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Oral history interview with Joe Goode, 1999
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Joe Goode on January 5, 1999 and April 10, 2001. The interview was conducted at Joe Goode's home in Mar Vista, California by Paul Karlstrom for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

PAUL KARLSTROM: Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This is a taped interview with the artist Joe Goode in his home/studio in Mar Vista, California. This is session one January 5, 1999, this is tape 1 side A.

Well, Joe, I want to avoid too much preamble at this point. We're going to have a chance a little bit later to get into your family background, growing up and those kind of biographical information, but right now I'd like to just start out by placing you in Southern California, in Los Angeles, a place that for better or for worse you are identified with and certainly with the 1960s. What I would be interested hearing about is you're from Oklahoma, or at least you came from Oklahoma City, to Los Angeles. How you made that decision, what were the circumstances of you coming to Los Angeles, perhaps, in part, what you expected?

JOE GOODE: Well, the way I originally ended up here was talking to a friend of mine- I was trying to decide whether I was going to go east or go west and I knew I wanted to try an art school, and I knew I had to leave Oklahoma City in order to try to find something that I really could get myself interested in. So, I thought art school was the most obvious one because that's the thing that I had always been around, drawing and painting and stuff with my father.

I thought maybe I'd come to either New York or California to study advertising design, and the reason - because I had no idea what it was - what life with an artist or anything like that would be- I never knew an artist other than my father who always had a secondary job to support his family and everything. So he was always interested in me going into advertising as well. So I thought, well, I'm going to go either to New York or I'm going to go Kansas City or I'm going to go to Los Angeles.

And I eliminated Kansas City because I was sitting outside one night talking to a friend of mine, Jerry McMillan, who also lived there, who came out here, and we were sitting in a car and it was about this time of year and he was getting ready to come back to Los Angeles; he'd been out here one year. So he was coming back out here to go to Chouinard and he was trying to tell me the pros of coming out here, and I was trying to evaluate those against going to New York, and so we drove up to my house and we stopped at about 11:00 and by about 1:00, I opened the door and there was a foot of snow on the ground and the wind was blowing and everything and it was a blizzard-like condition. And I opened the door and then before I even shut, I turned around to him and said okay, I'm going with you tomorrow. That's how I decided to go to Chouinard.

MR. KARLSTROM: Just one night you're there, not sure where you're going to go, and the next you're on your way?

MR. GOODE: I just figured there's no sense in going back there and freezing to death. I can do that here. So, that's how I decided to come out, literally.

MR. KARLSTROM: So, it was that fast?

MR. GOODE: Yes. Well, it was a decision I'd been dwelling on for - well, ever since I got out of high school, and I had been out of high school a year and I just couldn't make up my mind what I wanted to do but, that was the final decision-making element in the whole thing.

MR. KARLSTROM: So, McMillan, a photographer mainly, had been here already for a year and attending Chouinard?

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: So he had come to L.A. to go to Chouinard or were there other reasons?

MR. GOODE: No, I think he went there - it's probably- both of us were in contact with Ed Ruscha - he was friends of ours, we were all friends in high school so Jerry obviously wasn't - I think Jerry was probably influenced by Ed to come out. I'm not sure how that - it could have been more independent than that but I don't know.

MR. GOODE: What year was that?

MR. KARLSTROM: Nineteen-sixty – I think it was in December of 1961 or 1960; I'm not sure.

MR. KARLSTROM: You don't know for sure –

MR. GOODE: No, because of the December, January thing. I mean, I know I was here in January '61.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, it must have been December '60. So Ed was already here?

MR. GOODE: Yes, Ed had been out here, I think, two years.

MR. KARLSTROM: Is he older than you?

MR. GOODE: No, he's younger. He's a year younger than I am.

MR. KARLSTROM: He's just more advanced, right?

MR. GOODE: He's just older than he looks. (Laughs.)

MR. KARLSTROM: So, this is kind of nice though. There must have been for you a feeling of a kind of reinforcement, a support group because you had – Ed was out here and you'd grown up with these guys.

MR. GOODE: Oh, there's no question.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. GOODE: Yes, no question, that's true. And also, I had a '55 Ford that I sold for about, \$200 or something and that was the money – I used part of it for a plane ticket and the rest of it I – it was all the money I had. So I flew out here. It was the first time I was ever on an airplane and I flew out, and I came into Los Angeles about 10:30 at night and I was absolutely terrified because, all I saw was all those lights down there and I thought, Jesus Christ, how am I ever going to find Jerry or Ed, because I had never been in an airplane before even so I had no idea of what to expect once I got on ground.

MR. KARLSTROM: How did you find them?

MR. GOODE: I think I just took a taxi, got there.

MR. KARLSTROM: How far did you have to go?

MR. GOODE: Well, they were in Hollywood so it was like –

MR. KARLSTROM: That was way before – well, I'm sure that's way before Ed had that Western – apartment on Western.

MR. GOODE: Oh yeah, yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: Where were they at that time? I'm just curious where --

MR. GOODE: This was a place – a little place on Madison Avenue in Hollywood. It was near Vermont and really pretty close to the Municipal Museum.

MR. KARLSTROM: Down in Barnsdall?

MR. GOODE: In that area, around Vermont.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did a lot of the art students at Chouinard live more or less in that area?

MR. GOODE: No, most of them were further downtown, closer to Chouinard. When I came to Chouinard, Ed and Jerry were living with a couple of other guys, two of them were from Oklahoma City and one of them was from St. Louis. And the one from St. Louis, his name was Wally Batterman, was in the process of getting ready to get married and so there was just enough room in this house that they all rented, and basically I took his place. And so I ended up in that house with them as a result of him marrying this –

MR. KARLSTROM: So you all ended up together?

MR. GOODE: Yes, right. And we were all in the same house.

MR. KARLSTROM: On Madison Street or somewhere --

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, two questions. What were your expectations? What views had you developed on what you would find when you came out -

MR. GOODE: Well, I'll tell you, what I was looking for when I first came out here, frankly, really didn't have as much to do with an art school as it did the freedom. I was looking for a place to be able to develop and do what I felt I wanted to do and could do without having to be in a position where I would offend my family. I just didn't want them to be embarrassed by, whatever I did, at that time, when I was living in Oklahoma City, I spent most of my time - insofar as making a living, that last year it was basically gambling. I was just playing cards.

MR. KARLSTROM: For real?

MR. GOODE: Yes. And so I played - I figured I could always do that, and -

MR. KARLSTROM: But that didn't embarrass your folks?

MR. GOODE: Well, it did. My mother was looking for something more than that, but in retrospect she really shouldn't have because I didn't even graduate from high school.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, really? So you had dropped out of high school live on the edge a little more?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I did actually without realizing. I was totally naïve about it- I grew up in a Catholic - I don't know if this is what you want to hear or not but -

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: My father was Catholic and they were divorced when I was about 13 - 12 or 13 years old, and at that time in Oklahoma City, I was the only kid I knew who had divorced parents.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes. Back then it was really a shock to people, but one of the advantages that I had was that I had a kind of freedom because I didn't live with my father and my mother worked. So that meant that I had an awful lot of time on my own and I was probably one of the original latchkey kids.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh yeah.

MR. GOODE: So, I think in retrospect that had a lot to do with, what I was doing and how I thought I was going to be able to do it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, from what you say it sounds as if what you were seeking was even beyond anything that had to do with art.

MR. GOODE: It was, yes. It didn't have -

MR. KARLSTROM: You were basically seeking a lifestyle, the possibility of choosing a lifestyle suited to you and you wanted to do it on your own terms.

MR. GOODE: That's true. Art to me was secondary. So the first year I was in Chouinard, I took all these classes that were kind of mandatory classes and everything and I did pretty good in them and I thought maybe I might be able to get a scholarship but I had a design class and the design class, I made - in four quarters I made three As and an F.

MR. KARLSTROM: Three As and an F?

MR. GOODE: Yes, and so what happened was that I was in this class with this design teacher who I was able to do the work and everything but then the last quarter of that year—he'd been in a situation where he burned a collage of Ed's off the wall in a student show. And Ed -

MR. KARLSTROM: Burned -

MR. GOODE: Ed was in the Navy Reserve and he was gone and of course didn't know what happened. And so Bob Irwin told me about this and said but don't say anything about it or I'll lose my job. So I said okay, I won't say who told me, but I went to the director and told him that this guy burned this thing off the wall.

MR. KARLSTROM: Who was he?

MR. GOODE: His name was William Moore.

MR. KARLSTROM: William – Bill Moore, William Moore.

MR. GOODE: Bill Moore, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Never heard of him.

MR. GOODE: Nope, never will either.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, yes, actually he's famous now.

MR. GOODE: But anyway, the director said this is something that should be taken very seriously, and it could be a lawsuit involved, I don't know what Ed's going to do when he gets back. And so he called a meeting of all the faculty, the director did, and so everybody came in this room and then they invited me in, and so I came in and they were all sitting there and the director said, well, Joe, you came to me and accused Bill Moore of burning this collage and Bill Moore says he didn't do it. And so I said, well, he did. And so Bill Moore stood up and said, listen, you're standing there accusing me of this and there is no evidence that I did this.

And so 30 seconds goes by and finally I'm thinking, well, I guess this is going to go to court or something. And so then, after about 30 seconds of dead silence, Emerson Woelffer stands up and just looked at him and said, I saw you do it too.

MR. KARLSTROM: Emerson did that?

MR. GOODE: Yes. So that was the last semester for that guy but also I didn't get a scholarship because basically the way they did – they way awarded was scholarships was on a point system of, say from 10 to zero, and if you get an A is 10 and if you get an F it's zero. And if you get As and Bs you're way up there but one F can bring the whole thing down. So he just unloaded on me.

MR. KARLSTROM: And so that came from Moore? You were in Moore's class?

MR. GOODE: Yeah, yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: That was a pretty gutsy thing of you to do, sort of reckless almost from the standpoint of, the school and your academic career or whatever.

MR. GOODE: Right. Well, I didn't even think it would affect it. I just thought the guy did it in humor and the guy would apologize. That's what I thought he would do.

MR. KARLSTROM: Why did he do it?

MR. GOODE: Well, I don't know. I still don't know. Basically, he didn't like it, because he was a design teacher and the collage was of cigarette butts and stuff like that. It was kind of very Dada derived.

MR. KARLSTROM: So what did Ed do when he came back?

MR. GOODE: Ed didn't do anything.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did he care?

MR. GOODE: I don't think he did. I don't know.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you cared –

MR. GOODE: Well, the whole thing is, if I had known in retrospect that he didn't care, I probably wouldn't have said anything, but what came out of it was really interesting because about a year later – well, this guy, the director, had formally been the director of the Colorado Museum in Denver. And he put together a student show of all of us– five of us or four of us that lived together, and it went to Colorado and it also went to Oklahoma City, to the art museum there. So that was the first time any of us had ever shown our work outside of school.

MR. KARLSTROM: Who was the director then?

MR. GOODE: God, I can't remember that guy's name now.

MR. KARLSTROM: We can look it up, that was in '61 or '62 or something like that.

MR. GOODE: Yes, he was really a nice guy. He was very honorable.

MR. KARLSTROM: And so he, despite – or maybe even because of this incident—

MR. GOODE: It was basically his offer of apology.

MR. KARLSTROM: But he must have also found the work interesting. He must have found you – seen talent in your work, saw something special --

MR. GOODE: Oh, he probably did. Yes, he probably did. He probably liked – I'm sure –we were all really good students; I know that. I was the only [one] in the whole group that didn't have a scholarship.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes. That's why I only stayed a year and a half. I didn't figure – it was really interesting, on the last year I was there, I was in Emerson Woelffer's class, and he said we're going to have this student show, at the end of the year so I would really like you to bring something in. So I load this big painting – it's about 7 by 10 feet – on top of my car and I drive it in from Highland Park and I drive that thing in. I put it up on the wall and he comes in and he shakes his head. He said, Joe, this is just – this is too big. If we have this in here then we don't have any room for anybody else.

And so I sit there and I was looking at him. I had this old Army coat on, this Army surplus coat. So I pulled out this little painting that's about two by four inches, I said, okay, then hang that one. And he said, well, that's too small. I said, Emerson, now you understand why I'm quitting.

MR. KARLSTROM: And what did he say? Yes?

MR. GOODE: He said, well, you should really stay -- because, that whole thing that you've been a year and you've been helped by this school, and the power and the advantage of the school is other students helping other students. And I said, well, Emerson, I tell you what: if I can have your salary and do what you want to me to do, I'll do it if you take my salary and do it.

MR. KARLSTROM: If you had had a scholarship or something, you would have stayed?

MR. GOODE: I would have, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: So, you liked the place?

MR. GOODE: But I had to have three jobs to support myself going there. I was working Saturdays, I was working nights and I was working on weekends, and two days –I was working at a restaurant at lunch hours. So that was a lot to do. I just – my last year, particularly the last semester, I didn't even adhere at all to the schedule of the school. I just started taking the classes I wanted because I knew I'm not doing this for four years. So that's what happened, and that's how I started Irwin's class, which was really an advanced class but I took it my first year.

MR. KARLSTROM: So what was Emerson like as a teacher? He's spoken of by other artists I've interviewed from Chouinard and from Otis -- but anyway, he's spoken of very highly and –

MR. GOODE: Well, he was one of three really good teachers I had that were good in a positive sense. The guy, Bill Moore, the designer teacher, he was really good too.

MR. KARLSTROM: Was he?

MR. GOODE: He really was. Yes, he was. And I learned a lot from him actually, but the teacher that was most important to me was Bob Irwin because Bob Irwin didn't care what you painted like or what your image was. He was more concerned about what kind of reason you had for doing it. And Emerson was very important because Emerson had this link to history because he had known Motherwell, and he knew Clyfford Still, and he knew Franz Kline, and also some of the artists in Europe.

So this guy was like – I mean, for a kid coming from Oklahoma who – when I first came to Chouinard– I'd never heard of Jackson Pollock.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh yeah?

MR. GOODE: Never heard of him. So, I mean, he was a real eye opener for somebody like me, and so it was a combination – I think, in retrospect, the great thing about when I was in high school; it was a combination of three factors. The timing was right because it was after the war, there's still the GI Bill and there were a lot of older people coming into school who were much more mature than people like myself, and they set kind of an example. And, they were dead serious about school. They weren't there to fuck around. They were there to – they wanted to get in and get out and get something done.

MR. KARLSTROM: So there was still GI's around -

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: What was that - that's not, of course, the first wave. Would those be Korean?

MR. GOODE: Korean, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Because the big influx, of course, came from World War II.

MR. GOODE: Right, right. No, this was Korean though.

MR. KARLSTROM: We sort of forget about that sometimes -

MR. GOODE: I know it.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and there was a GI Bill still operating - (inaudible) - fellowships --

MR. GOODE: I would think so. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- afford to do it.

MR. GOODE: Right. So the factor, that the school had that kind of seriousness to it, and also it had this very, very kind of retro teaching faculty. Basically, people who taught drawing and painting were illustrators -

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: -- and they were were fine artists to a certain degree but basically their paintings- I always considered them kind of like illustrators.

MR. KARLSTROM: Who were - do you remember any of them besides -

MR. GOODE: A guy named Ed Reep.

MR. KARLSTROM: Reep?

MR. GOODE: Yes. He's around; he's in your books and stuff, isn't he?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: Yes, he actually was an illustrator in the Air Force during, I think, World War II or something like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: Reep. How do you spell Reep?

MR. GOODE: R-E-E-P. And, there was some more guys like that too, but then all of a sudden someone like this guy Richard Rubens come in.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh yes.

MR. GOODE: Now, Richard Rubens was a painter that - this guy really embraced the whole concept of abstract expressionism, and for somebody like me who walked into a painting class and see all this going on - I mean, man I was just in shock. I couldn't believe it, that these guys were doing this. I had no idea what they were doing but- it was simply because I had no idea what they were doing that I wanted to learn it. And I wasn't interested in these illustrators' classes because my father was a portrait painter and, I learned how to draw that kind of drawing and I just wasn't interested in it.

And so after I didn't get a scholarship then I just kind of lost my interest in following a formula of getting a degree or a certificate or anything, and I just thought man, I'm just going to get what I need and get out of here.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, so you said there were really three factors at Chouinard.

MR. GOODE: Okay, it was a - I think it was the GI Bill kind of influence and it was this group of teachers, which was Irwin, Richard Rubens and Emerson and another guy named Robert Chuey who was part of that also. And these were teachers who -were aware of something that happened before social realism - I mean, after social realism, and so they were the ones that really had a huge influence on me. And then the third factor was- I think it's just by sheer luck; there was an incredible group of students there at the time I was there.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: And, we reached a point where we were more of an influence on each other than the teachers were on us by just the mere fact of criticism and observation of each other's work. There was a guy named Ed Bereal who was in our class and he was - I grew up in Oklahoma City and I didn't go to school with black people and so our school's were segregated, and I had one class in Oklahoma City at a college, at Oklahoma City University, and there was a black girl sitting next to me. And that's the first time I was ever even in a class with her - with a black person or any other color, anybody other than white.

MR. KARLSTROM: How did you respond?

MR. GOODE: I thought it was - I was really shocked.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did you like -

MR. GOODE: I was shocked that I didn't realize it for a week. I was really shocked. And it just didn't matter. We didn't run around together or anything but, we had conversations and talked and everything but, I come out to Chouinard and then there's a few black people going to this school. And then Ed Bereal happened to be one of the guys that was in our class and so I did get to know him and started talking to him, and this guy did these collage kind of things that were, assemblage kind of things that were really amazing. They truly were.

He was selected for a show at the Museum of Modern Art while he was a student, and I don't know if any other - I mean, Frank Stella never had that. He was really exposed young but I don't think - he never had a show like that while - I mean, he wasn't included in a show like that while he was a student.

MR. KARLSTROM: How do you think that came about?

MR. GOODE: Because this guy's work was extraordinary and probably through Ed Kienholz or somebody like that had seen it.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's pretty interesting though to have him for - as a California artist, somebody working in the west.

MR. GOODE: Well, not only interesting to California but also a black California artist.

MR. KARLSTROM: I'm wondering if that had - do you think had something to do with it because, there is that other reverse side to that -

MR. GOODE: I don't think so, not at the time. I don't think so.

MR. KARLSTROM: Because that did happen - it has happened, to a certain degree I think it did earlier with Jacob Lawrence who became kind of the -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- standard-bearer for the African-American artist. All you really needed was one.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And you don't open it up to too many.

MR. GOODE: Right. Yes, that's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: I just think it's interesting -

MR. GOODE: Yes, but then there was also in this group of students, of course, Ed Ruscha and Jerry McMillan and Stephan Von Heune, Llyn Foulkes, Larry Bell. I mean, that's - you think of it as one class. There may have been more successful classes of graduates or people who studied in art school but I don't know that there would be.

MR. KARLSTROM: Were you there at the same time Terry Allen was there?

MR. GOODE: No, he was there afterwards. He was in with a group of people like Laddie and -

MR. KARLSTROM: What about - I'm going to save that question for the other side of this tape because we're getting low, but pick one of the teachers, like maybe Richard Rubens, and if you can remember specifically what it was like interacting with -

MR. GOODE: I'll tell you a great story about Richard Rubens as a teacher. This guy, at the end of the semester

when he had his class, one of the things that was really great – and man, I was in awe of this guy and I believed it at first – but this guy would give a slide lecture. And he would start out with cave paintings as the beginning of paintings, and then he would go through, Egyptian art, and he'd go through all this stuff, and he'd go through Baroque and Medieval art, and he'd lead it up to modern art, and he'd come up to Picasso, and then he'd come up to Pollock, and he'd end with Richard Rubens.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh really? He ended the whole history of art with himself.

MR. GOODE: Yeah, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: So I gather, with Richard Rubens, it was the art history that he was able to share with you as much as his own style –

MR. GOODE: Well that and he also had a great kind of facility, to paint. He had a tremendous facility and he could make these really kind of – he had facility kind of like Laddie Dill in a way. He can make these big, grand things without any effort or with seemingly any effort.

MR. KARLSTROM: Seemingly.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Let's turn the tape over.

You mentioned – well, you mentioned a couple things. One was that you remember that he would introduce basically a little art appreciation and art history lessons, and so I guess that was something that was part of the training at Chouinard –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- which, of course, I approve of. But anyway, so you remember Rubens doing these shows, but you also mentioned beyond that there was something that was sort of stimulating or inspiring or impressive about his work, perhaps his – I don't know, what is it -- was it kind of an abstract expressionist approach, a very gestural, a very –

MR. GOODE: Well, it was more – I mean, compared to sitting there with somebody doodling on a painting on an easel it was like theatre. It was more like theatre. It was people really getting into what they were doing, and it wasn't so much the philosophy of abstract expressionism as it was the enthusiasm people were involved in their work.

MR. KARLSTROM: So it was an energy, sort of energetic painting, which of course was very much by then very much the, I guess, leading style by the early '60s, certainly --

MR. GOODE: Right. Totally dominant style, yes, but not in our school.

MR. KARLSTROM: Not in your school.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right. It was the totally dominant style outside. If you were to ask someone like, these guys who were older than us, who were just out of school like Kenny Price or Billy Bengston or Ed Moses, these guys – this is what they were into, and-

MR. KARLSTROM: Of course, they picked up some of that in places like the Art Institute in San Francisco which –

MR. GOODE: But even so it still came through New York –

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, well, that of course is debatable, but yes –

MR. GOODE: No, I mean the influence here.

MR. KARLSTROM: Here?

MR. GOODE: Yes, basically –

MR. KARLSTROM: So you think – that's a very interesting –

MR. GOODE: Maybe Ed Moses would be an exception but nobody else.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. GOODE: Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you think most of it still came – that the AE gestural action painting to the extent that it was evident in California – Southern California practice of schools, came – was really more of a response to advancing artists in New York than to what had been going on from about 1945 at the Art Institute in San Francisco.

MR. GOODE: Yes, because people like Frank Lobdell, – I'd never even heard of when I saw in school.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right. Of course, a little later some of these people, including Lobdell showed at Ferus.

MR. GOODE: That's right, later I did know. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's interesting because one would think that because of geography that there would be a kind of closer link.

MR. GOODE: But the reason is because of publicity. There was a magazine called *It Is* and that was a really – the preeminent magazine for art, even though there was art magazines like *Art News* and stuff. This magazine, *It Is*, had articles by Ad Reinhardt and Clyfford Still and all these guys and then they had these really beautiful reproductions, and people like myself and others would – I mean, man we just lived for that magazine to show up.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes, in the library.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you would then cite that as maybe a major source for new ideas in –

MR. GOODE: Oh, it was.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- art, and that – and I've heard this before, that in California in general much of the influence came from the East or ultimately from Europe but through reproductions.

MR. GOODE: It was -- totally reproductions.

MR. KARLSTROM: And which is real interesting because one thing you'll lose is the sense of scale. Scale's supposed to be such a big deal –

MR. GOODE: Oh, everything. Everything. But the whole thing is you could read the size of the painting and visualize what this thing – in a way it was even a stronger influence than if you had seen the real thing because now days when I see a lot of Clyfford Still's or see a group of Clyfford Still's or I see a group of Motherwell, I don't think nearly as much of them as I did then.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, yes, right, because your own then imaginative powers –

MR. GOODE: Sure.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- well, that's an interesting observation because generally speaking this is viewed as experiencing art or seeing art in imagery at a remove and that that's a disadvantage, but what I think you're saying is that there's an imaginative –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- function there where you almost participate in recreating the work –

MR. GOODE: I think that happened a lot out here.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I think that happened a lot.

MR. KARLSTROM: Can you think of any – well, who are the artists through reproductions that appealed to you and some of your friends? Can you remember any particularly special?

MR. GOODE: Well, all those guys, the Philip Guston paintings, the Ad Reinhardt. I always liked the idea of Ad Reinhardt because you almost had to reel them. You couldn't even – you could hardly see them, you had to feel them, and then you could barely see it in the reproduction as well. You could just see it and it just made you ache to go see one, to see what this thing was really like. And – of course people like Pollock and de Kooning

were – I mean, everybody was doing Pollock and de Kooning’s in our art school– in the painting classes.

But the other thing that was really interesting about that school is that they had a really strong painting department that was completely different than the advertising and design. I started out in advertising and design and I was very fortunate to take this class with this guy Richard – oh, what was – no, not Richard Rubens, somebody else – Marvin Ruben.

MR. KARLSTROM: The other Ruben.

MR. GOODE: Yes, different guy, Marvin Ruben. He was an advertising designer and he worked for this advertising agency that was a really big deal called something Roberts, something like that. Anyway, Ed ended up working for this guy, too.

MR. KARLSTROM: You worked for him?

MR. GOODE: No, this guy did and then Ed got a job there, but I took his class and he had this really great class because what he did – he would give you an assignment and then he’d say okay, for this – I want you to do this corporate logo and I want you to think seriously about what this company is, how whatever you design is going affect this company, what people are going to read into it, all that stuff. Okay, so you go home, I worked on this thing, worked on this thing, worked on the thing, bring it back, and so he said, okay, now I’m going to show you what happens.

He said, you put this thing up and so now we’re going to bring in the people from the accounting office and we’re going to see what they think about it. And here’s what they’re going to think about it – he’d tell you – proceed to tell you what was wrong with it from the point of view of the accounting department. And so then, now, we’re going to bring in the editorial department and they’re going to tell you what they can’t do with it in terms of text, and then we’re going to bring in the advertising department, they’re going to tell you how expensive it is to reproduce it and all that stuff.

And so, I was in that class – that was the last day I was ever in that class because he said now, you have to take it back and revise it and bring it in again, and you have to bring it in – you have to keep revising it until it pacifies all these different views.

MR. KARLSTROM: Clients, yes.

MR. GOODE: And I said, well, that’s not for me.

MR. KARLSTROM: So much for –

MR. GOODE: So, then I decided to go into fine arts because I’d gone in and looked at those guys throwing paint around and making these great shapes and looking at stuff just happen all of a sudden and I thought wow.

MR. KARLSTROM: So that was a class that you took – was that among your last classes there or – no, t hat was when you decided to take just the classes you wanted.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And so, in a way this was a good teacher because he helped you see –

MR. GOODE: Oh yes, he was a great teacher. Absolutely. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And he wasn’t wrong.

MR. GOODE: And he remained a friend too afterwards.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Marvin Ruben.

MR. KARLSTROM: How did the fine artists get along with – well, the more commercial artists, the design/ad people, the illustrators, everyone –

MR. GOODE: Well, there was a little bit of a friction there, yes. Because the fine artists –like Ed– at that time he wasn’t considered a fine artist, he was considered an advertising student. So he was a little bit of an outsider, it wasn’t that they didn’t like him or anything, they did. But it was just that he wasn’t quite in this thing where

everybody just kind of threw themselves into it, and – because he was doing his advertising classes and stuff like that.

By this time, that's all I cared about was painting. I didn't care whether I had any grades, I didn't care whether I had any money, I didn't care about anything. And so then everybody else that I was living in at this house, everybody else was majoring in advertising. So I was the only fine art major.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: But that was only for –

MR. GOODE: One year, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Not even that.

MR. GOODE: Yes, mostly one year.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, did you talk about these distinctions? Did you, with Ed and –

MR. GOODE: No, we didn't talk about the distinction but we talked about Ed. I mean, my feeling about Ed wasn't that way at all because I knew he was really interested in painting, and I could talk to him about Duchamp better than I could talk to most of those painting students about Duchamp.

MR. KARLSTROM: I'm interested in these two camps, if you will, or two directions. At Chouinard it may seem to have been reasonably –

MR. GOODE: Well, the great thing about Chouinard, there was every department practically had a different director. You see, there was a ceramic department that was taught by Vivien and Otto Heino and they were very prominent potters at that time. Now, across the street over at Otis, Peter Voukos was teaching. So that was interesting too that there was two different philosophies on ceramics but basically the philosophy that existed in ceramics at Chouinard didn't coincide at all with the one in painting. However, at Otis, the painting school was not nearly as radical as the ceramic department. You see?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: And then the third element was the fashion department, which was really great. They had a really great fashion department that was headed by Edith Head.

MR. KARLSTROM: At Chouinard?

MR. GOODE: Yes, at Chouinard. And that's where Bob Mackie went to school, and I'm not very much up on fashion, particularly in Hollywood but an awful lot of students came out of there that ended up working for Hollywood and other places. And there was the advertising, which was completely different too.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's interesting, but of course – okay, here's the next question – Basically that would be then the standard commercial art school.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about Art Center?

MR. GOODE: Well, now, Art Center is the one that had the really strong program for advertising and photography, and so if you went to Chouinard the spiel was that if you go to Chouinard you're going to learn something more than just what's current in advertising and photography and you're going to learn more than just technique.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: Of course, in retrospect the way I look at that now is I would say well you're not going to learn as much about advertising and design as you would if you went to Art Center. And they had higher criteria too at Art Center. You had to have a much stronger portfolio to get into advertising and design.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, it certainly has been, I think pretty much over the years, considered one of the leading commercial art schools.–

MR. GOODE: Yes, absolutely. It was and probably still is.

MR. KARLSTROM: Of course, what they've tried to do is integrate, in a sense, fine arts programs up on the hill in Pasadena where they are now at Craig Elwood campus.

MR. GOODE: Right, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And they have people, guest professors like Lita Albuquerque and all kinds of people teaching half time there.

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And they have a gallery program. But I guess, I gather what you're saying is that in the old days it was much more strictly focused on commercial art and Chouinard then billed itself to the extent it could compete in those same areas that well, you're going to be getting more here.

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's true but also -

MR. KARLSTROM: In the fine arts sense -

MR. GOODE: Yes. In our center's fine arts department, they had Lorser Feitelson and Helen Lundeberg - they had these people but they were all kind of hard edged, kind of clean, that's the way we saw it. And then we had people like Richard Rubens and this guy Robert Chuey, and Emerson Woelffer. So, even the painting department still reflected the philosophies of the schools.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, of course, Chouinard though was in a way - at least at one time but I'm not terribly clear on this - a school or a prep school for Disney.

MR. GOODE: Absolutely. Well, that's basically the foundation. Basically Disney founded Chouinard in order to train animators. That was the purpose of the school in itself and then this lady, Nel Chouinard, kind of wanted to make it a little broader experience. I think by the time I came into school, by the time our group came into school, the school kind of lost control and the instructors kind of took over.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's really what happened. By the time people like Irwin and Rubens and Emerson Woelffer and Robert Chuey and all these guys were in they were also bringing in guest instructors like Billy Bengston, Kenny Price and all this stuff- in night school when nobody knew it. The war was on at that time.

MR. KARLSTROM: And in some cases, these teachers were former students of Chouinard, isn't that right?

MR. GOODE: Well, Kenny wasn't. I don't think Kenny did and I don't know if Billy did or not.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about Irwin?

MR. GOODE: I don't know if Irwin did or not. I don't know where he went to school.

MR. KARLSTROM: He - oh, me neither, I guess.

MR. GOODE: Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: I don't know, I thought that some of them came out of the Chouinard program and then - oh well, we can check up on that.

MR. GOODE: Well, I know Kenny and Billy primarily went to Otis because -

MR. KARLSTROM: They went to Otis.

MR. GOODE: Yes, they went because of Peter Voukos.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, right. But Irwin we don't know?

MR. GOODE: I don't know about Irwin and I know Ed Moses came out of UCLA.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, yeah.

MR. GOODE: Yes. Tony Berlant came out of UCLA, all those guys.

MR. KARLSTROM: But Tony is sort of your peer, isn't he?

MR. GOODE: Well, he's a little bit younger.

MR. KARLSTROM: A little younger but maybe he's Ed's age.

MR. GOODE: I think maybe even younger than that maybe three or four years.

MR. KARLSTROM: I want to ask you about a few more of the teachers because you seem to have a really good memory, even though you were only there a year and a half, on some specific things, and it's interesting to try to create portraits to a degree at least of your experience of these people. But before we do that, I have to ask you about one of your classmates and that's Llyn Foulkes because, I interviewed him recently and he's - it's all there on tape, he has a lot to say about many subjects including Chouinard, and I think you were all in Irwin's class together, is that right?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: You and Ed maybe and Llyn?

MR. GOODE: Possible, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes. Do you remember that at all and do you remember any dynamic, any sort of interaction there?

MR. GOODE: No, to me that was the great thing about that school. Basically there wasn't any - I mean, Ed and I had interaction because we've known each other since we were seven years old. So he and I had interaction with Ed Bereal because Ed Bereal and I became really good friends because this guy looked at my painting one day and says you've got to listen to this and he gave me a tape of Miles Davis "Sketches of Fame," and that's when I became indebted to Ed Bereal.

And then we would go to hear jazz. We went to hear jazz one time and I told him I wasn't to paying to hear Miles Davis ever again because I paid two times and he never showed up, and he said well, come on I'll show you how to do it, and we go to this place called The Renaissance Club. We go underneath the foundation of this thing and crawl right underneath where the stage is and sit there and listen to him for free.

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: It doesn't sound too comfortable.

MR. GOODE: It was plenty comfortable.

MR. KARLSTROM: It was okay. It was tall enough so -

MR. GOODE: Yes, I mean, man, I was this close to him.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's incredible.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: I guess the stage would be kind of elevated anyway and so you were able to -

MR. GOODE: Yes, right. It was interesting, but you'd do all kinds of stuff like that when you don't have any money.

MR. KARLSTROM: Here's a related question, and I'm thinking of being in class with Llyn and in his interview he was talking about early days of the Ferus and I guess, this was just about the same time that several of the Chouinard students picked up -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and brought into Ferus, and Llyn's take on that is kind of interesting because it's a little different from kind of the standard line about Ferus Gallery. He feels somewhat, what you would say, alienated from that group, but do you remember this as the case, that Irwin's students then were, in several cases tapped to come out right into the - in other words, this wouldn't suggest a connection between the art school, between Chouinard, and specifically Irwin, and the Ferus Gallery that was one of the places that eventually brought a lot of attention to some of the artists. Is that right? Do you remember that?

MR. GOODE: I don't really know. I tell you why because when I left school, Richard Rubens, who was showing at

Ferus Gallery said –well, if you’re going to leave, I don’t know what you’re going to do, but if I were you I’d go talk to this guy because he’s opening a new gallery and you might find it interesting.

So I didn’t even think of Ferus and in a minute I’ll tell you why, but I took a portfolio of drawings over to this gallery on La Cienega that was almost right across the street from Ferus called Huysman Gallery, and that was Henry Hopkins who was the director of that gallery.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: And so I walked in there and I showed him these drawings and he looked at them and he said, “Would you like to have a show?” and I said, “Sure”.

MR. KARLSTROM: Now this was Henry?

MR. GOODE: Yes, and I’m thinking shit, there’s nothing to this.

MR. KARLSTROM: Who needs to go to school?

MR. GOODE: I mean I couldn’t believe it. I couldn’t believe it. Then he also said, “Well, do you know anybody else? I mean, anybody in your class that’s doing interesting work?” I said, “Sure,” I said, “Yes, there’s Larry Bell and there’s Ed Ruscha and there’s Ed Bereal.” And we all ended up having our – you know, Ed Ruscha showed work there before he showed it at Ferus.

MR. KARLSTROM: What year was that, ’62 maybe?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I think so, ’61 or ’62, yes. But then my feeling about Ferus was kind of ambivalent. I mean, I always had the idea– in some respects I was jealous that they didn’t ask me to show. I was kind of jealous, in some respects, but there was another aspect to it where I had so much pride that I kind of told myself, I don’t want to go with those guys that are already there. I want to start a new group. I want to be with a new group, a whole different identification.

So I was never really upset that I was not – the only time I was really upset was when Henry quit and then I had no place to show, then I thought I shouldn’t have done this, but –

MR. KARLSTROM: So what did you do when Henry quit? And that wasn’t that long that he was operating.

MR. GOODE: No, he was only open about six months.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. GOODE: Yeah. And later, this guy came into town named Rolf Nelson and he came out of New York, and he was putting together a group of people and I guess he asked a group of people what artists were around, and I don’t know they did it in those days but it’s probably the same way they do it now. And so he asked me if I’d be interested in showing. He called me up and he said, “Would you be interested in showing?” and I said, “Sure.” And I think Llyn showed with him and some other people did too. I think – yes, Judy Gerowitz or Judy Chicago showed with him.

MR. KARLSTROM: But other interesting artists showed there. I mean, Llyn was quite positive about Rolf Nelson and the importance of some of the people who were there. I mean, Jess showed there if I’m not mistaken, is that right?

MR. GOODE: That’s right. Yes, that’s right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And –

MR. GOODE: Yes, he showed a number of people. See, also Rolf was really running this gallery for Dilexi at Ridgeland.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, I see. That’s the connection

MR. GOODE: You see originally he was just hired to run that gallery for Dilexi. So of course they had all of Jim Newman’s people and that’s how I ended up showing in San Francisco with Dilexi.

MR. KARLSTROM: I see. I forgot about that because we always – this is how history gets distorted. So often the – so often the Dilexi is called or described as the Ferus North.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: It's that kind of a connection, and I guess there was, to some extent, a connection but from what you say it sounds much more as if Rolf Nelson had a Bay Area connection.

MR. GOODE: Well, because Rolf was hired by Dilexi.

MR. KARLSTROM: So, I mean, that was really Dilexi South.

MR. GOODE: Yes, it was just for a very short period of time, and I think a number of people from Jim Newman's gallery showed at Ferus or some of them did I know like Sonia Getchof and -

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, DeFeo, Jay DeFeo -

MR. GOODE: DeFeo, yes, right. And --

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and Bob Bell.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Didn't he?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And, I don't know, maybe Craig Kauffman was just - I can't remember my chronology on this, but he certainly had a very strong Bay Area connection.

MR. GOODE: Did he? Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, he was up there for a while hanging out with all those people and -

MR. GOODE: So was Ed Moses. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: So that was a natural back and forth, I guess.

MR. GOODE: Yes, but see I didn't hang out there. I showed there but I never - I mean, I didn't even go up for my opening.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, so did you feel, or do you feel in retrospect that you were - you might have been better off in terms of attention - not that you didn't get a lot of attention, but -

MR. GOODE: Oh, I think I would have been better off, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: The Ferus situation might have served you and your career better.

MR. GOODE: Right. Yes, I think so. I think so simply because they had all the PR. Yes, if Llyn is resentful to them or about them, I think the only reason - legitimate reason he has is simply that they had a PR factor that was Irving Blum - primarily Irving Blum more than even Walter. Walter was - Walter was the eyes of the gallery and Irving was the mouth, I just didn't like Irving.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: I just didn't like him at all. I didn't - I mean to me, he was introduced - Walter told me that, this is a guy who was a Knoll Furniture salesman when he walked in the gallery and said they struck up a conversation and ended up going into partnership but -

MR. KARLSTROM: How those were simpler times.

MR. GOODE: They were, yes. But Irving never liked my work, I knew that, I knew he never liked my work and he didn't like Llyn's work either.

MR. KARLSTROM: I can see why he might not like Llyn's work but I can't see why he wouldn't like your work.

MR. GOODE: Because they thought Ed and I were too close, which I didn't think so at all but, I didn't care. Since Ed got showed at Ferus then I was accused of kind of always looking at Ed's work but in fact - and I think even Ed would agree with this, we had the same influences because we came from the same source. I mean, the idea of coming from Oklahoma and the idea of stuff that we saw in our childhoods was the same stuff. So even today, our paintings don't look alike but they're still influenced by the same stuff.

MR. KARLSTROM: We're going to have talk about that in a minute. That's real interesting.

MR. GOODE: Yes. See, I don't know any other artists that have gained any kind of prominence, that have known each other since they were seven years old and have gone from one side of the country to the other.

MR. KARLSTROM: And also remain such good friends.

MR. GOODE: Yes, exactly. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's - because it's a pretty competitive field.

MR. GOODE: Well, it is competitive but you can't deny what's there. I mean, - when I would hear stuff like that - basically I did a series of paintings when I was in England of a glass and a spoon, and Ed at that time was working on a series of a glass of milk with birds or something like that. And a lot of people thought that I got that idea from him- but ironically I did those things when I was in London. So it never came up that I got it from him but I just think that my work was never very flamboyant. So basically Irving really liked flamboyant work.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, I guess so. I can just see - not to draw too close a parallel, but somebody who liked Warhol and some of the sensibility there might find some things in your work to respond to -

MR. GOODE: Oh yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- along those lines and it just, to me, it doesn't seem like a huge leap.

MR. GOODE: But see, I think, in my case, what I was looking and where I was going, it was a kind of more complicated route than where Ed was coming from and where he was going. Ed's influence came from advertising.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: And mine didn't come from advertising. Mine came more from only looking at everyday life and that if I lived in the country that's what I was looking at, if I lived in the city that's what I was looking at. I mean, even today it's the same thing. And Ed's influence was - he was totally - he was really influenced by film and by advertising and by, all that stuff and I never was.

MR. KARLSTROM: Doing a first session interview with Joe Goode. The date is January 5, 1999. Interviewer for the Archives is Paul Karlstrom. I may have neglected to say that at the beginning of the first tape. This is tape 2, side A.

I was really interested in what you were starting to talk about. I mean, you seem to have thought about this yourself -- it has to do with sources and precedents; who's images appeared first, who was looking at whom, where these images came from and this sort of thing. And you mentioned that part of the problem was that Irving Blum had listed your work - in his mind, anyway, was that it somehow seemed perhaps derivative of Ed Roche.

JOE GOODE: No, I'm not saying that that's necessarily the case; I've just always got the feeling that he didn't care for my work, and perhaps that could have been one of the reasons. I don't know - I really don't know.

MR. KARLSTROM: But more important than that was your observation that even though there was some similarities in imagery, in interest, that fundamentally they came from different sources which you began to talk about, and I'm interested in hearing more about that, but furthermore, you said that in both cases there were connections to Oklahoma City, and I guess even your own growing up, your own experience there.

MR. GOODE: Sure. Well, a good example would be if we both used a similar image, like, in my case I used a glass and a spoon, and it just so happened that the glass was the same shape as the one that he used with his bird painting, but the thing is, this was a very common glass in Europe at that time, is a wine glass, and it was very café - it was a very common kind of shaped glass. That's where I got the idea to use that thing. And my reasons for using, a glass and a spoon had more to do with light reflective qualities and the idea of painting a still life than it did anything that Ed was doing.

And then in another case what would be really obvious is that, I did these sky paintings - started doing these images of skies in, I don't know, 1969 or something like that, and then Ed uses the same -an image of the sky for work of his later, but it wasn't derivative of me at all because I know where his comes from, it came from the desert.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, yes, right.

MR. GOODE: But, these things just happen when you're kind of in close proximity to somebody.

MR. KARLSTROM: I guess it's natural for some people to think that there might be a kind of symbiotic exchange between you two because you've known one another so well and so long.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: But it does sound as if – how would you characterize the differences – I don't know if it's a different temperament, different set of interests, a different way in rendering and drawing from objects. How would you characterize the difference between you two, but tracing it back to earlier experiences, because that's what I thought you said that much of it came from both of you but perhaps in different ways, from earlier years?

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: In other words, before you even came here.

MR. GOODE: Well, I don't know– I can't characterize where his comes from --

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay, you.

MR. GOODE: -- but I just know that at a certain point, after I got out of art school, basically I kind of just sat down and I really did try to do an analytical kind of survey of what the hell I was doing with these paintings and stuff. And so I kind of very simply took the idea, I'm going to paint what's in front of me. And that's what I started doing, and that's how I ended up doing a milk bottle painting, that's how I did these things that – I did all these drawings on paper and stuff. Then I started – I started manipulating – using these images to manipulate a kind of depth and space with the idea of drawing a line around a milk bottle painting and then drawing a line out to the edge of it to show a point of perspective and stuff like that. I didn't know what I was doing, but I knew what I was investigating.

MR. KARLSTROM: Which was?

MR. GOODE: Was this whole – this whole idea of space and the concept of light and space coming – like something – like a real object instead of sitting – physically sitting in front of this thing but to try to make it appear that it's sitting in back of it, this kind of thing – kind of manipulating space like that.

So this is what I was dealing with, and so someone called me a pop artist, and I thought – I didn't care what they called me as long as I was in the show. But I knew I didn't share ideas with Ed on why we were doing images of real objects; I knew that. We just had completely different reasons for using them.

MR. KARLSTROM: This really interesting. From what you say, your self description, in a sense, you're much more interested in perceptual issues which I suppose in part was a shared interest in Irwin.

MR. GOODE: That's right. That's true. That's why he was such a strong influence on me. I had got a phone call one time from Phil Leader in San Francisco, who was at the time writing an article for *ArtForum*, and he asked me to describe to him how the color in Irwin's paintings influenced me, and I told him they didn't influence me at all, and he got really pissed off, and he said, "Oh, yes, where did that color come from?" I said, "Well, as a matter of fact, the color I use in my painting, the strongest influence is my father."

MR. KARLSTROM: Really?

MR. GOODE: Yes, you look at that painting and you think of those milk bottle paintings, and it's true.

MR. KARLSTROM: That painting – you informed me that had been a painting which was hanging in your kitchen as we speak was by your dad, B. Goode.--

MR. GOODE: Yes, right. But this is just kind of keyed down colors, soft colors. That's what I was using in those milk bottle paintings for the most part.

MR. KARLSTROM: You're right.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And let's give credit where credit is due. This is B. Goode, the initial B. for Bill – is that right? – William Goode.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And even though you didn't live with him, if I remember correctly, you obviously had some

contacts, because you said earlier that you were – this is something you were familiar with, making works of art. And he was a portrait painter, right?–

MR. GOODE: Right, right. Well, he also took me one year – I’ve told this story a number of times but you might as well have it too.

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay, sure.

MR. GOODE: But basically, he took me on, every Sunday for a year, out to this lake and we drew this log, when I was about 10 or 12 years old. And we kept drawing the same log over and over and over again. And I just kind of would – kind of blew it off. I was kind of just always waiting till we go to breakfast or something.

Anyway, we’d do this thing and I just kind of forgot about them, and at the end of the year my father brings out these drawings and he shows them to me, and he said, now, Joe, I want to show you this same log; I want you to see how it changes. And he showed me this – he said, remember in January when it had snow all over it? Remember in March when it had moss on it? Remember in August when it was all dried out and had holes in it and everything? Remember in September when it had leaves on it? He said, this is the same log. And this – I mean, this is what I learned from my father, but this is also what was emphasized by Irwin vicariously because basically Irwin said, paint what you know, paint what you can see, paint what you believe it. Don’t worry about what other people think. Don’t worry about other people’s ideas.

And that was the strongest influence that Irwin had on all of us because that’s basically why we all didn’t end up painting the same way.

MR. KARLSTROM: So fundamentally – let’s not lose this. Let me reiterate and you see if I got it right. I mean, you’ve said now a number of times that Bob Irwin was at Chouinard, and your schooling experience, the major influence –

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- presumably an influence then that continued through his work – I mean, you didn’t have to be taking class with him – but I would understand, from what you’ve said, that the most important lesson you learned at Chouinard was from Irwin, and that it was to, I guess, sort of trust in your own interest, your own attention –

MR. GOODE: Your own vision.

MR. KARLSTROM: Have faith in your own vision.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Which of course, reinforces very much this whole idea of freedom, which is, in a more general sense what you were seeking in the beginning.

MR. GOODE: That’s right. That gave me something to feel a sense of security about being worthwhile while pursuing it, this idea that I had a sense of purpose and it didn’t matter what other people thought. And there’s nothing bigger in art school than that.

MR. KARLSTROM: But he in a way kind of gave you a freedom – (inaudible).

MR. GOODE: That’s true.

MR. KARLSTROM: And I think, just by the by, that this is exactly what Terry Allen said about his experience at Chouinard, or just at an art school.

MR. GOODE: Right. Well, when it’s good it works that way. When it’s good it works that way.

MR. KARLSTROM: Do you think – this is of course speculation – would be speculation, but there are those who think that in California, on the edge of America, on the West Coast, there was an environment that somehow seemed more open to this kind of freedom, perhaps because there was less at stake – whatever reasons -- that there was perhaps more of an opportunity to do this self investigation through art than perhaps was the case in the more formal or certainly more established art schools in the East. Do you have any reason to think that this might be the case? Is this ever anything you’ve talked with other artists maybe who went to art school?

MR. GOODE: I don’t think I ever recall talking to anybody else about it, but in retrospect I kind of think probably it did, because basically the one thing art schools had out here is that the teachers that were influential to me were not the prominent teachers of the day. They were not the ones that held political positions at universities

and they weren't the best – they weren't, quote, the “best teachers,” but they were the most radical teachers, and they were in just barely. That's why Irwin said, don't say anything about Ed because he would get fired. I mean, if he got fired, that was his only source of income. He wasn't selling any paintings. Nobody was selling any paintings out there. But nobody – that wasn't the most important thing at that time. Nobody cared about whether they're selling paintings; they cared more about what they were doing than whether they were selling them.

And that changed with a lot of people later – with most people; not all of them, not everybody, but it changed with a lot of them, and certainly it changed with, I think, the younger groups that came up. I mean, I don't even think they were even under that kind of influence at that time. But, see, when we came out of school there was only one or two galleries and nobody was selling anything. And certainly nobody was making a living out of it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Were there any – well, that's a very important point, that if you're not going to make a living at it, then what do you have to lose?

MR. GOODE: Exactly. That's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: You just try stuff. And so there's, from that standpoint, a greater opportunity for experimental work.

MR. GOODE: Yes. So then there's no other reason – basically that just provides you with the opportunity to do the very best you can because, man, that's the only reason you're doing it.

MR. KARLSTROM: And whose response were you most interested in? I mean, obviously –

MR. GOODE: Other artists. They're the only ones that really mattered.

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay, well, what about this: was there a kind of exchange at the point – well, I mean, as students that's one thing. You are living together and so forth. Were you working in the house?

MR. GOODE: Hell, we had the same studio.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, so you're all working –

MR. GOODE: Yes, I guess we had different times we worked in there and stuff.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, so it was really quite natural for you to see one another's work and make comments. Well, maybe that fits in with this whole idea that you said earlier, that eventually the most important component of the school was this interaction between the students --

MR. GOODE: Oh, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- that there was more influence. Did any of your teachers ever visit you at your --

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: They came to your place and checked things out?

MR. GOODE: Sure.

MR. GOODE: Yes, Irwin did; Woelffer did. I'm not sure if Richard Rubens did. I don't recall but maybe he did. Our place was kind of a unique place. I mean, there was one other place where Larry Bell lived with a group of artists too, and we had the kind of unique places where people kind of congregated.

MR. KARLSTROM: That is interesting that Irwin at least, and maybe Emerson Woelffer and a few others outside of class were interested enough in their students and interested enough in art to want to check things out and see what's happening. You must have thought that was great.

MR. GOODE: We did, yes, sure.

MR. KARLSTROM: I mean, really. But I suspect maybe this wasn't so common. I expect it was just a few that were getting that kind of attention. Do you think that's the case?

MR. GOODE: Well, I think one of the things that helped is that you could get one visit and see five people. I don't think that hurt anything.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, five?

MR. GOODE: There were five of us living in that house.

MR. KARLSTROM: So who was there then?

MR. GOODE: There were two other guys that also grew up in Oklahoma City but we didn't know them. They lived on the other side of town. And one guy was named Don Moore and one was named Pat Blackwell, and they were friends. And they came out quite independently of us.

MR. KARLSTROM: But you all ended up in the same house?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: How did they do? Did they go on?

MR. GOODE: Well, he moved back East and he's been an advertising designer. And Don Moore I think died. I'm not sure what happened to him. I think he died. He didn't do so good. I think he had kind of a tough life.

MR. KARLSTROM: Was there any common thread, something that connected all of you, or were you, in truth, really exploring in somewhat different directions?

MR. GOODE: Oh, you mean ascetically?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: I think that was really the amazing thing about that school, the thing that was really good at our house is that it was pretty disciplinarian. I mean, basically we had a pretty strict thing of who cooked, who cleaned up, who did all this stuff. Everybody had to take their turn at doing all this stuff, and we were pretty strict about adhering to it.

But also, everybody was really strict about doing their work. I mean, if somebody was just, goofing off or laying around, there was no tolerance for them because we just always - we needed that time. And so if somebody didn't want to be there because they weren't working, then they didn't really want to be there. So it was kind of a reinforcement of school. Actually, we were more hard on ourselves than ever any teachers were, and it was just a really great education.

MR. KARLSTROM: What you're describing is very interesting because it's a situation that goes quite counter to a popular myth about the '60s.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Especially when you put Bengston into the mix. I'm not saying everybody's the same. What you've described is actually a very sort of work ethic, work-oriented situation.

MR. GOODE: It was.

MR. KARLSTROM: And, you aren't out partying all the time, doing -

MR. GOODE: Well, we were doing that too, but -

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, yes, but not all the time. It sounds to me like you had a balance.

MR. GOODE: Yes. We had a focus.

MR. KARLSTROM: A priority, a focus to the work.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: I mean, obviously people are going to party.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: We'll party later today perhaps.

MR. GOODE: Yes. It's really true. We did - and I think, in retrospect, the reason that we did is because we had to think it. We had to invent a purpose. We had to invent - basically there was nobody telling us to produce paintings. There was no demand for painting. There was nobody interested in it, so we had to make ourselves feel they were important, and that's basically the way we lived our life.

MR. KARLSTROM: That is very interesting because it suggests actually a kind of professionalism that, this was to be taken seriously; you weren't playing at it.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Maybe you weren't getting the reinforcement that could have gotten elsewhere perhaps, but be that as it may, you were determined to operate in a way that at least you imagined serious artists worked.

MR. GOODE: Right. Well, because we're pursuing the same thing that, cold serious artists were pursuing, basically. I was trying to do the most inventive, the most grand, the most, whatever, painting I could do. I mean, I was trying to do the best painting I could do.

MR. KARLSTROM: One of the reasons it's interesting is that there is this L.A. Hollywood image, which has actually been kind of useful in some respects that is undercut by the artists who want to establish themselves or present themselves as dedicated as New York artists, right?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: But there is this image that - how things operate on the surface here, not just in an art end but in other ways as well. Then on the other hand, some of the artists played to that image because it's attractive, it's connected -

MR. GOODE: Because it's what?

MR. KARLSTROM: Attractive --

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- to Hollywood. And it can almost - it's a way to get attention and it becomes almost a marketed thing. Now, I don't know how much that worked, but certainly in Ed's career, you looked at that and you can see that part of his identity, whether it's self-created or imposed, is a real connection with Hollywood - beyond the Hollywood sign of course, which is emblematic. And he would be one example where Hollywood - the appearance of a Hollywood life or lifestyle would give a kind of romance that would attract attention.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: It's the kind of thing that gets magazine articles written about you. It can help a career; then on the other hand it can hurt it -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- in the arena of serious, serious art. What are your thoughts on that? Is this anything you guys even thought about at the time? I mean, you were in this area -

MR. GOODE: I never thought of that, because I was never particularly - I've never been particularly attracted to film, for one thing. I'm not particularly attracted to advertising images. I mean, for Ed it's just a natural, I don't think for one minute that Ed was seduced by these things to further his career. I don't think so at all. I mean, this guy was seduced when he was seven years old by these things. And basically it's just an attraction for him, but it never was for me.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that is a huge difference, then, as you pointed out earlier.

MR. GOODE: But, no, I don't for a minute think that he did that to try to advance his career or anything because he's just too good. He's too serious and the things that come up - when he does images that kind of parallel images of Hollywood or something, they're so much more clever than Hollywood does it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, yes, no doubt.

MR. GOODE: What's really ironic, now you see the influence that he's had on Hollywood. You see all the advertising on TV and all the advertising in magazines, far more influenced by him than vice versa.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, I mean, it's an incredible - it's an unusual symbiotic relationship. I guess in part I was thinking not so much of the imagery that's created, because, nobody who's serious about making art is going to tailor their work to make associations that -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: I don't think that happens with serious, good artists, but -

MR. GOODE: Well, I think Andy did.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, there are a few exceptions.

MR. GOODE: And I think Lichtenstein did.

MR. KARLSTROM: But there was this time with the L.A. artists, male generally, in the '60s, where they were characterized as players and sort of, the studs and these different characterizations which provided a kind of good PR, frankly. It doesn't mean their work was determined by this, but the whole surfing component - and I guess we'd have to cite mainly Billy Al Bengston.

MR. GOODE: Mm-hmm.

MR. KARLSTROM: This doesn't mean that his work wasn't entirely serious, but does it hurt to find ways -

MR. GOODE: Well, see, Billy - I think Billy would have been far more - far more apt to be kind of - I think he'd be far more prone to look at something from a point of view that could help him commercially than Ed would. I'm not saying Ed would be necessarily immune to it; I'm just saying Ed would - I don't think Ed would make the decision based on that, but if he thought of an idea and he thought it was a great idea I don't think it would matter what is commercial or not for him. I just think - and basically I think I'm pretty much the same way -- I mean, basically. You just have to kind of focus yourself to go through and see what you're going to see, no matter what the ramifications of it are.

And I'd known for a long time - I did a lot of paintings that just did not reproduce well at all in magazines, and I hated having to do those paintings, because it just did me no good. But I had to do those things in order to reach a point where I got - where I kind of developed my own kind of history. And I had to do that. So it's just a different way of - people have different things that they have to deal with, and -

MR. KARLSTROM: You're sort of more of an impressionist in a sense, in a strict sense.

MR. GOODE: Who is?

MR. KARLSTROM: You, in the strict sense of the word, because you - I really can see it now, that your interests have to do with perception, how you see, and I think the Irwin discs -- which are all about that, and dematerializing -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and trying to fix an object in space located - than what it does to you in realizing that you've missed this - these are really challenging perceptual issues.

MR. GOODE: You.

MR. KARLSTROM: And the impressionists, of course, were very much about - we're not going to talk about what the impressionists were about, but this strikes me as very interesting, and so in a sense, even though your takeoff point would be everyday objects, a wine glass perhaps, on the table, or milk bottles in front of a canvas, that that's not what the pictures - the works are about.

MR. GOODE: No. See, one of the interesting things about my work - and I wasn't aware of this till about five years ago, but one of the things that I kind of discovered in my own work was that every series I've ever done you could see through it, and I was never aware of that.

MR. KARLSTROM: What do you mean -- you can see through it.

MR. GOODE: Yes. Even staircases.

MR. KARLSTROM: You could see through it.

MR. GOODE: Yes, because basically you go up and down and in and out. But I was never really aware of it. And I could never, ever understand what these diverse kinds of subject matters had to do with each other.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, what are your thoughts on that?

MR. GOODE: It's the same. I mean, to me it's like when I told people, I'm doing the same painting over and over and over again. I'm just doing a different version of the "Milk Bottle" painting.

MR. KARLSTROM: You mean even your recent work?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about clouds?

MR. GOODE: We can see through clouds.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did you milk bottle paintings – well, you just said – that’s sort of iconic, or a central image for you, representative of certain ideas. It’s the ideas that you continue to play with and so the milk bottle stands as emblematic? Is that --

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: I have to ask this, of course, and probably you’ve said it before and I’ll go back and read your catalogue and it’ll be there, but how – what was the moment? What happened that presented --

MR. GOODE: What, when I did a milk bottle painting?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes. How did it come about?

MR. GOODE: Well, the first thing I did before I did any of the milk bottle paintings, I did some photographs of painting – of milk bottles that were sitting on a porch. They were sitting on the steps. And it was when I was living in Highland Park and – we had milk delivered because I had a baby. So they were in these – sometimes they were in these containers and sometimes there was just one or two bottles. But they were sitting on these steps, and they would be the empty bottles that my wife had put out, for the milkman to pick up the next day. So I started taking photographs of those. Then I started painting these photographs, and then I started thinking, what if I did these paintings on a large scale and I put this bottle in front of it so not only am I showing something that is in front, of a natural painting, but I’m making the actual painting the image, so I make this thing go back into it.

That’s when I first started thinking about it, and that’s why at a very early point in time I do these house paintings, but my idea for those house paintings was I did these sketches, drawing on these – Hi, Romi – sorry.

MR. KARLSTROM: That’s all right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Continuing with Joe Goode interview, session one, tape two, side B, which will wrap up this session. And we’re having a very interesting talk about – you were telling me about “Milk Bottles” –

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and where they came about.

MR. GOODE: Yes, I can’t recall exactly what we discussed, but I think I told you that when people ask me, try to explain my paintings, I just say I’m still painting – I just paint the same painting over and over and over again, just trying to find a new way of seeing it. And that’s what I do.

MR. KARLSTROM: But you think that the milk bottle paintings were picked up – I mean, it was fortunate, actually, that you had these –

MR. GOODE: Pure luck.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- because they – I mean, aha! Pop art. This is –

MR. GOODE: Right. Pure luck.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- commonplace objects.

MR. GOODE: Yes, and actually, that’s why Walter Hopps made that title; that’s why he called it “art of the common object” as opposed to anything having to do with pop art. It’s because he realized early on that a lot of people were doing images with common objects that didn’t necessarily fit into the prevailing philosophy of pop art.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, right, like Wayne Theibaud.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: I mean, he’s a really good example of that because now with a little bit of perspective we see

very little connection at all. He's an old-fashioned Bay area painter.

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did you know Wayne's work at all?

MR. GOODE: I knew his work - well, only when we started showing in pop art shows together, about the same time of Mel Ramos and those guys.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes. Do you know Mel?

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Because there's another case where the pop rubric doesn't seem -

MR. GOODE: Well, he got consumed by it, I think. I don't really know his history of his work because I know he might be in the same situation I am where if nobody is interested in showing it, you just don't show that much. But he didn't seem to have changed his work very much. Kind of -

MR. KARLSTROM: No, I guess not.

MR. GOODE: I don't know whether he did or not.

MR. KARLSTROM: But, I mean, you have milk bottles; he has, if I may say this, human milk bottles.

MR. GOODE: No, right. You can say that. But he just didn't like - I don't think he - maybe I'm wrong; maybe I just - I haven't seen enough of his work, but I just don't think he has carried his idea very far.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, yes, he -

MR. GOODE: Maybe he did and I just don't see it.

MR. KARLSTROM: He of course has introduced other subjects, like he had his - (inaudible) - series -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and such, but I guess one could say he's been pretty focused over time.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And I guess it's served him well. I mean, our mutual friend Mel isn't the subject, but there is - I suppose it touches on what we were talking about earlier, trying to identify - or discovering certain imagery that is effective, that serves you well, serves you very well. It's not that you've chosen for that reason, but if it gets reinforced that way it's quite - perhaps almost irresistible if you're going to -

MR. GOODE: Well, it is. I mean, some of those people who got involved, people like Robert Indiana, I mean, they just chewed up, and a guy that - D'Arcangelo -

MR. KARLSTROM: Allan D'arcangelo.

MR. GOODE: Yes. I just think they weren't focused, I think they happened on something I did that related to what they were doing and then - but they didn't have - I just don't think that they had a kind of focus that I did but, I don't care what John Coplans tells me to do, I'm not doing that. I'm doing this. And John Coplans did indeed tell me one time that I should follow up those milk bottle paintings with doing - putting objects on shelves, and I said why should I do that? And he didn't want to say why but basically the idea was because he could write about it, that's why.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's pretty bad. That's not the kind of thing that -

MR. GOODE: That's - I mean, that's - I mean, basically every artist has gone through that.

MR. KARLSTROM: What do you mean? Being encouraged by critics and --

MR. GOODE: Every artist has been seduced one way or the other to do something that's outside the focus of, their -

MR. KARLSTROM: Because it fits somebody else's agenda -

MR. GOODE: Sure, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- if it's a dealer or it's the market; if it's a critic or historian, he can write about it.

MR. GOODE: Sure.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, I guess you're right. That's true. So you actually had that experience of being encouraged to develop in a certain way?

MR. GOODE: Well, he asked me to, yes. Also, Peter Gould asked me to paint smaller ones so I painted bigger ones

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, I guess you can't blame them for trying.

MR. GOODE: But see, that's why I think there's basically two kinds of artists. There's the kind of artist that paints for money and there's the kind of artist that makes money to paint.

MR. KARLSTROM: It takes pride. Did you ever teach, speaking of schools and ways to make -

MR. GOODE: No, I always had a kind of feeling about teaching. From what - it was kind of like at the time - when I was in art school it was very difficult for anybody - every artist I knew didn't want to teach, and the reason they didn't want to teach is because they didn't want to be part of the establishment that we were all against.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, but on the other hand, you got on and on about Irwin and -

MR. GOODE: Well, but see we always considered him kind of -

MR. KARLSTROM: Above it or something?

MR. GOODE: Well, he was, basically he was barely in it. I mean, he never sacrificed his principles in his own work and he didn't promote his own work. Those two things were very important. Every other teacher we had promoted their own work one way or the other.

MR. KARLSTROM: Like Richard Rubens showing his stuff?

MR. GOODE: Oh yes, all the other illustrators, all the animators, everybody. And - but he never did that. So I always had a kind of negative feeling about teachers, and I also felt I didn't have enough information to be able to sit up there and tell someone what to do. I was so engrossed in the process of trying to figure out what I'm going to do that, why would I be in a position where I tell other people what to do?

MR. KARLSTROM: Cool. This is just like Zorthian's books. Thank you.

Well, right, but we've been talking about - for Romi's benefit here - about schools -- art schools and other things. It seems to me that what you've described is a pretty positive experience, an important experience or a time for you.

MR. GOODE: Yes, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And you can't have it without having somebody on faculty and, I mean, I realize it's great to have those figures - the academy; we used to call them, academicians -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- to, rebel against but somebody's got to do that. I guess, what you're saying is that you and your friends, colleagues basically wanted to separate yourselves, once you'd had that experience just to move on -

MR. GOODE: Right, well none of us taught. That's interesting, none of taught.

MR. KARLSTROM: Didn't Ed ever teach?

MR. GOODE: Well, he might have - if he taught, he taught on the guest - I've done that.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: I've kind of guest - that means you just walk in and look at people's work and ask if them if they've got any questions and if they don't, you leave.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, what about some others who actually have made careers out of – or they wouldn't say it's their only career but I'm thinking, like John Baldessari may be the most famous one of all.

MR. GOODE: Well, he made a career out of teaching.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: He did. And he made a whole culture out of teaching.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, well, what do you think of that? Do you –

MR. GOODE: I just think that's one way of doing it–

MR. KARLSTROM: Do you think that teaching is almost like an artwork? Practically a conception of –

MR. GOODE: Well, for him it was because basically he developed a whole system. He not only developed a system of people who followed him, but he also, developed a system of people who would support him. So, basically there are more curators that ever came out of – there are probably more curators that came out of Valencia than there are artists. Basically the curators are of a conceptual mold, which means that they don't use their eyes, they use their ears and what they hear is more important than what they see.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, of course you described a very prevalent recent phenomenon. What do you think of – and this is asking you a question that, of course, you can only answer on the basis of whatever your contact has been, but I'm thinking of somebody whose become very seemingly influential at UCLA, I think he's chairing the department, Lari Pittman, for instance?

MR. GOODE: Well, I don't know him. I'm interested in his work. I'm more interested in his work than I am people like – oh god, the sculpture woman there –

MR. KARLSTROM: Charles Ray?

MR. GOODE: No, I like Charles Ray too. I like both of them better than I like – who's the big – Chris Burden.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh yes, oh really?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I think Chris is interesting, but I think if I took 10 years to make one work I could make it pretty interesting too. And basically, he can do that because he teaches. He doesn't have to depend on – he doesn't take risks that I do. He thinks – he probably thinks he does but he doesn't.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, what do you think of, at this point, a kind of critique on colleagues –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- but I'm interested –

MR. GOODE: No, I think – when I say that, I'm not really criticizing him because, I think he operates in a different arena.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, but you said that you like Charles Ray. What is it --

MR. GOODE: What is it I like about him?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: Basically, the chronological order is Ed Ruscha, Baldessari, Bruce Nauman, Charles Ray.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh really?

MR. GOODE: Yes. Think of it that way, think of the influence.

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay, well, you tell me the influence.

MR. GOODE: Well, I'm not going to tell you, I'm going to tell you to get out your books and look at them. I mean, it's obvious; it's so obvious.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, yes. What – Ed Ruscha, Nauman –

MR. GOODE: Ed Ruscha, Baldessari, Nauman –

MR. KARLSTROM: Baldessari, yes.

MR. GOODE: -- Nauman and Charles Ray. It's just a very logical extension.

MR. KARLSTROM: But – and Charles Ray, of course, I think I read about him, he came here – oh, I don't know, not all that long ago, I guess it was in the '80s?

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: He sort of came to UCLA and then made a home for himself. Do you see – what is the question here exactly? I'm sort of looking for –

MR. GOODE: See, right now I think UCLA is the Chouinard of the '90s. I mean, I really do think so. Yes. That's where all the new – that's where the tolerance is. I shouldn't say new work necessarily but that's definitely where the tolerance is. When you have a guy like Chris Burden working the way he does, Charles Ray working the way he does, and Lari Pittman that shows you a certain tolerance.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's pretty good. It's better than it used to be.

MR. GOODE: Yes. Absolutely.

MR. KARLSTROM: Although –

MR. GOODE: It's better than Art Center.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, yes and UCLA has had in the past a pretty distinguished faculty. I mean, after all Diebenkorn taught there. There was a conservative element –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- we all know about that but then you would get people dropping in, even Llyn. Llyn Foulkes was teaching there back in the '60s, I think. There was – oh my god, David Hockney taught there, I think, actually very early on when he first was around here.

MR. GOODE: Right, probably –

MR. KARLSTROM: And I'm not sure what kind of impact these – Diebenkorn was there long enough to have an impact.

MR. GOODE: Well, Diebenkorn would have been our Emerson Woelffer.

MR. KARLSTROM: Now is that right?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Do you think so? How so?

MR. GOODE: Because he's very conservative but at the same time he was renowned and he knew a lot of artists and had a lot of experiences.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you never think of Dick as in any way pushing –

MR. GOODE: Pulling.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, pulling? Is it because he –

MR. GOODE: Because I never saw any – I never saw him really extend any – I never saw him extend his influences like Matisse. I just didn't see it. He's so slow and plodding that it just never happened for me.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, what about this, and what you said earlier suggests a possible connection between you and Diebenkorn --

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- which is to stake out a kind of territory –

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- a series of ideas and keep at them.

MR. GOODE: Right, no I - that doesn't mean I don't admire him. It's just that aesthetically I don't light up from him that's all. To me there's as boring as mine were to everybody else's and I just don't see it. I mean, the other thing is the fact that he was teaching - see his came from history, mine came from life.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: So mine - I didn't have the orientation; I didn't have the guidance that he had. I mean, basically - I mean he had these pictures to look at, to work through. I never had pictures to look at to work through. That's what I tried to avoid, is having pictures to work through.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about all of those little cigar box lids though? Those little paintings that he did, just sort of obsessively over and over again looking at the most simple sayings. I would think that that would appeal to you.

MR. GOODE: That would have. Yes, those are -

MR. KARLSTROM: More so maybe than the big - (inaudible).

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's right. That's right. That's true. I like those things.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, what about Morandi, Giorgio Morandi?

MR. GOODE: The great painter.

MR. KARLSTROM: Because he came to mind as you were talking about your own interests. You know, humble -

MR. GOODE: Well, he just wasn't afraid to paint what he thought was important that's all. He just pursued what he was looking for.

MR. KARLSTROM: He had a show at Ferus, I think --

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- which of course tells you quite a bit right there about a kind of aesthetic or an admiration for a certain position as an artist.

MR. GOODE: I'm trying to think, I think they had a show of Schwitters too, but I'm not sure.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's very possible.

MR. GOODE: But they may - huh?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, that's possible.

MR. GOODE: They may be the only European painters they showed there that I can remember. But, I mean, not a bad selection.

MR. KARLSTROM: No, and in both cases, especially with Morandi, there you have a real artist's artist.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: I mean, it's like -

MR. GOODE: See, I mean, in a way he was more like us than the abstract expressionists were.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, I could see that.

MR. GOODE: I mean, I don't just mean me but I mean Ed and Kienholz and Billy and Ken Price, all of them basically, even though the images - I mean, he was - his images - the one thing that every artist out here got from him is that he was doing something that nobody else cared about.

MR. KARLSTROM: And you identified with that?

MR. GOODE: Yes, absolutely.

MR. KARLSTROM: And that's an interesting thought.

MR. GOODE: And I especially identified with him when I thought of what I was going to do and why I'm doing it, and I just thought well, I'm going to just paint what was right in front of me. And it couldn't - I'm not aware of it now but it could have very well have been - he could have been the influence for it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Morandi?

MR. GOODE: Sure, he could have been.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's like this flower painter, Fantin-Latour.

MR. GOODE: Yes, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: That symbolist French dude who did things besides flowers, his portraits of Baudelaire and company and, the impressionists, but what really seems - people generally know are these florals --

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and still-life florals, over and over again, and some artists in the Bay Area, as a matter of fact, Gordon Cook, who's gone now, mentioned that to me. That this is what he responded to, Fantin, just like Morandi, the same kind of thing. And Gordon Cook's work was -

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Do you know his work at all?

MR. GOODE: I do, yes, but -

MR. KARLSTROM: He was married to Joan Brown for a little while and he did beanbags, garbanzo bags, and this sort of thing - the most simple objects, so simple, so plain.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And what is it about that, for you that seems to attract certain artists? Is it a kind of discipline of just looking and looking -

MR. GOODE: Yes, I think so. I think its more discipline of looking. I mean, I think there's basically two kinds of responses to art right now. One is a kind of overt kind of sensation response, and the other, which is kind losing ground, is this idea of introspective response which - where you can actually contemplate something and start seeing in your own mind something that's there that you didn't see before. But, I mean, I think more and more today because- perhaps because of computers and TV and all the media, people are not disciplined to take the time to do something like that anymore.

Now, my feeling is that that it's very possible and, in the future at some point this kind of discipline is going to be actually necessary for a human being to survive because otherwise if they were to be taken by the whole concept of media and everything and you start interacting with media then, you reach a point where you don't know how to be a human. You don't need to be a human and you don't even have the experience of being a human.

MR. KARLSTROM: You've touched on something that would be great dinner conversation because there are some new books out on how machines, basically technology - or artificial intelligence - is going to rule the future

MR. GOODE: Yes. Well, I think it's very possible.

MR. KARLSTROM: I was reading reviews by this philosopher at Rutgers who was reviewing these books in the New York Times. It was basically saying that we don't know what consciousness is, that nobody knows, and actually we don't know how the brain works in that sense. We only can see the exterior evidence of consciousness, our brain activity in certain behaviors, but we don't know that it doesn't tell us what's going on inside. And I gather what you're bringing up is something not unrelated to that.

MR. GOODE: Not totally, but my concern is not so much as the brain and what we know about the brain and how it works. My concern is how the brain interacts with another brain.

MR. KARLSTROM: Communication.

MR. GOODE: Exactly.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that would also bring in consciousness.

MR. GOODE: Well, it does, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And that was this guy's point, that we don't understand at all human consciousness but that it's probably fundamentally different from cyber-communication and how computers talk to one another and -

MR. GOODE: Yes, the brain is more than just an initial response but like communication with visual - and computer, it's all instinct. Like computer games and everything, it's all instinct. It's not thinking, it's instinct and so basically if a kid goes to school and he learns by computer and his entertainment is these games, he doesn't need people until he needs people but when he needs people he's not going to be able to communicate how - why he needs or what he needs from people or a person. That's going to be interesting once it reaches a point where we send all these computer programs and everything into these inner schools so that these people learn math. The idea of learning math and not knowing what to do with it is going to be an interesting problem.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, this is very much the point of what I was talking about, because what these machines can do is calculate. They're meant to compute and to calculate, and that's actually all they do.

MR. GOODE: Right, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: But if it gets fast enough, then we get confused into something that there is consciousness. In a way, there's - and what you're saying is the danger in losing a kind of an awareness of humanity that allows this.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: So take that to the art. Take that again to the art and what you see perhaps as maybe diverging directions. Did I understand that correctly?

MR. GOODE: I think you did, yes. Yes, I think it is diverging directions. I think the idea is something that is dependent on impact as opposed to introspection. It's -

MR. KARLSTROM: It's a reflex practically. Is that it?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: It's a reflex response.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, you're actually right because there's almost no time allowed to a single incident. There will be one incident after another, and you can then keep doing this for a long, long time, but that's not qualitatively the same at all as contemplation.

MR. GOODE: Right. And basically what - I think the danger is not so much that a person doesn't contemplate, but the danger is the person loses the ability to learn how to contemplate. That's what I think will be dangerous. The idea that, you don't need to be able to count if you've got a computer, but if you don't have - if your brain is not articulating a way of learning how to do that, then you're really going to be in trouble.

And particularly, just in general, if humans are that way, if the kid goes to school and he no longer has to learn addition, subtraction and multiplication, because he's got a computer. But he has to learn some discipline to activate his brain. He has to have something.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, another question that you could get pretty quickly into the whole realm of ethics and -

MR. GOODE: That's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and behavior, and how do you make those judgments, because you can't count on reflex or computation to tell you one thing's better than the other one thing is ethical or moral.

MR. GOODE: That's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: So who's going to do that?

MR. GOODE: That's why some artists paint for money, and some artists paint for art.

MR. KARLSTROM: So we're - what you're saying then is that the higher role of our whatever form -

MR. GOODE: No, I'm not saying higher - different.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, I don't know. If humanity is at stake -

MR. GOODE: Well, I'm not saying it is at stake now. I'm just saying - I'm saying that if it continues to go this way and the influence continues to be this way, it could become at stake. That's what I'm saying.

MR. KARLSTROM: But projecting, speculating -

MR. GOODE: No, I'm not projecting; because things change so fast in our society that you never know. I mean, basically 20 years ago, if somebody like Clinton had been drawn up for what he's being drawn up for, he would have been - he would have been out in a minute. But the idea that he's got a wider following than even Reagan had is astounding when you think of it. So they're going to try to put this guy out. They're going to try to put this guy out, and basically they'll cause a revolution if they do it. Who would ever have thought that would happen?

MR. KARLSTROM: Not me, not me. Let me try to get this down one more time, and I'm listening very carefully to what you're saying, but there seems to be a rather big and I think important implication here from this idea of contemplation and time allowed to focus -- this is how we got on to this -- and then the reflex response that comes from rapid - more rapid and rapid contemplation and the digital world around us, the electronic world. And I want to make sure that I understood what you said, and if not, be corrected on this, that perhaps one of your at least observations, if not concerns, is that you - that we're at risk at losing the ability to contemplate, to understand and perhaps have then the material to communicate or develop - or develop which perhaps is an ingredient, a crucial ingredient of our humanity.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Is that right?

MR. GOODE: Well, it's a huge - it's a crucial ingredient for people to be able to live together.

MR. KARLSTROM: The human community?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And so - I'm rephrasing this - you see art as potentially one of the agents of preserving -

MR. GOODE: Well, I see it as potentially art, as potentially one of the avenues that could be an aide to this kind of direction, but I never, you never know what it will be or not. But I mean, certainly there's - certainly the fact that art and music are disciplines that have to do with projecting from inside to outside, basically it's a communication process. That's the reason that it's possible like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: And this has always interested you?

MR. GOODE: No, I don't think it's always interested me.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, maybe intuitively.

MR. GOODE: I mean, I've never heard of a computer when I --

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, but the issue isn't just the computer. It has to do with communication and quality of reforms that have an ability to interact. So at least now at this stage, you see these as issues that have a bearing on our practice.

MR. GOODE: Yes, yes. I did, because I mean, if you look at artists as diverse as someone like Richard Tuttle or Brice Marden, the base of - both basically of them are contemplating kind of experiences, in looking at those paintings. The difference is one is more public and the other is more private, but I think if things were to continue the way they are now, those two things would merge together to such a thing that you don't have any distinction between these kinds of experiences, because we don't have the tools to separate these things, because nobody is going through the experience of seeing things like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: I think that's well said.

MR. GOODE: I don't know.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, our light is blinking. It looks to me like we've just about used up our two hours, and I think this is -

MR. KARLSTROM: -- Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. The second session interview with artist Joe Goode in his living room, in his room in Mar Vista - which is in Los Angeles - California and the date is April

12, 2001. This is a little over two years following our first session, which was – I think it was in January 1999. It's hard to believe. I certainly didn't intend to wait this long but anyway here we are, and the interviewer for the Archives is Paul Karlstrom.

Well, Joe, we reviewed a little bit what we talked about two years ago which – and it was focused pretty much on the earlier years, your coming from Oklahoma to Los Angeles, and the time – the sort of brief time actually you spent at Chouinard, your friends and teachers who were important to you, and just the whole scene and situation. And I don't know that we really carried it too much chronologically beyond that except you did talk about your early exhibitions, you talked about some of the galleries.

Why don't we just pick up there because you seem to have, a pretty strong sense of the sort of progression of galleries and what they did and what they didn't do. The roles that they played in this developing art scene in –

MR. GOODE: Well, I don't have a real good sense especially without any research in front of me or anything but I don't have a real good sense of the galleries and what they provided, but I do have a sense of what some of them did.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, all right.

MR. GOODE: Off the top of my head I can think of galleries that came very early, either in the late '60s or early '70s. Galleries like Claire Copley, galleries like David Stuart, galleries like Rolf Nelson –

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, you mentioned him.

MR. GOODE: -- Nick Wilder.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about Esther Robles?

MR. GOODE: Well, Esther Robles, her gallery, and the artists that she showed, were of the generation that was accepted at the time, and our generation was the generation that wasn't. So all these people that came along, – after that – Rosamund Felson's gallery was another one that was early, pretty early at that time.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about Kantor? Paul Kantor?

MR. GOODE: Paul Kantor was very early. Yes, even –

MR. KARLSTROM: He a pretty important guy.

MR. GOODE: Well, he was. He was the first one who showed Diebenkorn here, I think, and he was the first one to show de Kooning, and different artists like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: And Frank –

MR. GOODE: He was an asshole of a person.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about Frank Perls?

MR. GOODE: Well, and see Frank Perls was here even earlier than that, but that was before I was here.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: And he – I'm not sure about this but my impression is really didn't show so much local artists.

MR. GOODE: I don't know that he did at all.

MR. KARLSTROM: He liked French modern Matisse, for instance.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. GOODE: You know, he showed and Kantor showed, I think, some surrealists and people like that, but he also showed people like Richard Rubens and Emerson Woelffer here as well as those people from New York. So he was the most important gallery before Ferus.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, okay what about the galleries that you were involved with, those that for one reason or another became important to you in your early career?

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, Rolf Nelson, when Henry Hopkins' gallery closed, which really only lasted about six months. After the kind of notoriety of our shows –

MR. KARLSTROM: Tell me a little bit about them. I didn't see those shows.

MR. GOODE: Well, it was a group of our -

MR. KARLSTROM: What was the name of the gallery again?

MR. GOODE: The name of the gallery was Huysman Gallery and it was basically named after the poetic form of Japanese - in Japanese poetry. And it was run by Henry Hopkins who at that time, I think, was just out of UCLA, and he - Henry at that time was kind of following Walter Hopps. Walter was his mentor, throughout his whole career actually, and he just decided to open this gallery and I didn't know about it until I walked up to Richard Rubens when I was in school. I walked up and told him that it'd been nice working with him but I'm not going to be back next year.

And he said, well, what are you going to do? And I said, well, I don't know, I have no idea. I'm just going to paint on my own. And he said, well, maybe what you ought to do is get yourself a portfolio of drawings and go see Walter - go see Henry Hopkins. I said, all right. So I did and I took these drawings in and he looked at them and he said, well, would you like to have a show? And I said, yes. And he said, well, do you know anybody else that's working in an area like this? And I said, yes, there's a guy named Ed Ruscha, there's a guy named Ed Bereal, and a guy named Ron Miyashiro, and Larry Bell.

MR. KARLSTROM: And Henry didn't know these people at that time? Really?

MR. GOODE: No. And so he said, could you get some of their work? And so basically that point, Ruscha was in Europe. Otherwise he would have been in that show but he was in Europe so therefore didn't participate, and he was in a show, I think, at Huysman later. I'm not sure.

Anyway, that was the first show -- that was the first exposure any of us had- but he only lasted about six weeks because we did this poster that had an American flag on the table and all of us were kind of mocking the idea of freedom and racism in this country because this was during the time when there was a lot of activity-

MR. KARLSTROM: Civil Right Act and -

MR. GOODE: -- with civil rights and then a lot of activity with the right wing.

MR. KARLSTROM: What was the year?

MR. GOODE: Sixty-two, I think.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. GOODE: And -

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, that's for sure. That was a really critical time.

MR. GOODE: Yes, and so basically the photograph had Ed Bereal, who was African-American, eating a watermelon; and it had Larry Bell, who was Jewish, eating a bagel; and it had me, who had been raised Catholic, eating a piece of fish; and Ron Miyashiro, who is Japanese-American, eating a bowl of rice.

MR. KARLSTROM: Where is he now?

MR. GOODE: He's in New York. And he left shortly after that show. He didn't stay here very long.

MR. KARLSTROM: Had he been at Chouinard also?

MR. GOODE: Yes, he went to Chouinard and he ended up working in New York for Donald Judd. He basically did Donald Judd's work.

MR. KARLSTROM: How do you spell his name?

MR. GOODE: I can't remember how it's spelled.

MR. KARLSTROM: Say it again and I'll try.

MR. GOODE: Miyashiro. Miyashiro.

MR. KARLSTROM: Miyashiro. Okay, thanks.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: So what was the - this is a significant detail that we often don't get - here you must have thought that wow, this is great. I'm going to have an exhibition.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: The gallery was where? Was it in --

MR. GOODE: The gallery was on La Cienega.

MR. KARLSTROM: It was on La Cienega?

MR. GOODE: Yes, it was catty-corner, right across the street from Ferus.

MR. KARLSTROM: I see.

MR. GOODE: And I really liked that idea. I thought it was great because we were younger than those guys, we were just coming out of school and I thought, man, that's great, I don't mind taking them on. And that's the way we felt. Yes, but it only lasted about six months because the guys that were backing this gallery, they didn't really want to show that kind of work. They had other ideas about showing much more, conventional work. And so they told Henry, if we're going to do this, we don't want to back it. So Henry went over and started working for the County Museum and that was it. That's how he developed his career from that point on.

But then, after that there was a guy named Rolf Nelson who came from New York, and he had really pretty good ideas about what he wanted to do. He had worked for galleries in New York and really kind of wanted to set out on his own, and he had collected people like Jim Dine and a lot of work like that and he was going to use that as a basis to try to get something going on his own. So he had a lot of really interesting artists like Alfred Jensen, a guy who did these kind of paintings that were kind of based on mathematical equations and stuff like that, and Jim Dine and different people like that and then he actually came to me and asked me if I'd be interested in showing with him and I said, yes.

And so, he said what he's doing is he's working for this guy Jim Newman who had a gallery up in San Francisco but Jim wanted to open a gallery down here as well and so Rolf was going to run it. So that's how it came about that Rolf came to town. So he got somewhat of a salary and everything and all he had to do was -

MR. KARLSTROM: So that was like Dilexi South?

MR. GOODE: Yes, exactly. That's what it was.

MR. KARLSTROM: When many people think Ferus -

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- and Dilexi were connected.

MR. GOODE: This was all while Ferus was going, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, tell me about that because I think there's a bit of a misconception in regards to a relationship between Ferus and Dilexi Gallery.

MR. GOODE: Well, as far as Walter Hopps are concerned, they were pretty tight. They - in fact, I think they both showed Bruce Conner. I'm not sure if Bruce showed there or not but there was different people that they definitely shared interest in, whether they actually showed them or not, I don't know.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, or Jay DeFeo with the

MR. GOODE: Yes, there you go. Right. But, the thing is I ended up showing my milk bottles there. That was the first time I showed my milk bottles.

MR. KARLSTROM: At Rolf Nelson?

MR. GOODE: Yes, well, it was Dilexi Gallery.

MR. KARLSTROM: It was called Dilexi then?

MR. GOODE: Yes, it was called Dilexi.

MR. KARLSTROM: I didn't realize that. But it eventually transformed into Rolf Nelson.

MR. GOODE: Yes, when Jim Newman pulled his support out of it and decided he didn't want to have two galleries, then Rolf took it over on his own, and he eliminated a lot of the San Francisco artists, or some of the San Francisco artists that he was showing from Jim's gallery and he just started putting more Los Angeles artists in. He had people like - at that time her name was Judy Gerowitz -

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: -- and a guy named Lloyd Hanrol, and Lynn Foulkes and different people like that. And then he would show outside people too. He had this huge painting of Georgia O'Keeffe's that he showed, and he had this show and it was a Georgia O'Keeffe show, and he just had that one painting there for a month, and it was a staggering painting. But those are the kinds of things, that he would do.

MR. KARLSTROM: So he in a way represented the alternative avant garde of Los Angeles?

MR. GOODE: He absolutely did, yes. He showed people like Phil Hefferton.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah?

MR. GOODE: Yeah. Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, so Rolf saw you then at Henry's gallery -

MR. GOODE: No, he didn't.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- during that show?

MR. GOODE: He saw me after Henry closed.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh.

MR. GOODE: Yes, because Rolf was still in New York at that time.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh.

MR. GOODE: But he came - I guess, he just asked around. I don't know how - I don't know what brought him to my studio actually, but -

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, when did you have that show? Was that - that must have been in about '60 -

MR. GOODE: I think '62 or '63.

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay, well, shortly after the Huysman Gallery.

MR. GOODE: Yeah, yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: How was - do you remember anything about it? I mean, how the work was received --

MR. GOODE: Yes, it was received not well critically at all.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, was it ignored or did it get negative -

MR. GOODE: No, it wasn't ignored; it was negative. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that's better than being ignored, isn't it?

MR. GOODE: I don't know, man. When you have your first show and in the show that they had at the museum called Six More that Lawrence Alloway put together to go along with the pop art show that he organized, we - Phil Hefferton and this guy O'Doud and then Billy Bengston and Ruscha and I were all included in this group. I mean, we were the kind of Los Angeles group that were in this show and I got a review and I think that show was reviewed by a critic here named Henry Selids that a lot of people used to call Henry Seldom because he was seldom right but -

MR. KARLSTROM: Was he right this time?

MR. GOODE: Yeah, well, he was right except he said - and the worst painter of the whole bunch is this guy named Jim Goode.

MR. KARLSTROM: So what didn't they like - you speak of being two shows, both of which had some critical

response.

MR. GOODE: Yes. Well, I think the main thing they didn't like was it had a three-dimensional object with a two-dimensional painting.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's what I was wondering about.

MR. GOODE: Yes, I think that was it. I think that to them, at that time that was the most outrageous thing. That's the only thing I can think of.

MR. KARLSTROM: Because it has to be one or the other, it can't be combined.

MR. GOODE: Yes, or maybe they just thought that it was poorly painted or maybe - I don't know what they thought because they never - they were not - the critics were not sophisticated enough to kind of go into detail about, what was really obnoxious about it. I mean, he was either too upset or not sophisticated enough, one or the other, to worry about things like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: Who else was writing here at this time?

MR. GOODE: A guy named Jules Langsner.

MR. KARLSTROM: Jules? Yeah, right. What about Jules Langsner?

MR. GOODE: Well, he was more accepting of work like that. Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: Because he was actually a critic -

MR. GOODE: But he wasn't totally open to it either.

MR. KARLSTROM: No. Well, did it get any attention - did your work get any attention outside of Los Angeles?

MR. GOODE: Yes, yes. I did. I mean, I got -

MR. KARLSTROM: By *Art in America*?

MR. GOODE: I got a great review in a show, within a couple years of that same time. I was included in a show at the Carnegie, I think. Either at the Carnegie or at Pittsburgh, some place like that. And it was a group show as well and I got - my review - they were talking about this milk bottle painting that I did and they said how bad it was, and at the very end they said and there's only one thing worse than this painting of Joe Goode's and that's a painting of these beer bottles of Jasper Johns.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, hey -

MR. GOODE: So even at that time, even though I wasn't selling anything and I was, totally poor, I felt good about that because Jasper Johns was my hero.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you thought you were in good company?

MR. GOODE: I did, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: You were. You were on the right track.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did some of your other colleagues like - well, like Ed fare better in terms of critical -

MR. GOODE: Yes, yes, he did.

MR. KARLSTROM: Why do you suppose that was?

MR. GOODE: Well, because I think he had a more popular image, I think -

MR. KARLSTROM: You mean it was associational, they would say hey - I don't know if you were doing a Hollywood - (inaudible) -- at that time or gas stations yet but, that's -

MR. GOODE: I think it's partially that and partially the fact that it had a sense of humor. I just think in general it was easier to take because, I was feeling something that - I really know I was really confused about myself. It wasn't -

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh really?

MR. GOODE: Well, yes. I was really confused. Even though I was doing this whole kind of thing of perception, I didn't know what it meant. I had no way of articulating what I was doing at that time. It was just kind of gut feeling – I was just feeling my way through it, and I didn't really know what it meant either. I felt pretty strong about the fact that, I wasn't a kind of stereotype pop artist, but I didn't know that I didn't relate either because I knew I was doing something that nobody else was doing. That's the only thing I knew and so that was the only thing that people were associating as something new.

So, I think Walter, may in part have called his show a show of common objects just in order to include somebody like me rather than pop art.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you weren't – well, a show of common objects would, of course, include then – would – pop art would be eligible by virtue of subjects –

MR. GOODE: Yes, but it was a little bit wider than –

MR. KARLSTROM: -- but it could go beyond that deadpan sensibility.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: I have to say that I remember your milk bottle paintings from that time. I thought they were very famous, and at a certain point they got quite a bit of attention and were reproduced a lot.

MR. GOODE: Yeah, yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: And I – just to sort of try this out on you – you were mentioning the sense of humor, element of humor in Ed's, I have to admit I thought the milk bottles –

MR. GOODE: Yes, I know. See a lot of people did but I didn't think they were funny. I didn't look at them the same way at all. I didn't see them the way that they were seen, in a more general sense but I – the problem is I couldn't articulate how I did see them. That was my big downfall. I just couldn't articulate it because I had never – the only person that even came close to doing something, or not doing what I was doing, but dealing with what I was doing, was some of the ideas of Irwin's, and certainly not all of them but some of them.

He really emphasized this whole idea of perception, that I became very, involved with – but, I never dreamed of taking it outside the area of painting. To me I just felt like this was something that could be dealt with in painting.

MR. KARLSTROM: I realize this has been explored a lot; you probably were interviewed a number of times on this precise subject and I'm sure much has been written, but let's sort of forget that at the moment because this is here and this is now and it's our Smithsonian interview. But I'm very interested in how you would now articulate that which you couldn't articulate at the time in connection with the work.

MR. GOODE: Yes, now it's much easier for me because, I can look back and I can see what I went through in series, series, series, that makes it much easier for me to see. I realized that at the time I was trying – I was looking for something that was personal to me that was a way of – the image was personal to me, that I could show a new way of seeing painting. That's what I was interested in.

MR. KARLSTROM: Using something familiar from your own environment –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- presumably milk bottles. You must have had milk bottles. You grew up with them, right?

MR. GOODE: Well, no –

MR. KARLSTROM: No?

MR. GOODE: The idea of those milk bottles, the way they were sitting at that time was, I had just had a baby and so the milkman would leave these on the steps, and that's where I got this idea, coming home one night from Chouinard, I saw these things sitting on the steps and that's what gave me the idea. It's like well, this is something that's mine. This is something that's in my environment, and I don't know if you remember seeing the drawings and stuff that I had done that I showed at Mannings.

Well, they were kind of exploratory things before, I did these things. So, that was the same kind of thing, like an ashtray or sunglasses and my car keys. It was the idea of looking as close to me as possible and then I realized

that I was doing –at my next show after that was these house paintings, and the house paintings were images of houses that were – I drew the houses on the canvas and then I painted around it a kind of very monochromatic void space. And my idea, thinking at that time was, the reason I drew these in a kind of line form and I didn't draw – I don't have solid spaces in it is that, these are kind of suburban houses and they're houses that all of us grew up in. And the interesting thing about it, when you see a house like that you can see the outside and know what's inside because everybody's been in those houses.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's right.

MR. GOODE: So then I start getting this idea of well, this – yes, this really relates –this is more of what I'm after, and so that meant that I started thinking well, now I wonder why I'm intrigued with this idea of doing these staircases? That was the next series that I did. Yes, I started doing these staircases about the same time that I doing these window paintings, and instead of having the sky outside, the sky was the wall and the window was set in the center.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that sounds to me – and I've seen these works but also the description is flat out surrealism. You must have really been looking at like Magritte, for instance.

MR. GOODE: Well, I like those particular paintings did look surreal, but, to me this idea of looking through something was more important than the image itself. And the idea of seeing – when I did the milk bottle paintings, I would take the milk bottle and I'd set it in front on the step, and then I would have a line that went back into perspective to show that this milk bottle painting came out of this environment, at this very specific place in this painting.

So I was totally unconscious in thinking about this but at the time I didn't understand that I was trying to show this idea of perception, that you see through something.

MR. KARLSTROM: You see through something because you know what's on the other side.

MR. GOODE: Well, you don't see through something because you know but you see – if you want to see through something you can do it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, but isn't the idea, if you want to think of it in perceptual – or, no cerebral terms, this –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- I want to make sure I get this right –

MR. GOODE: Okay.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- that if you have a wall you know – this is what a lot of what Magritte was playing with and that's why he's so famous. He's almost like a Duchamp now in terms of, representation of reality, which I sense is –you're coming at those same issues a bit, I believe. But – and you correct me if I'm wrong – my sense of what you were doing by bringing the sky inside of the room is to acknowledge that you can't see that sky, except with the help of the artist here, but you know something like that is on the other side. So it's combining the perceptual with the intellectual, with memory.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Is that right?

MR. GOODE: Well, that's right up to a point but see the difference between what I was doing and what the surrealists were doing, or in this case what Magritte was doing, is that Magritte puts the image – he puts that image in total. I didn't put the image in total, mine was more vague because I didn't want to tell someone what to look for and I didn't want to tell someone when to stop. And so, what happens when I did those paintings and I drew this line, it was a line in perspective but it's anybody's imagination where in that painting how deep you go.

And then the thing is like the sky ones, that's the probably the closest that related to Magritte, but then when I did the staircases, to me, see it was the same thing as the sky one, exactly the same thing because if you have a staircase that comes out of a wall and then makes a turn or something like that, you have two things occurring here in a perceptual sense. Basically, you have like in the sense that you look at a painting; you are looking up and down and in and out at the same time because, if you follow your line of vision, with a staircase, it goes in and out and up and down.

So this was another way of seeing the same thing to me, of looking at that house and looking inside and saying I know what's inside, it's using what your brain knows in order to see an idea or a thing in a different way.

MR. KARLSTROM: Is this at all like – well, I’m trying to think of some other famous – well, cubism itself, of course –

MR. GOODE: Yes, right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- involved multiple –

MR. GOODE: But see, that’s what I mean, that’s why it’s not just surrealism.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: I mean, basically it’s everything I knew.

MR. KARLSTROM: And what about Hockney? Of course, this predates Hockney’s exercises in –

MR. GOODE: Well, it doesn’t predate Hockney. I mean, Hockney got out of school about the same time I did.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, I know but the works that I’m thinking of, or at least the ones that are most familiar are more recent, with the multiple views and –

MR. GOODE: Oh yes, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- showing, it’s moving through time and so forth, and that’s actually a little more recent or, in the ‘80s –

MR. GOODE: Right, right. Yes, that’s right.

MR. KARLSTROM: But, in other words, I guess I’m asking do you respond to that and see some connections with what you were doing a bit earlier?

MR. GOODE: In a way. Yes, in a way but with his photography more than anything but –

MR. KARLSTROM: That’s right. But then those paintings, like the visit to – (inaudible) –

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- place where this – I think, I hope L.A. County has that now, but it’s, this huge canvas where you actually, visually travel through time –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- through the whole environment.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And well, anyway, you know the work.

MR. GOODE: Yes, I would say there’s some relationship there, but see then the series I did after that, then I did this series of sky –paintings of sky and clouds.

MR. KARLSTROM: And clouds.

MR. GOODE: Yes. But then I put Plexiglas in front of it, and that wasn’t just to protect the painting. The reason I put Plexiglas in front of it is because you’re sitting there looking at that painting and you see the reflection of you in this painting. You see what I mean? So basically you have a perception of you in this painting and vice versa.

MR. KARLSTROM: When were they? What were the dates on those?

MR. GOODE: In 1969, I started –

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay, so we’re still in the ‘60s. This is covering a lot of –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: You went through a number of series just within –

MR. GOODE: Yes, but see I always looked at that time – I mean, I never really put an emphasis on trying to make paintings as good as I should. I didn’t start doing that until the last 10 or 15 years.

MR. KARLSTROM: What do you mean, make them as good as you should?

MR. GOODE: Nice looking because I was so concerned with people seeing what I was trying to do. To me that was important than seeing how good I could paint.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that's sort of a conceptual position, right?

MR. GOODE: Yes, exactly. That's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, what - may be jumping ahead, but what made you change? Why did you decide you were also -

MR. GOODE: Well, once I was able to formulate what this meant to me, then I started trying to refine it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, I see.

MR. KARLSTROM: And when did that happen, in the '70s?

MR. GOODE: Well, I think when I did this series of paintings of trees, I did this idea of trees, they were very unsuccessful as a series of paintings and they weren't very good paintings either but they were very important to me because I tried to paint these images of trees where you could be - you could see underneath them and down on them at the same time.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's cool. I don't know if I know those.

MR. GOODE: No, you may not but I've got them. And then I did this series of images of water where like looking, at a painting and the ideas that you're -

(Audio break, tape change.)

MR. KARLSTROM: Continuing the second session interview with Joe Goode. This is tape one still, side B. And I think maybe we got cut off but you mentioned a series of trees with multiple viewpoints.

MR. GOODE: Yes, I tried to paint these paintings but the idea is you could see above and below them and - but it didn't turn out very good. It just became - instead of articulating that view it really became more vague than anything so it wasn't very good. Then after that I did these paintings of underwater, this idea of looking at water and being underneath and looking up from the water, and after that I - that took me to an idea of doing a waterfall because the idea of looking at water coming down, coming from the top coming down.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, what about the underwater ones? What was the goal there? I mean, is this still about perceptual issues?

MR. GOODE: Well, the goal is to be - to look at something front on, and you're actually seeing it from the bottom, from a perceptive point of view, not from an illustrative point of view. Just the idea that you feel - it's more like you feel this way and then showing, seaweed underneath or something like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: And koi -

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- or goldfish.

MR. GOODE: There you go. But, the more I started working in this area the more I realized that's when it - I can't remember specifically when I became aware of the fact that, all I've been doing is trying to do paintings that you see through. That's all I've been doing and I've never taken any subject matter that didn't have something to do with seeing through it.

I did these images when I was in England of a glass and spoon on a white tablecloth and it was still the idea of seeing the reflection in the spoon and then looking through glass and, I just kept thinking, god, I don't know why I'm - I never knew what all these things meant and some of them, I feel from what I was trying to do were more successful than others. And then some of them as paintings were more successful than some of the ones that might - where I got my strongest ideas.

MR. KARLSTROM: What about that, the - you sort of go back and forth a little bit in terms of a successful painting or, a better painting - a more realized as a painting -

MR. GOODE: Yes, well -

MR. KARLSTROM: -- but then you also talk about this persistent line of interest in an idea and it can still be works that were not well realized maybe aesthetically, works of art or paintings but that still communicated the idea. Do you have any thoughts about that, about almost like two separate concerns?

MR. GOODE: No, I didn't think of them as separate concerns. I thought of them as the same thing, that I kept thinking that if I was successful, if I ever reach a point, I can show this idea. That was what I was trying to do is show this idea but -

MR. KARLSTROM: And you wanted to show it well.

MR. GOODE: Yes, yes, I wanted to show it - I want to show it so that everybody could see it, but I didn't -

MR. KARLSTROM: And like looking at it because -

MR. GOODE: Well, I didn't care whether they liked looking at it, as long as they could see the idea, I thought as long as you see the idea you're going to like it.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's giving the viewer a lot of credit.

MR. GOODE: That's right, I did. I did.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well done. That's to be appreciated.

MR. GOODE: But then after this show that I had at Orange County, this kind of -

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, that was only a few years ago.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: That was a good show.

MR. GOODE: That's when I started realizing - about that time that what I had been doing all this time is I've been taking an image that is really close to me and then I've been looking at, images that are getting farther and farther and farther away from me. And I was never really aware of that.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's - and at the Orange County show, which I saw -

MR. GOODE: Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- it was very impressive and it was big enough to give pretty much a full range -

MR. GOODE: Yes, well, it was only half - it was only 10 years work.

MR. KARLSTROM: Was it?

MR. GOODE: Yes. Yes, basically that was 10 years.

MR. KARLSTROM: It was a big show.

MR. GOODE: Yes, but it was only the last 10 years work at that time. But it was through that, through what I knew of my earlier work -

MR. KARLSTROM: Right.

MR. GOODE: That's how I knew that and that's how I came to see that.

MR. KARLSTROM: That show must have been like in '95 or '96 or -

MR. GOODE: Yes, something like that. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And so it was like roughly mid '80s to mid '90s - the work.

MR. GOODE: Right. And so, then I realized when I was doing that, even the tornadoes, was kind of part of that too, this idea you could see something like, a volume of air coming towards you or going away from you and stuff like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, it seems to me - I guess this is where what you said seems to be leading - that there is a move away from those humble objects, those familiar objects like the milk bottles or elements within a house or

an architectural thing, the staircases and all that – rooms, to become, as you said, moving further back, getting a bigger view and also, it would seem to me, becoming more phenomenological in a sense –

MR. GOODE: Well, it did. Yes, it just goes farther and farther out. And I wasn't even conscious of that but that's when I started –I guess the last four or five years, then I start combining all these elements in paintings. I put tornadoes with forest fires and forest fires with house paintings only not in the way I did them before. But they're much better paintings now because they're much more resolved paintings because I'm not worried about how someone sees them, I've already seen them that way and I know how they would seem that way. Now I'm trying to see them in context with each other. So it's kind of like painting my own history, or trying to paint my own history.

MR. KARLSTROM: It would seem to me that –

MR. GOODE: Or using my own history as subject matter.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, this is one thing that – and, in fact, this is the question I was going to ask, it's related to that – early on you talked about the milk bottles and the – how you came to appropriate it as a subject or subjects, and the way in which it is personal is not only that these would confront you on your front porch or wherever it was that you would see them –

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- but the fact is they were there for a reason that had to do with something important in your life at that time, which was that you had a baby.

MR. GOODE: Right.

MR. KARLSTROM: And there's no way to get beyond then – or to miss the autobiographical element there –

MR. GOODE: That's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- but that's very domestic and very focused and intimate. What you've described, it seems to me, is a progress keeping sort of autobiographical component there and really carrying it into a much larger view of existence and –

MR. GOODE: Well, I think that's true. That's what happened. Yes, basically it's like taking baby steps and just walking your way through it. I mean, even those paintings – like two of them were named for my daughter. One was called "Happy Birthday" one was "One Year Old."

MR. KARLSTROM: You mean the milk bottle paintings?

MR. GOODE: Yes. That's really true. To me, I just kept thinking the only thing you can paint is what you know or what you see, and so that's how I just kind of kept going farther and farther –the images that I selected kept going farther and farther away.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, I'm sure you've talked about this a number of times with other people, but here we have another chance. I'm interested in how you see this connection, this consistency that goes throughout the work from the more focused, domestic, intimate, personal experience, your experience and what's around you to this much, much more expanded view which becomes cosmic in a sense. It also involves force. There's nothing intimate and quiet and – okay, personal it may be but you're talking about forces of nature, you're talking about fire, you're talking about the big stuff, the elements.

MR. GOODE: But this is all stuff that when I moved to the foothills of the Sierras, this is the stuff that I was confronted with every day.

MR. KARLSTROM: I see.

MR. GOODE: It was actually just as personal to me as –

MR. KARLSTROM: So it's the same as the milk bottles on your porch?

MR. GOODE: Yes. It's exactly the same.

MR. KARLSTROM: Was there any – was it simply that or does this reflect an expanding – an expansion of your own thinking, or your own say worldview, maybe even ideas about mysticism?

MR. GOODE: I think it did because basically, when I left Los Angeles to go to Springville, that's when I had

started doing these paintings of skies. I did two, three different series of paintings of sky at that time and one of them - like I painted a series where I did a painting of a sky and I let it dry and then I put another canvas over the top of it and then I cut that top portion away and let the other part come through.

And this is the idea of seeing through one sky to another and then a lot of times the different colors that I would use in these things were just Los Angeles skies, and in fact, when I had a show of these paintings in London, in some cases, the people didn't even know what they were because the color of the sky was this kind of tan color or this kind of pea green color. And that was the color of smog in the '60s when you were in Hollywood looking at it, and that was the color of sunsets because the sunsets became really beautiful but it was because of the smog.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's true. Glorious sunsets.

MR. GOODE: I did these things and then I left and went to Springville. Well, the sky didn't offer anything that was different for me like that. Then to be able to see all these different colors, kind of through trees or through trees looking at mountains or trees looking through water - to water or something like that. And then this kind of thing played on me for a kind of image and it's the same thing with like a forest fire.

What gave me the idea to do the forest fire is I was sitting on my porch one night and I kept watching this light come up behind this mountain and I kept thinking, god, this is going to be the damnedest moon I've ever seen in my life. And so I kept sitting out there and I drank a bottle of wine and about 3:00 in the morning this damn thing never came up, and I thought Lord, I don't know what's going on. And finally, about 4:00 in the morning I saw these little flames come up and it was actually a forest fire and I didn't realize it. So the next -

MR. KARLSTROM: What did you think it was?

MR. GOODE: I thought it was the moon coming up over the mountain. And so then I saw this thing and I thought, god, man, this is weird. I've never seen anything like that. And so then I'd go see - the next day, I knew this guy who worked for the Forest Service and I said man, I want to go take a look at that, and he said well, come on, I'll take you. And we went up and I started looking at this and I just saw the force of this thing, and again the idea of looking through a fire to see something like that, it just overwhelmed me.

MR. KARLSTROM: Let's back up just a moment here because we have you now moved out. For the sake of chronology, when was it that you moved to - what is it called?

MR. GOODE: Springville.

MR. KARLSTROM: Springville.

MR. GOODE: Yes, I can't remember the it was either '73 or '74.

MR. KARLSTROM: Where's that by? Bishop or some place?

MR. GOODE: No, it's on the other side, it's on the west side of the mountains and it's about 3,000 feet up, the elevation is about 3,000 feet up. It's in the foothills of the Sierras. As the crow flies it'd be right across from, Mammoth and those places.

MR. KARLSTROM: And so - and that was again, the year was -

MR. GOODE: I think it was 1974 or '75. It's when I started doing the first paintings with shotguns, which again is the same kind of thing. I would take an image if I thought a predominant color of a particular area like a pasture or like a mountain or something like that. And then I would take a shotgun and I would shoot it and basically what these pellets would do is flick off different parts of the paint so if there was other parts underneath it - other colors underneath it, which was just like what I was looking at.

And I called them my environmental impact series because, after doing these smog paintings, that became more of a growing concern for me at that time. When I did those smog paintings and I went to England and they didn't even recognize them because it was smog, they didn't recognize them as sky then that made me really conscious of what kind of sky we had that -

MR. KARLSTROM: They didn't recognize them as any credible sky?

MR. GOODE: No, they didn't realize it was sky because the colors were all wrong. They were these tans and pea greens and, sky's not that color.

MR. KARLSTROM: I don't know, London should have recognized that in some-

MR. GOODE: No, but at that time, they'd cleaned up. They'd already cleaned up. They weren't burning coal.

MR. KARLSTROM: They have short memories.

MR. GOODE: Well, I don't know what – the other thing is every place is different with the kind of smog. They had a different kind of smog than we did.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right, well, and that's true and light here is far different.

MR. GOODE: Yes, that's right.

MR. KARLSTROM: But what about – okay, so you – I'm trying to make sure I have this progress right. You're working through several series, it seemed to me you just really was progressing and proceeding. You were out of school. What did you do to support yourself when you – in those early years when you were – during the late '60s let's say until you moved to Springville? What was the –

MR. GOODE: Oh man, I just begged, borrowed and stealed. I did what I could –

MR. KARLSTROM: Did you have jobs and things in various –

MR. GOODE: Yes, whenever I could get a job – when I first got out of Chouinard I worked as a janitor at that school– when I was going to school I worked in an art supply store and I worked in a restaurant and, you do what you have to do.

MR. KARLSTROM: You're right, it's sort of like being an actor or actress, every one or every other one – most everyone are waiters and waitresses.

MR. GOODE: Yes, right. Well, the other thing I did -- I took that one year and I went to horse races for a whole year, that's all I did and, on my bio you see, I think it's '63, '64 nothing happened, it's blank.

MR. KARLSTROM: You were going to horse races?

MR. GOODE: Yes, every day.

MR. KARLSTROM: Hollywood Park?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I mean, Hollywood Park, Santa Anita, Del Mar, the whole year. I did –

MR. KARLSTROM: You mean you were in the influence of Irwin?

MR. GOODE: Partially, because I could – actually we'd see each other there occasionally. I didn't really go with him.

MR. KARLSTROM: I hope you won.

MR. GOODE: I won enough to stay alive.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's pretty good.

MR. GOODE: Yes. I paid my rent and got food.

MR. KARLSTROM: What made you decide that that wasn't the most –

MR. GOODE: That's the hardest work I ever did. I'd rather be a janitor than do that. I mean, what I would do is when I came home from the races, I would stop and get a racing form and I would do what we called figured fractions. I would take every race and I would take every horse in that race and I would figure form one-quarter to one-half to three-quarters to the end of the race, I would figure how fast each horse in that race was going, and then I would compare it against other horses and I would try to figure out who was going to be, at the front end – who was capable of catching him at the end or who wasn't capable.

And I would do that on – for nine races and then – I'd get finished with that after I ate and everything, I'd get finished about 12:00 or 1:00. Then I would get up at 7:00 in the morning and I would go to Hollywood Park or wherever I was going and then I would watch the rerun on TV. I'd watch them so that I could see what horse kind of got – by accident closed off and maybe was going really good, might win the next time. I'd write all that down, keep all that information, and then, of course, I would stay for every race whether I'd bet it or not. I would only bet two or three races, a day at the most.

MR. KARLSTROM: How would you choose which race to bet? Just where you were --

MR. GOODE: The one I thought I had the best chance of winning, and I never bet favorites. I'd bet at least three to one shot and lots of times I wouldn't win anything, but sometimes I'd win eight to one something. You bet - at that time for me it was a lot of money, \$20 to \$50 to \$100. That's how I did it.

MR. KARLSTROM: So is it a science or and art?

MR. GOODE: I think its grunt work.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, it sounded to me like you were spending all your time doing that, all your waking time so you weren't -

MR. GOODE: That's what I was doing that whole year.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- doing any work?

MR. GOODE: No, that was my work.

MR. KARLSTROM: And that was - and what was the year?

MR. GOODE: I think '63 to '64 or '64 to '65, I'm not sure.

MR. KARLSTROM: Interesting. Well, I would think there would be another reason you wouldn't like it - want to keep on doing it even, I mean, being bad work is hard enough but presumably you did want to make art.

MR. GOODE: Well, I did and when I got into this I kind of got addicted to going to races. I used to go to a lot - I went for a long time - a guy named Walter de Maria was out here -

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh yes.

MR. GOODE: -- from New York, and he and I used to go there a lot.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. GOODE: And yes, he got addicted too and so we were always - we were going together for like - Nick showed Walter de Maria, another great artist that he showed.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, Nick Wilder.

MR. GOODE: You never hear of that but,

MR. KARLSTROM: See, I didn't know that he was out here for a while.

MR. GOODE: Yes, I think it'd be really interesting if somebody would compile a list of artists that Nick showed. It really would. It'd be the most impressive list of any gallery in Los Angeles, I think.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, and Jim Corcoran kind of ended up with Nick's people, isn't that right to a large extent?

MR. GOODE: Well, he ended up primarily with the Los Angeles group, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, but -

MR. GOODE: But he had a lot of people that Nick didn't have. Like Nick didn't have people like Chuck Arnoldi or Laddie or those guys,

MR. KARLSTROM: Right. The young squirts.

MR. GOODE: Even Billy Bengston; he didn't care that much for Billy's work either.

MR. KARLSTROM: Hmm. Yes.

MR. GOODE: I think he had one show of Billy's at the most.

MR. KARLSTROM: So let's see though, had Nick - now, if I'm not mistaken, was it about - let me guess '65 - '66 maybe that Nick opened his gallery on La Cienega, that small gallery? Was it about '66, '65, and '66, that early?

MR. GOODE: No, I think '64, '65 maybe.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah.

MR. GOODE: Yeah, the first gallery -

MR. KARLSTROM: I remember going to it very early on.

MR. GOODE: Do you? Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, a Bob Moran show I saw.

MR. GOODE: Yes, okay. Well, the boxes?

MR. KARLSTROM: Mm-hmm.

MR. GOODE: Yes, well, that was in the first gallery. You know who painted the Nicholas Wilder Gallery sign?

MR. KARLSTROM: Not you?

MR. GOODE: Ruscha.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, Ed did? That was -

MR. GOODE: He carried that thing around with him for the longest time. I don't know whatever happened to it.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you had some connection then with Nick. We started out talking about galleries and this has you still doing those '60s, this would be - this is before Springville. We'll talk about Springville -

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: -- but I'd like to play with this a little bit more, and so Nick opened shortly after you had had your early show, it was about the same time as Rolf Nelson, right? It was a little after? Nick was a little after Rolf?

MR. GOODE: Nick came after Rolf - maybe six months after Rolf had closed his gallery and moved back to New York.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh really?

MR. GOODE: Yeah. Yeah.

MR. KARLSTROM: Where was his gallery? It was on La Cienega?

MR. GOODE: It was on La Cienega as well. He had two different galleries.

MR. KARLSTROM: Was that closer up to Santa Monica Boulevard or -

MR. GOODE: You know where Rico Mizuno's gallery was?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes.

MR. GOODE: It was in that space. That was the first gallery in that space.

MR. KARLSTROM: And then of course - (inaudible) - was there.

MR. GOODE: That was across the street, yes. Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Did you have any interest in - well, let's put it another way: Nicholas Wilder - I mean, you must have known him. Was he interested in your work?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I guess. He came from Palo Alto; he came from Northern California.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, he was at Stanford. We were actually at Stanford at the same time.

MR. GOODE: Oh, you were? You didn't know him, did you?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, I knew him a little bit.

MR. GOODE: You did?

MR. KARLSTROM: He was - (inaudible) - of arts or something like that.

MR. GOODE: I'll be damned, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Then he worked for a Langley Gallery.

MR. GOODE: That's right. Yes. Well, I didn't know him at that time. I didn't know him until he came here. I had never met him and so he came here and I was doing these staircases at the time he came. He asked me would I be interested in showing with him, and I had no gallery. I said well, what kind of - what do you have an idea for a gallery? And he told me these people are going to back his gallery have given him some money, these wealthy people from Stanford.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's it.

MR. GOODE: Hmm?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, that's it, the Langley's - I think that's right.

MR. GOODE: Who?

MR. KARLSTROM: The Langley's, I think it called -

MR. GOODE: No, they - I don't know if they did -

MR. KARLSTROM: It was the Langley Gallery.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Those were wealthy collectors -

MR. GOODE: Well, I don't know who the 10 people were but I know Charlie Cole was one.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, 10, do you think?

MR. GOODE: Katy Bishop was one. I don't know who the other - Nick was one, that was three of them. But he had \$80,000, I know, to open a gallery and that was what he did it with. And so he came and he said, well, I've got some money. I've got enough money to get the thing open and I've got enough money, for it to last a year if I don't sell anything. And so he said - I said, well, to tell you the truth, in a year I can't get enough of these staircases made by myself without having some kind of help. He says, okay, I'll help you.

And that's how I got them done and that's how I ended up showing with him, but see he showed, the artists that he brought with him from San Francisco, like Bob Graham and Ron Davis and John McCracken and one other guy -- I can't remember the guy's name, but actually Ron Davis got all his ideas from. I can't remember that guy's name but he actually went to New York too.

MR. KARLSTROM: Somebody from the San Francisco area?

MR. GOODE: Yes. I could find him; I mean I've got it in my library some place.

MR. KARLSTROM: So, you then got to show staircases there with Nick in what, about '64, '65?

MR. GOODE: Sixty-five, I think, yes, something like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that must have been an event.

MR. GOODE: Mm-hmm. And I sold a few. I sold one to some woman in Sacramento, I sold one to Betty Asher so, I don't know.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, that's good. But Nick actually helped - how did he help you?

MR. GOODE: Well, he paid for the materials and stuff. I had this little studio - you know where Ed's place is over on Western? You ever seen that place?

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, yes.

MR. GOODE: Well, I had a place - I had a studio there before he was ever there.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh really?

MR. GOODE: Yes, I had the back corner one on the left-hand side of the - (inaudible). It would be on the south -

northeast corner, where he used to have his office.

MR. KARLSTROM: Yes, his office.

MR. GOODE: That was my first – well, it was the first studio I had outside of Echo Park and that area.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you discovered the place?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: And then you told him about it and he ended up eventually buying it.

MR. GOODE: Well, he ended up – yes, we weren't there at the same time. I had actually gone to another place down the street. I went to a place near to Melrose that I like a lot better but he ended up taking the studio and he just – we both actually, what we did is we just kept buying, we kept renting as one became available next to us we would rent that too so we'd get two or three of them. And I had this same kind of thing only I didn't buy my building. It was a good thing I didn't because it got earthquake; twice it got nuked.

MR. KARLSTROM: He had that building on Western for really quite a while. I mean, even though – when he wasn't there. That's actually where I interviewed him back in '80 or so.

MR. GOODE: Oh, is that right?

MR. KARLSTROM: So he was still there at that time but by then you had gone to Springville.

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you went from that studio on Melrose or near Melrose –

MR. GOODE: I went from the studio – then I moved to another studio right across the street from him where the McDonald's is now.

MR. KARLSTROM: On Western again?

MR. GOODE: Yes, right across the street. I had a really great studio up there. It was on the second floor and it was an L shaped room, and then it was an L shape like this and then back here was a series of offices which I had access to the roof and I used to have roof parties up there.

MR. KARLSTROM: Great.

MR. GOODE: Yes, it was fantastic. And I was really cocky in those days and I had this big plaque, you know how these buildings have these bronze plaques and everything? Well, I had this piece of glass and I had it gold leafed on the back and I had studio – Jose Bueno. I thought I'd be okay in that neighborhood because all these, Latinos, maybe they'd leave it alone if it said Jose Bueno. Fuck, man. The first night it was up, they smashed it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, they didn't like that thing.

MR. GOODE: Yeah, they must have known more than I thought they knew. They said, fuck this guy.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, so did you – what about your domestic life during this time? I mean, were you married?

MR. GOODE: Well, I got a divorce a year after my daughter was born. We got a divorce. And for I think 10 years or something I never got married or anything like that -- more than that, 15.

MR. KARLSTROM: So you weren't married that long, is that right?

MR. GOODE: No, I was married two or three – two years, yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, so what –

MR. GOODE: That was the hardest time in my life, when I was married, because I was just having a real hard time supporting a kid and a wife.

MR. KARLSTROM: And you weren't really making adequate money, right?

MR. GOODE: Well, I was working as a janitor at Chouinard and that was it.

MR. KARLSTROM: Right, and trying to do your work.

MR. GOODE: I had to ride a motorcycle, man. I had – rain or shine I had to ride that motorcycle from Chatsworth to downtown Los Angeles.

MR. KARLSTROM: Chatsworth?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: What do you mean Chatsworth?

MR. GOODE: I lived in Chatsworth because I had to –

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, I didn't – I haven't heard that yet.

MR. GOODE: Well, I lived in a place called Box Canyon where Manson lived.

MR. KARLSTROM: Box Canyon?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Oh, where Charlie Manson gang – oh no.

MR. GOODE: Well, that was my house before it was his.

MR. KARLSTROM: That's out by the Hart ranch, isn't that right? Isn't that the name of that?

MR. GOODE: I don't remember the name of it but it's near where that research center for – oh, god, what was it called? Air Force or something like that.

MR. KARLSTROM: Well, how did you get out there?

MR. GOODE: I got out there because there was an advertising teacher named Bill Tara at Chouinard that was looking for somebody – he'd just bought this property, he was looking for somebody to go out there and watch it, and he said he would give it rent free if somebody would move out there and I thought man, rent free, I can afford that. But man, I'd never realized how difficult it was.

MR. KARLSTROM: How long did it take you to get down to – that's when you were a janitor at Chouinard? So you had to get downtown basically from –

MR. GOODE: I had to leave sometimes at 5:00 in the morning to get there at 8:00, like on a rainy day or something. And be soaking wet when I got there and then I'd get on the freeway again, coming back. It'd be dark when I'd get on it and be raining. It was the most miserable fucking time of my life and I finally just reached a point where I just went and I told her I said you're going to have to go live with your parents. I can't cut it anymore.

MR. KARLSTROM: And she said?

MR. GOODE: Yes.

MR. KARLSTROM: Okay.

MR. GOODE: Of course.

MR. KARLSTROM: There wasn't a lot of choice.

MR. GOODE: Yes, and I was going to die if I kept doing that.

MR. KARLSTROM: So then you went to Western?

MR. GOODE: No –

MR. KARLSTROM: Got out of that Box Canyon?

MR. GOODE: No, then I bummed around. I had this girlfriend that worked in a German bar over in Glendale and I stayed with her for a while and then I gave that up and –

MR. KARLSTROM: Yeah, what a bohemian life.

MR. GOODE: Oh, man, then I slept on Ed's floor for a couple months.

MR. KARLSTROM: I hope there was a mattress.

MR. GOODE: I don't remember. I don't think I even cared, man, I was so fucking miserable. And I was still working. Even then, I was working on drawings and stuff and this stuff that -

MR. KARLSTROM: Wow.

MR. GOODE: Then I had a baby -

END OF INTERVIEW

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