a classroom without walls, you know.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And you in fact had had that when you were a young man.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You were encouraged—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Right, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Did the schools in Berlin, did they bring people in to talk, people from the outside?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes, yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: They did? Very good. That was a time, a very liberal time.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Especially the director—I forgot his name now, but he was Jewish, and he was an excellent director for the Kunsthochschule, and he would bring in all sorts of people from the outside. And then later we had just somebody else.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You mentioned already the love of nature and almost the veneration for it. You gave, or you helped get going, this garden at RIT, starting [ph] in 1974, which had—I guess its formal name is the Yasuji Tojo —

HANS J. BARSCHEL: You are correct.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —which is in memory of a Japanese student, or?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yes. The following thing happened, how we met Yasuji and became friends of his. RIT always had somebody who would see to it that students had accommodations at Christmastime, Christmas dinner and



something like that. And they called Marga also, and she had actually invited another faculty member and his wife, and had prepared the dinner for them, and she dropped this dinner and she took Yasuji as a Japanese student, who can eat everything, but she had also a Japanese student, and Japanese don't eat everything. [00:22:22]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, the Japanese.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, nothing where milk was involved and so on. So she made a very nice rice dish, which was good for the Japanese and the [inaudible]. And so we had a pretty good Christmas celebration. They brought presents and so on. And it was also very gratifying to Marga. After this, the Japanese student came over here and he shared also other meals with us, and we felt an attachment somehow. Then he had another Japanese student from Tokyo visiting him, and they went into Yasuji's [inaudible] farm to Washington and saw all these sites, and on the way back, outside of Washington, he took a curve fast and was thrown out of the car, and this was his end.

ROBERT F. BROWN: So in his memory.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. And the parents immediately sent—well, not immediately, but soon afterwards, sent us a lantern, which we displayed at the Japanese garden, [inaudible], and had this especially made for the memory of Yasuji. [00:24:04]

ROBERT F. BROWN: Especially made, the garden was.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: And we redeveloped the garden around—I developed the garden around, with the help of the architecture, all the heavy equipment [inaudible].

ROBERT F. BROWN: So this interest in nature has extended to garden design, but it's also extended, I gather, to your deep feelings about nature and the reason we're here, where you reside in nature. You've talked about that, your philosophy. Is this something that, as you look back, you've held throughout your life?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: I've arranged this garden, for instance, so it's like a painting with all sorts of different colors mixing in, and light forest area in the back, and the more gentle things in the front, and the rock garden in the center.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And you allow it to—take account of the different times of year.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Yeah.

ROBERT F. BROWN: In doing this, would this have taken some years? I mean, you thought about it and [inaudible]?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: After the devastating ice storm which we had here, we had several years ago.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Several years ago, yes.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: It was terrible.

ROBERT F. BROWN: You had to rebuild the garden.

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Then I took these giant maple trees out, one in the back and one here in the front—

ROBERT F. BROWN: Oh, you took them out?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. They were too dangerous. Branches very wide and—

ROBERT F. BROWN: But this also allows you to open up, and many smaller things can be seen. [00:26:01]

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Yeah. Absolutely right.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Well, are you pretty glad that you left Europe and were here so long?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yeah. Oh, sure.

ROBERT F. BROWN: And what—your contribution is largely your, I suppose, scores if not hundreds of students. Would you say that's your chief contribution, having released, so to speak—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Oh, yes.

ROBERT F. BROWN: —students into the—

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah. This is like forming their new professional lives.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Yeah. Of your own work, what are you perhaps proudest of?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Well, back to the locomotive, which you saw there, and also the composition of my life, and quite a few paintings I did, and quite a few designs, my *Fortune covers, of course. I'm proud of those, [inaudible] and CIBA Symposia and—*

ROBERT F. BROWN: And things that you did during more recent years as well?

HANS J. BARSCHEL: Yeah, right. Yeah.

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]