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Oral history interview with Flora Mace and  
Joey Kirkpatrick, 2005 August 17-18

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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick on September 6, 2005. The interview took place in Seattle, Washington, and was conducted by Lloyd E. Herman for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick have reviewed the transcript and have made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

LLOYD HERMAN: This is Lloyd Herman interviewing Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick in their studio in Seattle, Washington, on September 6, 2005, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This is session number three, disc number one.

We covered a lot of each of your development as artists and childhood up to the point that you met, and I think it would be good, even though that is on one or both of your interviews, [to describe] how you came together at Pilchuck [Glass School, Stanwood, WA]. But just to kind of start that out again, would one of you want to talk a little bit about that first meeting and how that came about, and maybe even what you hoped to accomplish and did accomplish? Flora?

FLORA MACE: I was asked by Dale Chihuly to come to Pilchuck in 1979, summer session Pilchuck. I had, years before, been very close to Pilchuck, probably within one hour, when Dale had invited me to Pilchuck, and I just didn't go. But this was an official invitation. At that time, I was living in New Hampshire, and Dale said that—in fact, I think Dale might have even sent me an airplane ticket.

He said, "You're not copping out on me. I really would love to have you come and assist me teaching the class, and come to Pilchuck and be part of that community."

MR. HERMAN: And what year would that have been, Flora?

MS. MACE: Nineteen seventy-nine.

MR. HERMAN: Seventy-nine.

MS. MACE: And it was early, early on. It wasn't first session, but it was the beginning of the summer. And I arrived at SEATAC [Seattle-Tacoma International Airport], and I think the driver—Pilchuck has a driver that runs errands, and he picked me up at the airport. I think it was David Schwarz. David went on to—

MR. HERMAN: The glass artist.

MS. MACE: —yes, have a long career and still is working diligently in southern Washington, near Portland, in Vancouver [WA].

But David picked me up at the airport. I think he was holding a big sign, and we jumped in the school vehicle and off towards Pilchuck. I had never been north of Seattle and it was pretty country back then.

Arriving at Pilchuck—it was more than an hour in those days to get from Seattle to Pilchuck, and—

JOEY KIRKPATRICK: It wasn't the bedroom community that it is now.

MS. MACE: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. MACE: Yes, it was really quiet. I mean, I-5 was there, but the Pilchuck vehicle didn't go extremely fast, and the stores along the way were minimal. And we finally got to Pilchuck, and driving up that long dirt road are those huge trees. I didn't know what I'd had gotten myself into here.

And Dale was there at the hot shop. I can't imagine why he was, because he was—because coming from the East Coast to the West Coast, I probably didn't get in until the evening. And Dale was there, and we talked, and he was really excited to see me, and he said, "Oh, come up to my house." And he probably said, "Have a drink," and invited a lot of the other people up and—a few of the people I knew at the time because they were students at

Rhode Island School of Design years before.

MR. HERMAN: Who were some of them, do you remember?

MS. MACE: Ben Moore was one that I had worked with over the years, and Ben was there and—Ben was the one that kind of sticks out in my mind, although there were other artists in residence that, you know, I can't remember exactly what session.

But basically Dale went around to everybody and said, "Oh, come up to my house." Well, his house is very small, but everybody piled in his house and on his porch, which became quite tenuous over the years. They did eventually build a new porch. I'm surprised no accidents ever happened.

And Dale said, "I'm going to be working in the morning; could you come down? This is what I want to do." And I was to assist Dale to do—

MR. HERMAN: What did he want to do?

MS. MACE: Dale wanted to do a continuation of the cylinders, but he also had a teaching obligation, because he was a teacher, but also Dale wanted to get his work done. And he was trying to develop the program so that the faculty that taught, taught, and the artists-in-residence did their work. And he wanted to be the artist-in-residence that did his work.

But that hadn't—most of the artists that came to teach did their work, and the students were wanting to get their work done, so everything was kind of helter-skelter. The students would come and watch the faculty member do their work and maybe help them. And then basically, they blew for 24 hours, and then—there wasn't—it was kind of uncontrolled chaos with blowing, and Dale thought, "Flora, if we can get you and a couple of the other people, maybe we can start to set up some classes."

MR. HERMAN: Were you actually blowing the cylinders then, or what kind of—

MS. MACE: No, I was doing the, you know, the designs that went on them.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, this was the Navajo-blanket cylinders?

MS. MACE: Yeah. It was kind of a continuation of that and baskets, mostly baskets, too.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, he'd moved into baskets by now.

MS. MACE: He had started to work in—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: With the shard drawings on them, the little shard drawings that she did.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: Glass shards. So Dale's philosophy, I think, to bring me out there was that, of course, he wanted me to kind of help him develop his work along the way, but he needed a way to try to structure the uncontrolled classes. The students would come out to take classes, but the faculty that was hired were artists that wanted to do their own work. So really it became the Pilchuck blowing school, and classes were kind of marginal.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Pilchuck had sort of a crisis at a certain point, right after Flora and I started teaching there, in the early '80s, which was, Are the artists that would come in, are they asked to first be artists, or first be teachers? And, you know, there was a point at which the cost to come made those students expect to be taught —

MR. HERMAN: Real instruction.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —rather than, you know, Dale's theory [was] always to have everybody just watch artists. And so we were part of that transition where if you were asked to teach, you were expected to be a teacher first.

MR. HERMAN: So it was becoming more formalized as a school.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, yeah. Right. And sorry to interrupt, Flora, but—

MS. MACE: No, but that's what it was about.

MR. HERMAN: No, that's good.

MS. MACE: So there were—Dale had six teaching assistants, but those assistants were to help him get his work

done. They were the people that he had selected to help him get his work done, and then they went and did their own work on their off time, because everybody got blowing time. But there was no formal structure.

So Dale, what he wanted to do was bring in the people to help him, and he knew what they could and couldn't do, and he tried to select people this session to help form some structured classes, above and beyond them working with him.

MR. HERMAN: So is that what you were doing, helping to—

MS. MACE: I was helping him, and then Dale said, "I'll meet with the students"—because he was the teacher—"but could you take some of the students?"

And I don't even remember who the other people were at this point, but would they take a group of the students also.

Well, Joey was in like the second class that came through, and she was—Joey was one of the students. And when she showed up on campus, she—Joey went directly to Dale and had a portfolio of drawings and said, "Dale, I've seen what you do, and this is what I do, and this is what I want to"—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I probably wasn't really that outgoing about it, but—

MS. MACE: But all the students had an opportunity before class really started to talk to Dale, you know, and then he kind of sent them on their way. And Dale told Joey that, really, I was the one that should see her drawings, and I would help her achieve what she wanted to during that session. And so I took five or six of the students that were in her class and set up projects that I thought would help them develop their personal work.

MR. HERMAN: And it was probably different for each one.

MS. MACE: Yes. We did some drawings, and we did some thread drawings, and we did, you know, paper cut-outs or shards.

So I saw Joey's drawings, and I just couldn't believe that someone at, to me, her age, had this extensive portfolio of drawings—was just unbelievable. I mean, I knew what beautiful drawings looked like. I was an artist that couldn't draw with a pencil. I would draw directly with materials. But I really appreciated the sensitivity and the draftsmanship of her drawings.

MR. HERMAN: Joey, what were your drawings like then—what kind of subject matter, and were they complex, shaded drawings, or more simple?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No, they were very linear line drawings. You might even think of them as contour drawings, but there was more to them than that. But mostly pencil, very specific, pencil with washes.

They were a series of drawings that I had been working on for about a year, based on a group of antique dolls that I had a collection of. And I was using them as personas, so that they were out of scale often, and I would compose drawings where different ones would be together, setting up kind of a slight narrative, if you will. In college we used to call it "dumb art," because there was never a horizon line or anything. They were just sort of floating in space, and it was more about their relationship to one another and their scale compared to one another.

But they were very simple, pencil line drawings with color washes. And being that they were so specific—and again remember the time, 1979; there wasn't a lot of specific imagery in contemporary glass at that time. Historically, people had painted on glass and fired on the paints or enamels. This was something that I had wanted to try to and do. I wanted to bring my work to the material rather than have the material determine what I would do—

MR. HERMAN: Well, that's what I was wondering, if you had an idea what kind of techniques could be used to translate your drawings to glass?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No. I didn't know the techniques. I had come to glass just recently and was barely was a blower at the time. But I was enchanted, or seduced, or intrigued by the material enough that I wanted to come to this place, Pilchuck, which I only saw in magazines. I didn't know much about it. I wasn't part of the scene in any way.

And so I think that maybe the difference between us, that worked for us in terms of when we decided to collaborate later, was that I was bringing my ideas and my work to a material rather than letting the material dictate what I could do. And, you know, that's what I think an artist is, really, and that's why we don't only work in glass, because sometimes the material isn't appropriate for a particular idea.

So when I got to Pilchuck—Flora is right—I did indeed talk to Dale, who wasn't thought of as a traditional kind of teacher where he'll go give the demo or tell you how to make a piece. He worked every morning, and you watched him work with this gang that he brought with him as his teaching assistants, and then his teaching assistants fanned out more as teachers.

And so he did send me to Flora, and actually, she had the idea of trying to take these drawings, and instead of obviously a pencil line on glass, which you couldn't do, she suggested we use a thin wire and bend it as if it were a graphite pencil line. And we were hooked—that's when technique hooks you. You have your idea, but then you think, Huh, could this work? And then you get—

MR. HERMAN: And then you start to think how you're going to adapt it.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —and then you're stuck. Right. And I think that's sort of how it is often, working in more of what's considered a craft tradition, you know; your ideas and the making of the object, they take turns in which consumes your mind the most.

MR. HERMAN: But you hadn't necessarily thought that these images could be engraved or sandblasted; you were really—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, they could be, but it wasn't—

MR. HERMAN: But it wouldn't be very linear.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I hate both those things.

MS. MACE: And I have to say, if you were at Pilchuck in 1979, the concept of engraving didn't even exist. We had just barely figured out how to make a sand punty, because we didn't have grinding and polishing equipment.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. MACE: And Pilchuck's limited sandblasting equipment was basically—it was nonexistent at that time. In 1979, the cold-working equipment was very limited. We had a great building for the hot shop, and that was the priority at the time.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, because I think by '77, there were already five buildings.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right, right.

MR. HERMAN: So I had just assumed that the equipment would have kind of kept up with the—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The equipment wasn't there yet or the knowledge to use the equipment. People were learning how to blow glass in the '70s. I mean, they were just tackling the glassblowing, and sort of the additional techniques hadn't been brought in. A lot of it was going to be brought in later from Europe.

Who's the guy who did the great engravings?

MR. HERMAN: Jiri Harcuba?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. Jiri hadn't come over yet, as far as I can recall. I might be a little off on the time.

MS. MACE: And Klaus Moje came to Pilchuck. I think it was a few years after that. He would talk about the great equipment in Europe, and it was like, Really, that stuff exists? And he pushed every year to get certain people to come that had expertise in an area, or to get a piece of equipment. And Pilchuck couldn't conceive of how much it would cost to bring a piece of equipment over, because no one knew how to use it.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: That was the next dilemma. And so in the beginning—I mean, a sandblasting machine probably came from a cemetery stone engraver. Everything came through the back door. You had to figure out a way to make something that didn't exist in our world.

MR. HERMAN: You had already done the line drawings—

MS. MACE: For myself.

MR. HERMAN: —for yourself, but the ones for the Heller [Gallery, New York, NY] show—what was the contemporary glass gallery show? Those weren't with wire, though, were they?

MS. MACE: No.

MR. HERMAN: How were those made?

MS. MACE: Those were made with thin glass threads.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. MACE: And I was doing those, and I looked at Joey's drawings, and I said, Oh, God, I could make those for her.

MR. HERMAN: But the idea was for her to learn how to do them.

MS. MACE: And she said, "Show me how to do what you're doing."

And I believe my exact words were, "Joey, I'll make some for you, and you see if you like them, but I'm really nervous about if you really take this technique on, you're going to lose your skill at draftsmanship."

MS. KIRKPATRICK: You know what's interesting is that, as I sit here and think, we never did try one with a glass thread, never.

MS. MACE: No, we never did.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Isn't that funny, that we never would have just even tried one? We completely immediately tried something that was different and out of anybody's element.

MS. MACE: And I want to say that I didn't not do her drawings in my technique, to say, I didn't think, I'm not going to show her how to do my technique. I told her I would do my technique with her images. But I felt she was only going to be there for two weeks. We had to come up with something that she could take.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, right.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Remember, we're not collaborating yet.

MR. HERMAN: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] So then after you learned—after you worked out the wire drawings, did you do some of those on your own?

MS. MACE: Oh, she did.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes, I bent all the wire images for the drawings.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, you did all of them? Oh, yeah.

MS. MACE: Oh, yeah. Joey was very reluctant. I said, "I can take your drawings and do them the way that I do mine, but I"—and I think I said—"but you're going to lose this incredible sensitivity of draftsmanship that you have."

I mean, the drawings—the line that she produces on a piece of paper—I had never seen anyone ever do.

MR. HERMAN: Did you find that after you started doing the wire drawings, which I assume would be wire over an existing drawing on paper—it's like a pattern; is that how you did it?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, it sort of came to that a little bit.

MS. MACE: It didn't—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Mostly, I literally bent the wires in air holding them with pliers in each hand.

MR. HERMAN: So you weren't like pinning them down or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No. But I would put them down on top of a drawing on paper to match them up. Flora's job was to blow the pieces, because they were beyond my ability to blow.

But remember, too, nobody had ever really imbedded wire into glass blown things in a contemporary way. So we were not only dealing with the imagery, but we were dealing with making the pieces, getting them out of the annealer the next day without them breaking and cracking. I don't even, still to this day, want to understand it, and I certainly don't—the coefficients of the glass and why the wire, you know, made the glass crack.

So we had to work out those issues as we went, and we barely did before this two-and-a-half week period was up. But what we did do was, we started something that clearly had potential for our work. We were excited about a process that we knew could be taken someplace, in terms of a body of work and something very new in glass. Our motivation was that this process could address the concerns I had in my drawings, and that was the exciting part.

MR. HERMAN: And you didn't have a body of work in glass by that time?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Not at all.

MR. HERMAN: But Flora did, so I'm curious how you felt about this whole new idea of, rather than your own images with glass threads on glass, how you decided to move from that to the wire drawings.

MS. MACE: I was really taken by what I saw in her work, and I realized a few years earlier that really I didn't want to—I enjoyed developing work, but I didn't like to be the person out there.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: And when I saw what Joey could do with her concepts, of what she wanted to state in the material, I was trying to give her a way to explore that. It didn't matter to me whether it was mine or hers. In fact, if that was the case, I probably wouldn't have been able to work with Dale Chihuly or Italo Scanga or many, many other artists. It was more developing, being able to develop a technique, a way of working to express someone's ideas.

MR. HERMAN: It sounds like there wasn't a lot of ego involved in that. I think that's what you're saying, because you had been able to work for Chihuly and others in doing it in their own [work], that it was a natural fit.

MS. MACE: Yeah. I don't need that to fulfill me. So to see what Joey was doing—I remember I said, "God, I've got to figure out a technique."

And she goes, "A technique?"

And that was kind of a joke, like, Who do you think you are to come up with something? And I said, "Let me give that some thought. I have this idea."

And I think I went off to Stanwood to see if I could find some wire or something. I went over to the maintenance building, and everything was too big. So I came back and I gave her some wire. And she said, "What's this?" And I said, "I think that this might work."

And she laughed, and it was like a joke that—why do think that—you know, why hasn't anybody else—and you go to Stanwood and come back with this.

And so we started working with it. And so I figured that Joey would go off on her way and have a way to work, and I felt fulfilled that I could get her going on this. But her drawings—like I thought back when I started doing even my glass or thread drawings; I would get so excited about what I could—how big I could do it. There was no way physically I could make that.

And Joey, I was thinking, was doing the same thing. The images that she was creating in the wire were so much larger than she could blow. Everybody of that time was stifled by size. Even Bill Morris and Dale were having a hard time getting scale.

MR. HERMAN: Well, I would think one of the—you would have immediately the limitation, in working with the wire, of having to determine the size of the image, because that wire is not going to expand the way glass threads or anything else would as you blew it out.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's correct, and that's what we had to learn and what we started to do once we—you know, fast-forward—once we figured out a way to apply the wire and not have it break the piece. The next thing was to apply the wire and have it expand the way we wanted it to expand.

And so we had to start dictating to the wire how we wanted it to expand. We bent a wire drawing image and then xeroxed the wire image before we embedded it onto the glass piece. We have all the xeroxes before we put them on the piece. So for one thing, we could see what the wire did on the piece after it was blown out compared to the xerox of how it was bent.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, sure. Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But then what we started realizing was, and this gets a little complicated in the sense that

we're verbal here, but let's say I bend a figure out of wire, and I close off the head, and I tie it off at both ends to the shoulder. When we blow it on the glass piece, it expands. It doesn't expand and retain the shape in which it was bent, but expands into a circle.

Do you see what I mean?

MR. HERMAN: Oh, I see.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The head looks like a round ball.

MS. MACE: Now, you have to remember that this time is pre-computer, the very beginning of faxes or Xerox machines, you know. So we started—we had to find a copy machine that we could put the wires on.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, and actually copy the wire, yeah.

MS. MACE: And copy the wire figure drawing or doll drawings.

MR. HERMAN: That was a clever idea to do that.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, it was smart, and smart especially because now it's fun to look at them. But then we realized we could bend the entire figure, you know, head, hands, whatever, and we could clip the wire in certain areas so that when it expanded, the drawing wouldn't go round, but it would just separate and retain the details.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, but you would still have—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —the little details.

MR. HERMAN: —most of the outline.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. You would have the details. So then it became a question of where to clip them. And then slowly but surely we learned how to even cover them in a clear glass and—

MS. MACE: I learned to run a clear glass thread over the two ends of the wire, where it had been clipped.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So the drawing would still hold together as one piece because we had to pick it up and hand-place it on the vessel being blown.

MR. HERMAN: That does sound complicated to some—

MS. MACE: And like the eyes, like the eyes if you tied them to the frame or the—

MR. HERMAN: The head.

MS. MACE: —rest of the drawing, the eyes would be pulled to the side. So then we would have to take clear glass and attach the eyes with a clear rod to the side so that they would hover in the middle of the face.

MR. HERMAN: Do you have any of those early pieces?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Oh, absolutely, yeah, we do. And actually, there's one really early one in the Bellevue show [*Taking Shape: Pilchuck Glass School in the '70s*, Bellevue Art Museum, 2005].

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah, I was just over there with guests the other day, and I thought, Well, that piece of Flora's, that must be from that first show—

MS. MACE: It was.

MR. HERMAN: —from that body of work.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Seventy-seven, yeah. That's a beautiful piece, too.

MR. HERMAN: Resuming to talk about, then, as you were completing your two weeks at Pilchuck, where did you think you were going to go with this? Did you—had you decided you would collaborate or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Uh-uh [negative], not yet, not then. It's funny when you look back on it. An observer might think, Well, what were you thinking? Because we pretty much just parted. We didn't make a plan.



I think it was because Pilchuck is such an intense, hard hit of an experience that you don't do a lot of thinking while you're there, in an odd sort of way. I mean, it's just, you're in there, you're working really hard, and we weren't very contemplative about what this relationship was becoming.

And so I went down to visit a sister in San Francisco, Flora went home, and about a week after we separated at Pilchuck, Flora gave a call—

MS. MACE: No, wait. I have to break in here. I have to say, when Joey left and she was packing up her stuff, Dale had given me a Chihuly basket, you know, one of his glass pieces, and I think I gave it to Joey on the way out.

I said, "Joey, you probably have enough room to take this with you." And I gave her the Chihuly that Dale had just given me. And off to San Francisco she went, and I didn't know if I'd ever see her again, and I went back to New Hampshire. But I wanted to put that in there about—

MR. HERMAN: Well, that sounds like your personal relationship had already developed by that point.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Oh, definitely the personal relationship had, but we still didn't know where it was going—again, I just think it was so intense in such a short amount of time, and there's so much going on, and you meet so many people, that there wasn't time to contemplate the future.

And again, the first day I went to Pilchuck, I met Dale, Bill Morris, Ben Moore, Rich Royal, Italo Scanga.

MS. MACE: Lino.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Lino Tagliapietra. All the first day. Now, some of those people weren't who they are now then, if you catch my drift.

MR. HERMAN: Sure, I understand what you mean.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But, you know, it's an extraordinary group of people, and I think it speaks to the issues of an era that, even now, if you went to Pilchuck, I don't know if you're going to meet as many people who, 20 years from now, will have the same kind of impact on this medium. It's not as young of a field, and so it's harder to get out and make it, if you know what I mean.

MR. HERMAN: No, I want to come back to that, about how you assess the field today and—as opposed to the kind of young field it was when you both—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We were really in there at the beginning, in a sense. I was late to the party, so to speak. But, you know, I just lucked out because of my circumstances of being there.

So again, we parted ways with not a clear picture of what was going to happen, and about a week or two into, you know, the other life that we were leading, Flora gave me a call and said, you know, "I'm supposed to go work for"—

MS. MACE: Ann Wolff.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —Ann Wolff, Ann Warff. Her name was Ann Warff at the time.

MS. MACE: In Sweden.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Ann was going to hire her, which wasn't unusual because Flora was working for all sorts of people, making imagery for them with the glass threads. And so she said, "Do you want to come?" And I said, "Absolutely."

I went back to Iowa, tidied up my life and made a little bit of money, and flew out to New Hampshire. And she greeted me at the airport and drove me to a beautiful cemetery and broke the news that we weren't going to go to Sweden, because Ann didn't want—I really don't think Ann wanted to share Flora's talents with anybody else.

And so we went to plan B, which we made up as we went, which was to live in New Hampshire, and then go down to RISD when we could and become what they called "special students." That doesn't mean you're special, but, you know, outside of the curriculum.

MR. HERMAN: And Chihuly was still teaching at RISD?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Chihuly was still teaching there. And so we would go on the weekends, and Chihuly always welcomed Flora, because she was continually working for him. Even if she wasn't in the hot shop, she could make what she was making then for him, which were shard drawings. So she could make them wherever she

was and box them up and send them to him.

So we started working at RISD, and we continued making the wire drawings. And they were—they were really becoming something.

MR. HERMAN: You didn't have a separate studio, though; it was just at RISD? You did all your work there?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Absolutely.

MS. MACE: We lived in Waterville Valley, New Hampshire, with my sister and her husband, and the basement became our studio during the week. We—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But we didn't have a hot shop, if that's what you meant.

MS. MACE: Yeah. So we were—Joey had always done her drawings anyway, and I had always found—almost every place I've gone in my life, I build a studio out of something, whether it's tarps or a garage or just outdoors.

So Dale heard what was going on and he said, "Oh," he said, "this is a great opportunity." He said, "Why don't you two come down every weekend? If you're working during the week, come down on the weekends, or whatever the schedule was, and you can work at RISD." He said, "Oh, it would really take—it would be a nice compliment to the school if you guys were there on the weekends working."

MR. HERMAN: So you were doing that as special students, or just at his invitation?

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, he invited us to be special students, but I think we had to enroll in the classes going on there, because I remember we were—I remember Italo giving us crits, and that is when we really got to know Italo, who, you know, became our beloved friend.

So it was at RISD that we built up this body of work, and then we had to assess whose work it was. At this point we still really—we had denied that we had this issue of who was going to sign this work. But it was really becoming something. Somebody had to sign it.

MR. HERMAN: Why was it an issue, because galleries were uncomfortable having two artists' names?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No, we hadn't shown it yet, and it wasn't their issue; it was our own issue.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We had not sat down and communicated about it, really—it was clearly both our work, but we hadn't reached that point that somebody had to sign. So we had never had the discussion, Well, why don't we both just sign it? And given the time, 1979, 1980 now—

MS. MACE: A gallery came in—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MS. MACE: —from Boston.

MR. HERMAN: This was David Bernstein, probably.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MS. MACE: And said, "Flora, I've been watching you work for a long time, and have you thought about having a show?" And I said, "Well, I'm really not doing that much work right now." He said, "What do you mean?" And I said, "Well, I'm working with Joey, and really, it's her idea. I'm helping her develop her ideas." And he said, "Oh." He said, "Well, God, who is this Joey person?"

And so he met Joey and saw the work that I was helping her do, and he said, "Well, why don't I have a show of both of you guys' work"—or was it a group show, that first show?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I can't remember, but I can't even remember that—you know, my memory is more about that he saw the work—

MS. MACE: Yeah, it was a show. It was a show. It was our show. I remember driving into Boston, eventually, and going and having a show.

And he said, "How are you going to sign these?"

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I just remember we went on a long ride and we started talking about it. And again, as I started to say, in 1979, you know, we didn't have mentoring that people could cosign work. We hadn't seen it done before. So it seemed like it went against sort of that ingrained feeling that, as an artist, you work alone, that type of thing. And so I think the hurdle to overcome was that we had to go outside of ourselves, that it was okay personally.

MS. MACE: Joey had to, because I was, at that time, working for Dale, doing all his imagery on work. I was working for Italo doing—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, but you weren't cosigning it. That's a big step.

MS. MACE: No, no, no. So it was you that said, "I think that you and I should both sign these pieces."

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Could be. I don't remember.

MS. MACE: You were very giving back then.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I know, I was so generous. [They laugh.]

MR. HERMAN: So you did that first for that show in Boston?

MS. MACE: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: Were you still—was that body of work still the doll images, or had you—

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes, definitely the doll images. The pieces had slowly evolved into using more complicated drawings when we added Flora's technique of using the glass cane and putting the color inside the wire drawings.

And that led to another technical conundrum. We had to figure out technically how to make these large images where you'd have the large bent wire, you know, and then Flora would sit for 20 or 40 hours filling it in with the glass threads laboriously. And then we had to transport it, and then we had to pick it up hot and set it on the glass piece without it cracking and breaking and everything. So it took time to move from one step to the other, but, you know, once we made the decision to cosign the work, I mean, then it was just like—now I can't even remember it, so obviously, it wasn't a big issue once we decided to do it.

MS. MACE: I don't—I have to jump back. I think it was your idea that we cosign it, and it was like I was kind of relieved that now I didn't have to think about being out front. Joey could—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And you're still relieved over that.

MS. MACE: I am still relieved over that. Really, after I had that show at Heller, I just said, Oh, I just don't want to do this. I just want to make my work. I don't want to do the thing. And Joey was, you know, Let's do that.

But I don't think we officially became students at Rhode Island School of Design. I think Dale arranged, the way Dale arranges things, that we exchanged some services to help him get his work done and he gave us some blowing time. And then he liked having us around, because Dale's philosophy was that the better the students were, the more interplay with all the students there would be, and everybody would grow from the experience.

And so Joey and I spent more and more time at Rhode Island School of Design, and Dale kind of slid us into classes and made us kind of students unofficially.

MR. HERMAN: Who were some of the other students there then that sort of achieved success?

MS. MACE: Well, Howard Ben Tré was there, Toots Zynsky, Therman Statom—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I don't know if they were then.

MS. MACE: —during that year. They weren't maybe during our weekends, but they were there the following year when we lived in Rhode Island. And Ben Moore and, God, there was so many other people that I've kind of lost track of.

MR. HERMAN: Was it then kind of a community of artists? Could it be described that way?

MS. MACE: Oh, yeah.

MR. HERMAN: —[inaudible] were students, so you had that.

MS. MACE: Glancy, Michael Glancy, was there.

MR. HERMAN: Therman Statom, you said, was there too?

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MR. HERMAN: How long did—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Pike was there, Powers.

MR. HERMAN: Pike Powers.

MS. MACE: Pike Powers and whoever she was with; what's his name?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: To be honest, I don't think a lot of those people were there when we were there that one year, but those are people that grew out of the Rhode Island design community. You know, my memory more is that we were—we just worked. We weren't there during the week. See, we would just come on the weekends.

MS. MACE: Remember when we lived at Providence, though?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Uh-huh. Yeah.

MS. MACE: That year? Or two?

MR. HERMAN: So if you lived in Providence, so you could still—

MS. MACE: Eventually, when we finished up—see, we were waitresses up in the mountains, up at Waterville Valley.

MR. HERMAN: Well, that's what I was going to ask: What you were doing during the week?

MS. MACE: And we made our money—yeah, we made our money up there and then would drive—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It was a four-hour drive down to Providence every weekend. So what we would do is we would waitress in the morning, breakfast and dinner, and then between the shifts we would bend wires.

MR. HERMAN: So you had work to take every weekend?

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, we would take in the best wire drawings, and we would put them on the glass pieces on the weekend. And then we did ultimately move down to Providence, but it was really—when you think about it—it was short-lived, because each summer now as we start to go forward—you know, '79 we met; '80 we went back to Pilchuck; '81 we started teaching at Pilchuck, '82, '83, for the next 14 years.

So each summer we went back to Pilchuck, and a lot of this work that we're talking about progresses by our working at Pilchuck. It was in '81, I think, we started teaching officially as a collaborative team.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And then in there someplace, in the early '80s, Dale and Flora and I started the artist-in-residence program, and it gets back to that issue of how the teachers had to start being better teachers.

Dale really wanted more of an official artist-in-residence program. Then we would spend our summers being the artists-in-residence liaison, where somebody would come in, Chris Wilmarth, Judy Pfaff, Lynda Benglis. We worked with some wonderful, wonderful artists who would come in with no experience in glass whatsoever and would say, Okay, Joey, Flora, and Billy—because he was always a gaffer; the three of us really, really had this wonderful opportunity where, you know, Lynda would come in and say, "Okay, I want to tie knots like I do in my other work, in glass."

So Flora and Billy and I would put our heads together of how to do that, and we would literally do the work for them as they stood there and watched or participated. For example, when we worked with John Torreano, Flora and I fabricated huge two-part plaster molds for him in the shape of his gems. Then in the hot shop, Bill would blow the glass gems using the molds.

And then we started living there in the off season. We built our house—let's see, in '81 we were going to start teaching, and we asked permission if we could do what others had done in the early days at Pilchuck.

MR. HERMAN: Build those little houses, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And so we had to go through the channels. We had to go to John Hauberg; we had to go to Alice Rooney, the director at the time; and Dale. Of course, Dale signed off on it immediately, "Yeah, that would be great."

Alice and John put their heads together and said, "Well, nobody had done this for some time. You can do this, but here are the stipulations. You cannot build it anyplace where it can be seen from the road." I mean, I don't think they really trusted that it would be very good.

MS. MACE: Or any of the other houses could see it.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: Because they're already the official—you know, Dale had his, and Jamie Carpenter, and Ben—there were all these others' houses sprinkled through campus. So they didn't want you to clear-cut and build a house that offended any of the other original houses.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Which, of course, makes sense.

MR. HERMAN: And probably you wouldn't have done that anyway.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No.

MS. MACE: No, but they were really nervous.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So we arrived at Pilchuck. Gosh, we were going—so this was the year we were going to officially teach. We were on the program to teach, and I think the teaching started, let's say, June 1.

So we arrived at Pilchuck mid-May, and we walked the site. We walked all over Pilchuck, and we picked our site where we were going to build the house, and we had 11 days before we had to start teaching and we didn't have any electricity to the site.

MR. HERMAN: So no power tools.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No power tools. And we were living in a van at the time. So, you know, we would climb in our van every night and sleep.

MR. HERMAN: Had you brought that back from the East Coast then?

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We drove everywhere, to stay with a sister here or there. We were poor, starving artists just like everybody we knew. I mean, we weren't feeling sorry for ourselves at all.

And you know what? It's so interesting, too, that you couldn't do that now. I mean, the world has changed enough in that short a time that you couldn't live on the brink in today's world like we lived then. You couldn't live out of a van. You couldn't live with no insurance; you couldn't—it is a different time now. You have to have more under your feet, I think, to survive.

MR. HERMAN: Well, was that a concern to you, or did you—

MS. MACE: No.

MR. HERMAN: —look upon that as a temporary thing?

MS. MACE: No, we didn't even—that's the thing, we didn't even think about it as why we don't have—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No, we were about getting our work done. I just don't think you can live in today's society, you know, by the side of the road, so to speak.

MS. MACE: I mean, the kids nowadays are—Joey and I were some of the first people at Pilchuck to ever get a cell phone. We were living—we were going to have to teach at Pilchuck, and there was only one phone booth for everybody. And we had just—you know, we had this little tiny studio in Seattle, and it was like, God, how can we keep our business going if there's only one phone? So we went and got this cell phone, which was, you know,

looked like a—

MR. HERMAN: Huge shoe box.

MS. MACE: —bag—yeah, a huge bag with a thing.

[END TAPE 1 SIDE A.]

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So we walked the site; we picked out a place. We had our string. We made a ladder. We had a hammer, we had a saw, and every morning—I mean, Dale would just watch us and shake his head.

Every morning we would get in our van; well, we were sleeping there, so we were already in it, but we would drive to Arlington and buy the wood for the day, and we would drive back. We would park right behind the hot shop, because it rained so hard that we couldn't get the van down the road because it was too muddy. And we would have to hand-carry the wood down, maybe, what—

MS. MACE: A quarter mile.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Not even quite a quarter, but enough that it was too far for me—and carry the wood up the hill, and then do the work that day. And we would hang flashlights at night so we could keep working, to have enough light.

But we built this amazing place. I mean, you've seen the pictures of it. It's a beautiful place.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, I've actually been there, years and years and years ago, but—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So we finished the house and we—it's huge for us and had big glorious windows, and we climbed the trees and cut limbs out so we have a picture of the Cascades and whatnot, and it's time [to] unveil the house.

So we announced that it's time to unveil it. So we're up on the deck of the house, and it's up kind of a hill, and here comes the, you know, the patrol—John Hauberg, Alice Rooney, Dale. Harvey Littleton was in town that day. This group of people walking—

MS. MACE: There were like 12 people and they were all—they weren't the students at Pilchuck—because that's what we thought would come down and kind of look at our house—it was the hierarchy.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But—so they were walking and we're looking down thinking, Oh, my God, what if this—our house—the front of it was up on stilts—doesn't hold up. So when they all got in the house, I was afraid it was going to fall down the hill. I got out of the house on terra firma.

I saw those headlines flash before my eyes, "John Hauberg injured by falling artists' house." I didn't think it was going to hold up. But it did, and everybody, of course, loved it, and we loved it, and we lived there for several years, summer and winter.

MS. MACE: And John Hauberg actually was quite impressed with the house, and he turned to Joey and I on his way out—and we were so relieved that they were finally leaving, because really it was not structurally—I mean, we didn't know how many people it could hold.

MR. HERMAN: You built stuff. Had you ever built anything like that before?

MS. MACE: No. No, never like that. I mean, it was a tree house. It was a tree house, and one corner of the tree house touched a steep embankment so you could walk into it, but the rest of it was off the ground. And, you know, you start saying, Are the nails—you know, Is it in there strong enough? I was really nervous.

But on the way out John Hauberg turned to us and said, "How much did this cost you?"

And I looked at Joey and I said, "\$3,000."

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It was \$2,500.

MS. MACE: Twenty-five thousand dollars. And he said, "Alice, aren't those tent frames that we put on the hill, weren't those \$3,000 apiece?" And she said yes. And he said, "We need to start reevaluating our structures. We need something more like this."

And off he went, and months later all these new cottages that were not tents, but were structures, were started. And I really feel that that was a defining moment for us, that the place didn't fall down, and a defining moment

for Pilchuck that housing now for staff and for students was not going to be tents. Because when we went to Pilchuck in 1979, everybody lived in white tents.

MR. HERMAN: Kind of like army tents?

MS. MACE: They were army tents.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: They had wood floors.

MS. MACE: On tent platforms—yeah, tent platforms.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, I stayed in one my first summer there. And they were moldy and they'd get wet.

MS. MACE: Oh, yeah. The inside of them were kind of green.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: They were sure to get mold and—

MS. MACE: Green mold.

MR. HERMAN: Well, when did you actually move from New Hampshire—

MS. MACE: To Rhode Island.

MR. HERMAN: —to Rhode Island, to Providence, and then out here?

MS. MACE: It was in the early '80s.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Once we built the house, then we moved—

MS. MACE: Eighty-one.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We didn't know we were going to move out here, but we did.

MS. MACE: Yeah, '81.

MR. HERMAN: And you lived in that house year round?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We lived in that house until '84.

MS. MACE: Four years. Four years, wasn't it?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes. Summer and winter. And so we put a wood stove in. And sometimes we'd experiment with bringing a phone line down from Dale's cabin, but the mice would eat through it, so we didn't have a phone usually. But we powered it up with batteries that we—

MS. MACE: Twelve-volt batteries.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —that we'd bring back and forth on a red wagon, Radio Flyer. We'd pull it down the road to the lodge, and then we'd charge it up and pull it back down to the house. It was an incredible opportunity, because after we built the house in '81, we taught.

We were really nervous to teach. I believe we were the first women to teach hot glass, meaning the glassblowing —

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —at Pilchuck.

MR. HERMAN: What had other women taught?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: They had taught—

MS. MACE: —lampwork and stained glass. There were women around, but most of the mentors in the field were males. Ann Wolff had come to Pilchuck in—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But, you know, she didn't teach hot glass. I'm just saying—women had certainly been there and had been an important element at Pilchuck since '71.

MS. MACE: Enameling, they taught enameling or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But not hot glass. And I think—I remember getting a telegram after we taught, from Dale, and I still have it, I'm sure. It said something like, "This was the best session anybody had ever taught at Pilchuck. It was fantastic and if there was any question, women, you could do it; you did it with flying colors."

And I can remember just being relieved, because I remember it was a big deal then. And it could be that it was a big deal for me because, once again, what I brought to the table was more about art, not about glassblowing.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I held a class, an art class about drawing and learning how to bring your ideas to glass, and then Flora would give the glass demos. It was a perfect combination. But it hadn't been done like that before. I mean, people really had been teaching more about how to blow glass, how to gather glass.

MS. MACE: We used the lodge. Where people ate became our classroom. Joey would hold her class, and we would have drawing classes, and we would assemble projects that weren't in glass but were other materials. And then we'd talk to the students about how to then transfer those images that they've created two-dimensionally, three-dimensionally, into glass forms. And so then we'd hold a class in the hot shop.

So we were using all the different areas of Pilchuck, and the students didn't have classrooms. So then Joey and I went around to all the old tent platforms where people used to stay, and now there were dorms, and we gathered up all the bed frames and we put them up on stilts so then we had desks. And so we put them around the hot shop, and that worked one year.

And then the next year, we used under the lodge. We took the same platforms that were bed frames and used them for desks so that the students had places to work when they weren't in the hot shop, to show that there was a validity, that you didn't have to have the final object in glass, that you could work with kind of constructing and doing drawings.

Under the lodge became their permanent studio. So when you were blowing, you were in the hot shop, but afterwards you were still expected to keep doing your work.

It was a real change in Pilchuck's approach to teaching.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It was part of the overall evolution of what, also, the students expected. They expected the classes to be more like they found at the university, not just watching an artist work, but being taught.

And we only know this in retrospect. One of the things the second year that we taught at Pilchuck—in '82, we went to Dale, who was at the time the—well, actually, I think Bennie was the education director. But Dale was the artistic director at the time, and we went to Dale and we said, "Dale, this 20 students per class is horrible. We can't get to them all. We have to be up in the middle night," because people had blowing slots all through the night, and as a teacher, you felt like you'd have to be up at 2:00 in the morning to watch them and whatnot. We said, "Let us have a class with 10 students."

He said, "God." He said, "Well, you can't bring in as much money." He said, "I'll tell you what. We'll add a first session to the program. If you teach first session, I'll let you have 10 students if you promise to teach second session at the regular 20 students, because we still want you to be teachers for the 20 students."

And so we taught the first 10 students and it was fantastic. And then we taught our 20, and then after that summer it changed over to all classes were 10 students.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So it really did make a difference.

MR. HERMAN: Well, it would have been a little bit different, too, having both of you teaching too.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: And you still got the same amount of money that individual instructors or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No, we'd have to split it.

MR. HERMAN: —did you have to split it?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, yeah. We had to split it. I don't think we ever got full money. And then after we taught, we would always stay on to be the artist-in-residence liaisons. And we never got paid for that; we just always did



it.

And again, it was a great opportunity. We knew that we were working with—I mean, Chris Wilmarth, he's a great American artist, and that, for me, was thrilling, because my background was more art.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. Well, that makes me wonder, because you were talking about that space in the lodge. Is that what became the print workshop, the glass-plate print?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, now it's a library. Have you been up there?

MR. HERMAN: Oh, it's the library now. Yeah, I have. Yeah, I'm remembering from several years ago.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Once the session was over, we would stay on through the winter, then—in '81 and '82—and we would take over that room under the lodge as our studio.

MR. HERMAN: Oh. So you had a heated space?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We had a place then where we would shower and a place to work that was warm.

MR. HERMAN: Was anybody else up there during the winter?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. What would happen was Dale would have his team up there in the fall, through September, maybe a little bit into October and November; Billy would be there, and Rich, and Ben, and a team of around 10 or 12.

MR. HERMAN: Working on Dale's team?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: On Dale's team. And then we started working for Dale too. I mean, Flora already had, but that's when I started working as Dale's colorist. Flora and I would blow glass for Dale at night, and then the big team would work during the day.

So that would be the fall. Dale would cater Thanksgiving up there. There would be a whole group of us. There would be Amy Roberts, and Richie, and Bennie—

MS. MACE: They got a grant. They got a grant that year. After Dale's blow then there was—I think Alice Rooney wrote a grant, you know, with Dale's encouragement, for the artists to receive a stipend to continue their work.

[Audio break.]

MR. HERMAN: This is Lloyd Herman interviewing Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick at their studio in Seattle, Washington, on September 6, 2005, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This is session three, disc number two.

We were just talking about Pilchuck and the early years and how you spent the winters there.

And how was your work evolving during that time period, too, with what seemed to be like quite a degree of isolation in the winter months when you were living in your tree house up there? And I'm wondering whether you're now beginning to develop more work for exhibitions, and what kind of communication were you getting not only within the glass community, but galleries and whether collectors were becoming interested in this work.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, we had, through the early '80s, been showing the cylinders with the wire drawings, and so we continued to do that.

MR. HERMAN: Where were you showing them?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We showed in Boston. We had a show, I think in like '83, at Habatat [Galleries, Royal Oak, MI, 1984] in Michigan. We had a show here in Seattle with Don Foster, at Foster-White Galleries. So we even had a show at that place in LA which—

MR. HERMAN: Kurland-Summers.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, right.

MR. HERMAN: But it was probably Ivor Kurland Gallery originally.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes, yes. So we were showing the cylinders, and I think that, very quietly, collectors were becoming interested in our work. But I think that the most important thing about that time period for us, and again I don't think it really exists for younger artists coming up anymore, was that because we were in this

isolated situation in what we called the off season at Pilchuck, we had a tremendous amount of time to concentrate on our work.

And frankly, we didn't need to make a lot of money, because we built our house; we lived there. We kind of traded at Pilchuck. We helped do some maintenance or whatever. Our financial outlay was for materials and not what usually it might be if we lived in the city.

And what I think it allowed us to do—and I've talked to students about this a lot—is that we were able to continue making cylinders and showing them, and at the same time, then, in a parallel way, start to make our more three-dimensional sculptural work.

Once we started living up at Pilchuck, we got very interested in wood, and we started cutting down the trees and started fabricating wood and developing it and absorbing it in our work, and ideas into our work. And we were able to make this body of work that I feel like we could contemplate, and think about, and look at, and not have to rush off to market, if you will.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And I don't—I think that, even now with our work, we don't get to do that as much. Our careers are sort of busy enough that we need to get our work out a little quicker.

It was a wonderful work period, and it enabled us time to really experiment with the work, and look at the work, and think about what the work was about in a way that probably we've never had since. And we will be forever indebted to Pilchuck for that, because I think it really formed us in our approach to our work, our workaholicness, because of our isolation. All we had to do was work—and just our work ethic, if you will, as artists.

Being at Pilchuck helped establish our love and interest in being in the natural world, and I think it sort of set the tone for what our work has been about ever since—the idea of being in nature, and how we are part of nature, and all those questions that we've talked about before. So it was really an essential and important developmental period for us, don't you think?

MS. MACE: Yeah. And I think we have to thank our families for not putting the pressures on us.

MR. HERMAN: That was one of my questions I was going to ask. Did you get kind of nurturing support from families, or did they think you were crazy living in a tree house in the woods in Washington State or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think they thought we were crazy, how hard we worked. But both our families were very supportive of it for the most part.

MS. MACE: I mean, every single one of our—we have all sisters. I have one sister and Joey has three. Every sister we ended up staying with, for extended periods of time, as we cross-countried in our vehicle to go to a workshop or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Exhibitions.

MS. MACE: —an exhibition. We didn't have a lot of extra money, and any extra money we would try to buy supplies. And our families didn't have a lot of money to give us, I mean, but they gave us a place to stay as long as we wanted to.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But the pattern of sort of working in the off season, developing work for the season, and then having this influx of people, good artists, who then we worked with—

MR. HERMAN: In the summer.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —in the summer, and learning from that and re-meeting our comrades, Bill and everybody coming back for the summer, and Dale, and then, you know, getting as much out of that as we could. And then they all left, and then we had our own—just the two of us again, that we could develop our work. So it was a wonderful pattern.

MS. MACE: Because it was never truly in isolation. Even students today will go to Pilchuck, you'll absorb an incredible amount, and when you go back to wherever you're from, you will, like, work all winter off the energy from that experience.

And so the same was happening to us. We were in isolation, but there was so much to do before spring came.

MR. HERMAN: But did you come down to Seattle, or was there any kind of a sense of being part of, still part of an arts community, when you were living up there?

MS. MACE: No.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Not really, you know, but Flora and I are pretty—we're both—I'm an introvert, number one, anyway. Flora is probably more of an extrovert than I am. But I think that maybe it could be considered one of the negatives of living up there, was how isolated we got, although I loved it. But we both got very out of practice on coming into the city and being around a lot of people.

And I can remember often coming down for functions being really nervous about, you know, How do I do this again? Talk to people?

I can remember once coming down to give a lecture at Bush [School, Seattle] that Annie Hauberg set up for us, and feeling very nervous about it, and also not knowing my place in the world at that time. I remember Annie got up in front of the Bush School for this lecture, and it probably was around, I don't know, 1983, and she started talking about Flora and I in a way that assumed we had a presence in the arts community that I wasn't even aware of. She talked about how we were the first women to teach glassblowing at Pilchuck and how we were developing a career as women in a male gender-related medium and that type of thing. And it almost—it was a pleasure to not know that about ourselves, if you know what I mean.

MR. HERMAN: So you had never really thought about that, that you were perhaps handicapped as women?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think that we thought about it, and had had the experience that we touched on earlier in the tapes about both of our experience as women in glass before we met. We clearly were aware of the gender issues in our field and in the art field in general, but I think what I'm saying is, our isolation allowed us not to have to contemplate our place in terms of our career. So we—

MR. HERMAN: There were no real daily reminders of that.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: You were simply doing your work.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And I think it allowed us a freedom that we don't experience now, because the medium has generated such success that you kind of—it's just more out there, and we're aware of it because we're more in the mainstream.

MR. HERMAN: This is sort of a digression, but one of the questions is how you feel as university-educated artists versus people who are largely self-taught and are not from an art school or university background. I would think there would have been a number of people who had come to Pilchuck who maybe hadn't come through a university art department or didn't have the background and training, and I just would be interested in your assessment of the differences.

MS. MACE: That, to me, is the biggest difference about what happened then versus what happens now. I want to say almost everybody that was at Pilchuck during the late '70s, early '80s, all of them were in some way involved in a university somewhere. Because when Dale got the original grant for Pilchuck to even start, he sent fliers to other universities to get students. But many of the students came by way of the Rhode Island School of Design coming to the West Coast.

When I went in '79, all of the people that I met knew about Pilchuck and had training in universities in some field, not only in arts but in some field. It could have been architecture, somewhere. So all of the students that were coming to Pilchuck had some kind of an educational, university exposure.

MR. HERMAN: Do you think—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And—oh, I'm sorry.

MR. HERMAN: No, go ahead.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, let's remember, too, that the difference was the way to learn about glass as a viable artistic medium in the '70s and early '80s was only through the university. It wasn't a successful enough medium that you would really go to a gallery much and go, "Wow, that looks interesting; I think I want to be a glassblower."

MR. HERMAN: Well, it seems to me it would be largely technical instruction, which, of course, then links it more strongly to the craft field than it seems to be today.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It does, except for—because you went to the university for something other than glass—

MR. HERMAN: True.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —and met glass in the university; you had an art background. You probably took art history classes, or ceramics, or whatnot. Nowadays you can—glass is enough in the—

MS. MACE: Mainstream.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —mainstream that people can say, I want to be a glassblower, and they might have no experience with art whatsoever; they never took an art history class.

MS. MACE: They never went to college.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So that's the difference for me. Now they look at glass and see a friend making it or a friend making goblets and, you know, that type of thing. They can come to the medium without any background in art or craft whatsoever.

MS. MACE: And that's changed. That's what's really changed. Most of the students and faculty were very educated. Even in Europe, all the master designers all went to universities, all the people that ended up coming to Pilchuck from Europe, highly educated students.

MR. HERMAN: Interesting, because I would have thought that some of the Italians who came really kind of learned glassblowing in the factories of Murano, just sort of as kids, and kind of grew up in that. So it wouldn't have been a university influence on that.

MS. MACE: They were some of the first ones, but look how they are revered. Lino is a perfect example.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. Well, I was thinking of—

MS. MACE: Lino started glassblowing as a young—11 or 12, because he lived on Murano and that's where the glass was happening. And his family—you know, you're involved. He is such a technical glassblower that people will study with him to learn a technique now.

There were some Swedish glassblowers also that were very much into the technical, but they were much—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But in terms of the theory that we're kind of laying out, there weren't enough of those people. So I'm saying the people from the United States had gone to college first and then discovered glass there. There were not independent glassblowing studios being built yet.

MS. MACE: When we went in 1979, Lino was coming for the first time. In fact, I remember when he got out of the taxicab and ended up—he didn't know where Pilchuck was and told the cabdriver to take him. So he, you know, took a cab from the airport to Pilchuck. It was like a hundred and some dollars. And he got out of the cab and said—he couldn't speak a word of English. He only had this thing for an address. So we all like chipped in to get money to pay for his cab ride.

And here's Lino, and he's seeing all these artists trying to do this bizarre stuff. He couldn't believe that no one knew how to blow glass. We were all experimenting. That was his whole thing. He had never seen women try to blow glass, because in Venice they didn't have that.

But all the people that were at Pilchuck when Lino or these great masters arrived were young art students that had no idea, but they had a vision of what they wanted to make.

What happened was that Lino and these other artists that were incredible technicians showed us techniques to help us head in the direction to make our work, which opened up their eyes because they were—it was like backwards from the way that they thought. You take a drawing and you make it very methodically. Well, here artists were doing—were trying to make globs or things that had no drawings. They were kind of working in space.

MR. HERMAN: Just improvisation, really, without much preplanning.

MS. MACE: Absolutely. And now the students want to know, preplanned, how to make something.

MR. HERMAN: Do you feel that students have changed over the course of time, so they now come more directed; they want to learn either a particular technique or they want to learn how to make a kind of object?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MR. HERMAN: And I'm guessing, correct me if I'm wrong, that probably the people who have not come through university are maybe more inclined to learn how to do a production goblet or would be more—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's what I was trying to say. It's not even a criticism or anything, but I do think that you don't have to have an art background to look and say, Hey, my buddy is making a living blowing glass and it looks fun. I think I'll try it. And so what should I do, buddy? And then he says, Well, go to Pilchuck. And so the guy or gal arrives and wants to learn how to make whatever, something highly technically skilled, that they can take to a production studio or whatnot. That's what I'm trying to say.

I don't think that happened then, back in the '70s, when we first came. And I think it's changed the medium, or the culture of glass, to a certain extent.

MR. HERMAN: Besides Pilchuck, have you had any experience or relationship with any of the other schools?

MS. MACE: Haystack, Penland.

MR. HERMAN: Haystack, Penland. You've both taught there, or did you ever go as students?

MS. MACE: We taught at Haystack. Penland, we have not taught, but we have visited there. And I think those are very important institutions, and I think that the student gets to explore whatever material they're involved in there, and have the opportunity to see glass as a material possibly to bring into their field.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Because they're mixed.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: It's mixed-media.

MR. HERMAN: And do you feel that that's been more of a trend in education, that artists don't focus on a single medium but have the opportunity if they have ideas to explore what's the best medium for them?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's a hard question. I'd like to think so. I want to think so, and I think, you know, not to skirt the question, but yes and no. I think both these things are happening. I think that artists are looking at more multiple mediums, as opposed to craftspeople who might want to do a production line. I think both parties exist now.

I think that the people who grew up in glass are looking to other mediums to add to the glass, to further illustrate their ideas. But I think that there are still equal amounts that come into it wanting to be a great glassblower, and wanting to make this production line or—and I mean that in a real liberal sense—something for Vetri [Vetri International Glass, Seattle].

MR. HERMAN: I know you were going to go work with Ann Warff. Were there other women artists working in glass that were sort of icons or, you know, people you would emulate, or who provided examples?

MS. MACE: For me, even Ann Warff—what do we call her now?

MR. HERMAN: Wolff now.

MS. MACE: Ann Wolff, now, she was a really important designer in Europe, in Sweden, but had she not come to Pilchuck and any of us met her, we wouldn't have known how she fit in.

MR. HERMAN: Who she was, yeah.

MS. MACE: Because we didn't have a lot of international glass art magazines that had designers and artists and glass artists. There wasn't the kind of material available then at all. It wasn't until probably 20 years ago that we had the images of the glass of Frederick Carter and the Venetian glass and world glass. None of these artists or companies, throughout the world, ever had a lot of advertisement out about what their designers and artists did, other than what was in production.

I mean, Ann Wolff designed a little glass snowball that was in every Bon Marché [department store] in the world. I wouldn't have ever put the two and two together.

MR. HERMAN: But, you know, part of—I think it's that whole European factory situation, it's true, ceramic factories too, where they would have artists who were at the factory and they maybe were expected to design some products, but they also did their own work.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: I think probably—wasn't Ann Wolff, you know, kind of a factory designer/artist?

MS. MACE: Totally.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes, she was. And so was Bertil.

MR. HERMAN: And Bertil Vallien, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But also, you have to remember, to get back to your question about women artists, I didn't have an interest in glass per se. And so in answer to, you know, were there women to look at, I was looking at women who worked in art, not women who worked in glass.

MR. HERMAN: Well, who were some of the women that provided the strong examples for you?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Luckily, at Pilchuck when somebody like Judy Pfaff would come in, or even Lynda, even if—

MS. MACE: Lynda Benglis.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —if I didn't—it wasn't even as much about their work, but that they were working women artists who were making a career of it, or a go of it. And I'm a pretty voracious reader, so I was certainly aware of Louise Bourgeois or, you know—right when you're supposed to have, know the names, I can't think of them right off.

MR. HERMAN: No, but significant women artists.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But I certainly was aware of them. But—and I don't mean this in a snobbish way; I think it was because I wasn't a very good glassblower—it just was never on my radar. Glass wasn't of interest to me as a culture in and of itself, except for these wonderful people who I had met who became my family—Dale, and Billy, but it wasn't because they were glass artists at that point. I mean, remember Flora and I, in 1984, are making wood sculpture. In 1986, we're adding steel to it. In 1990, we're making huge wood, mostly wood-fabricated pieces, with some glass.

So a lot of these ideas we're talking about are really important to the glass movement, but they were just one thing paralleling our life, because we were making work that didn't fit in the shelves of glass galleries. So we were finding out—we'd send work to—I can remember once we sent work to Betsy Rosenfield's gallery [Chicago, IL], who was having a show, and found out that she never could take—one of the sculptures she never took out of the crate, because she didn't have a shelf big enough to show it. They had cubbyholes for the glass.

Well, we were making, at the time, those big glass heads on their sides, with fabricated wood parts on top. She didn't have a place that was big enough to show it. She never took it out of the crate.

So our experience was that we were making—we were more concerned about the work we were making than whether it fit into the glass world or not. Obviously, we couldn't—

MR. HERMAN: Well, as you kind of progressed—and I really want to talk about that, too, about how the ideas progressed and you began to work in other materials—it suggests that even though you first got recognition in glass galleries, that your field really has been sculpture, and that as you started to introduce other materials, was that then something that glass galleries were less interested in?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Absolutely. Absolutely.

MS. MACE: Absolutely.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think we still suffer from, you know, working with one foot in both the art and craft worlds. The glass galleries are more open now than they were, but back then, again, as I say, they didn't have cubbyholes big enough for our work. And I think that, by their comments, they had difficulty understanding what we were talking about in the work, and so to sell it was going to be difficult.

By the same token, I think if you went to a sculpture gallery, and you had one little piece of glass in it, you were identified as a glass artist. So they didn't want to take that on either.

So it could be a blessing or a curse. I mean, I think in some ways it's been a blessing because we just have been going on our merry way. We've been able to make work that we've wanted to and we're committed to, not based on what the glass galleries want and not based on what the sculpture galleries want.

MR. HERMAN: But have you ever had a gallery say, Oh, I can't sell this work—a gallery you've had a relationship with?

MS. MACE: We've had a lot of them say that. "I love your work. We have developed our clientele in such a way that it's hard to make them now understand."

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And we even had—I won't name them, but we even did have a very well-known gallery dealer say, you know, "We probably made a mistake years ago by pushing specific kinds of glass too much, because the glass world is going in a different direction now."

MR. HERMAN: Oh. And they've educated their clients only one way.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. And they said it was a mistake and they can't sell our work.

MS. MACE: They can't sell a lot of the—yeah.

MR. HERMAN: This makes me think also about the craft context, which—except particularly in the Seattle area—glass is simply a discipline like clay, wood, or fiber. How do you kind of address your own development in terms of the craft context? Has that been helpful, harmful, or neutral?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's a good question. I think for us, personally, it's been neutral, okay. I mean, a lot of these questions you're asking, the response is different from how we perceive than how we're aware that the world at large is perceiving it.

Flora and I don't ever stop a body of work or a theme or an idea by saying, Are we fitting in craft or are we fitting in sculpture? That just isn't us.

MS. MACE: Or, We can sell this. It's never been—

MR. HERMAN: And that's a very good thing, because it keeps you honest.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. And I'm really proud of it. I do feel like that has been one of our strong—

MS. MACE: Suits.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —suits in our work, is that we're stubborn and we're going to make what we feel like needs to be made. In terms of the outside perception of our work, I think that people have to decide for themselves. Again, we're back to this thing where we have one foot in both worlds. So I think it's been the same difficulty there.

MR. HERMAN: Have you been in sculpture exhibits and museums or in galleries that really focus more on sculpture than on glass?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. I think commercially, we've, for the most, part shown in glass galleries. But we've been lucky enough to have museum shows where they're just accepting the work as sculpture and saying, This is a body of sculpture by Joey Kirkpatrick and Flora Mace. So I think we—again, that puts us in both those worlds a little bit.

MR. HERMAN: Is that good or bad?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think that the more worlds that you're in, the better, because more people see it. I think commercially it hasn't been very good, because I think it's been difficult for that person who's a glass collector, who has one of everybody's in their collection, doesn't always have ours in their collection, because sometimes we're not working only in glass—I think that's changed. You know, I'm talking now we're still in the '80s and early '90s.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, yeah.

MR. HERMAN: And I want to get back to that, in addressing how your work began to change after you moved out here.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But, you know, we weren't in everybody's glass collection, and certainly we had the reputation to be. Our name would say that they would, or everybody would, have a cylinder, but then they couldn't go to the next thing, because it had wood in it. And they themselves didn't know how to address it. They didn't know how to reconcile it in their own collection. So I think that was problematic for some collectors. But the on the other hand we've had this handful of incredibly supportive collectors who have collected our work in depth from the get-go.

MR. HERMAN: I'd be interested, if you wouldn't mind, [in your] saying the names of those collectors who really have shown a continuing interest as it develops, because I think historically it will be important to know that. Those collections will probably end up in museums or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, one that's being installed right now probably is George and Dorothy Saxe's collection at the de Young Museum. Wonderful supporters of ours, and supporters of ours that didn't necessarily love everything we made, but they were engaged by it, and talked to us about it, and acquired work that was not only supportive to our being able to continue to work, but engaged us in a conversation about our work that was helpful for us as young artists.

MR. HERMAN: You mean in thinking about it yourselves and what it represented or where you would go with it?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, no, because we certainly never were led by collectors where we'd go, but I think it just enabled us to understand what people were thinking and why sometimes people didn't understand our work.

Jon and Mary Shirley have been wonderful collectors and supporters of our work in depth. Sara Jane and Bill Dehoff have been wonderful, from Ohio, wonderful collectors of our work.

MS. MACE: Francine and Benson.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Francine and Benson Pilloff—I'm sure you know who they are—

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —have been, you know, extraordinary supporters. Doug and Dale Anderson. Now I'm going to feel like if I miss one, I'm going to hurt somebody's feelings and I don't want to. But—Chris Rifkin—

MS. MACE: And George Stroemple.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And George Stroemple. So, you know, we've been lucky to have a group of people who have supported our work. And this is what you want from a gallery, too. Your supporters don't always have to love every single thing you make, and not any of these people love every single thing we make, but they believe in us as artists, so that they value what we make, even if it's not the one that they want.

MR. HERMAN: Their taste, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And that is a group of people who value us as artists, value what we make, whether they like it or not.

And sometimes galleries can't afford to value everything you make and don't want to show it if they don't like it because they can't—

MS. MACE: Sell it.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —sell it, they say. And that's a frustration.

MS. MACE: Because it's a big—if a gallery has 12 shows a year, and they dedicate four weeks to you, they've got to sell some work to make it all work.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. It's not altruistic.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. You wish it was.

MR. HERMAN: Galleries certainly have a role in educating the public so they can move them ahead as artist's work changes and evolves.

MS. MACE: Don Foster was probably one of the greatest galleries we ever had, the kind of support and openness. He never knew what we were going to show. He didn't care what he showed. He just said, How much space in the gallery do you want? And we'd arrive with it.

MR. HERMAN: Are you still showing at Foster-White since he sold it?

MS. MACE: No.

MR. HERMAN: Do you have a gallery in Seattle?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We don't.



MS. MACE: We don't.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We don't at this time. That was kind of a hide-and-watch situation. You know, you want to see how the new owners are going to treat the gallery after Don sold it.

MR. HERMAN: Sure.

MS. MACE: But it was at a really critical point in our career. We were just moving here, to this studio, and we didn't know what kind of work was going to come out of this particular studio when she took over.

MR. HERMAN: Sure.

MS. MACE: And so it was a great way to blend anyway.

MR. HERMAN: Let's go back to your work and—you lived how many years in Stanwood, seven years?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, once we built the house at Pilchuck, you mean?

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We built it in '81, and I think we came to Seattle—in '84, late '84.

MR. HERMAN: So how did you kind of run through the doll images, and where did that lead during that period that you working out there?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We ran through the doll images, or really I should say we ran through the cylinders. We made other imagery with the cylinders, you know, wind-kite pieces, pieces that you've heard of called the Narwal pieces, these weird figures, fish babies, kind of a combination of fish babies. But we stopped making those in 1984, and the last one we really blew was actually during the summer session, a summer session in the middle of July in 1984 when we were teaching. I know exactly what piece it was. And at that time we had spent a couple of years working on these wood figurative pieces, wood-and-glass figurative pieces

MR. HERMAN: Oh, so you were exploring that idea while making the cylinders?

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. And that's what I was saying before. It was such a valuable time for us because we didn't have to show that sculptural work right away, and so I felt like by the time we did show it, it was resolved in a way that it was ready to be shown. And I think nowadays a lot of people don't take the time to resolve their issues in their work.

But what we found—we had an exhibition at Don's, Don Foster Gallery, in 1983, where we took one room for the cylinders and one room for the fabricated wood-and-glass sculpture. And maybe this is one of the times—I'll have to go back on what I said earlier—that the feedback from people helped us quit making a body of work, because I found, or we found—I think Flora will back me up on this—that the audience couldn't absorb, or couldn't understand, the two very different visual results of our artmaking—

[END TAPE 1 SIDE B.]

—which was the different kind of work. And so after that show—I mean, clearly it wasn't the whole reason we stopped making the cylinders, but after that show we really decided to not make the cylinders anymore. We felt like we—much like when we stopped making the fruit years later, we felt like we had made the work as good as we could make it. We had resolved the issues both conceptually or intellectually as well as technically, and it was time to move on.

MR. HERMAN: Were you getting bored with it and wanted something new?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It wasn't—

MS. MACE: No.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: For me, it wasn't bored. Part of it was they were so hard to make that I think we had gotten to a point that it just was very difficult to continue making them.

MR. HERMAN: What were the first pieces like, then, that included wood? Were they the wood-and-glass pieces with the blown heads?

MS. MACE: The tall white—the tall white pieces.

MR. HERMAN: The cylindrical bodies with the heads?

MS. MACE: Yes.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: As soon as we built our house and lived at Pilchuck, we made a couple of life-sized wood figures that looked like Penny dolls, and what we were really doing at that time was, we started taking the imagery that was on the cylinder, the figurative, off the cylinder. They were dolls, and a lot of them that I had drawn were—remember the old Penny dolls? They have kind of hinged arms and they're all wood?

MR. HERMAN: I think I kind of have an idea. I'm not sure.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And what we—

MR. HERMAN: Penny was the name of the character.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Actually, you know what; I don't even know what Penny is from. But we took the figure off the cylinder for a variety of reasons. One is, we didn't have access to a furnace as much as we wanted to.

MS. MACE: We did build a little furnace that we used at Pilchuck during the winter, but we realized that, you know, we could only afford to keep it on a certain amount of months of [the] year. So we would make our designs or drawings and then turn it on, but the rest of the time we were bending wires or building these sculptures, which got us into the routine that we we're still in. You work months preparing, and then you turn the furnace on.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But there were certain ways that glassblowing was limited. The scale was limited. Access to a hot shop was limited. So also I found that blowing glass just—there was something about its—my ability to think while doing it, that I felt like the work wasn't as contemplative. You had to be responsive to the hot glass, you know, in a way that maybe wasn't allowing for as conceptual of work as I wanted.

So the first work that we made was, we took these dolls off the figure and we made these big wood dolls, which we don't even have anymore. I wish we did. We never showed them. It was just being in our transitional stage, allowing us to make wood.

MR. HERMAN: Well, by saying "big wood dolls," were they solid wood or were they—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: They were solid wood.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: They were taller than we were.

MR. HERMAN: Carved?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. We cut down trees, and we'd carve the wood, and we'd joint them. And there would be these figures and—

MS. MACE: And we were starting to make environments. But we had no studio space long-term, because at Pilchuck we could only have it during the winter months, and then spring, we'd have to clear everything out. And we had no—you know, where are you going to store everything and—

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, yeah, particularly large-scale pieces.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MS. MACE: Yes.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But really, what it did was it allowed us to start thinking differently, and we started giving ourselves the permission to not be locked into only one material. And I just think it was a good period for us to learn how to be more expansive artists, in terms of the material we used.

So we started making these large wood figures, and then we sort of settled down into a combination of those tall, glass, white figures with wood parts and slate bases. And that's the body of work that we worked on for the two years leading up to the Don Foster show in '83, where we had both types of work. Then in '84 we stopped making the cylinders and then went purely to what I would consider sculptural work.

So the blown work that we were doing after 1984 were blown parts, but they weren't vessels; they weren't

traditional one-off, where you'd blow and you'd be done with the piece, you know, right there in the hot shop.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. So the glass—the blown-glass element would only be part of a larger structure—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: —that was usually wood, or always wood?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Usually—no, it was glass and wood, glass and wood.

MS. MACE: And it had some steel in it for structure.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: Oh. Were those mold-blown heads then?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes.

MS. MACE: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: And the tall cylinders—

MS. MACE: No, they were not mold blown. But, yeah, Joey and I developed a process to blow into plaster molds that were vented.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: So we developed that process. It was just one of the techniques that we later incorporated into our work with the artists-in-residence at Pilchuck.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: For example, we used those molds for John Torreano's pieces.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But—so in other words, anything we blew wasn't a finished object. We might spend a day blowing heads, or we might spend a day blowing the white tubes, or we might spend a day blowing little bowls that we'd put into the work when we were making this body of work where the figure was sort of like a musical instrument. And we'd always put a little bowl to talk about the resonance of sound and that type of thing.

So that was like in the mid-'80s, and again we were struggling in terms of making a living, because it was not what other glass artists were making, and so we were having a difficult time showing it—in a sense, back to the thing about the galleries being able to show it.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But we were living in the woods, and the ideas, you know, were really about being in nature.

But in 1984 we got an apartment in Seattle, at the Linda Vista building, where Dale lived. We lived below Dale.

MR. HERMAN: I don't even know where that is.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It's over off of East Lake, on Lynn Street.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Old, one of those old beautiful Spanish buildings.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. MACE: It looked out on the lake.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It looked out on Lake Union. And then we got a little studio over on—literally, a room that was about the size of this—over at a friend's futon store on the other side of Lake Union, where Swallow's Nest used to be. Remember where that was?

MS. MACE: There's condominiums—it's right behind Gas Works Park.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, right by Gas Works Park. So we had a view of the lake on both sides of our life, and we slowly moved our stuff down here. We still taught at Pilchuck, and we still worked there and did all our blowing

there, but we did our fabricating now down here.

MR. HERMAN: Did you develop all those with drawings first? I mean, it seems to me that in blowing these elements that were to become part of sculptures that had other materials, that this would have involved a lot of preplanning, just as the wire drawings did.

MS. MACE: Absolutely.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think, though, that one thing we learned—and I think we learned this a little bit from Italo Scanga, because we worked a lot with Italo making his sculpture—was that an artist identifies a vocabulary of images.

I think that we became comfortable with our own personal palette as artists, which meant what was our imagery, what was the imagery that we found, was expressive of who we were. And then we would go into the hot shop and make those parts as a palette.

So I don't—let's say, if we went in and made the heads or made the little bowls or made these little solid glass blocks and whatnot, we didn't always know specifically what that was going to go to.

MS. MACE: We liked the image.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We would make the glass leaves or whatever. Then when the blow was over, we'd have our palette of objects in our studio, and then we would start to pick from it as we were doing the drawing.

Now, one difference that Flora and I have is that I would draw on paper, but Flora would actually take the objects and kind of tape them up together. Once we'd get the direction—

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And so we worked like that.

MR. HERMAN: Well, that kind of leads me into the whole thing about collaborating, and initially it seemed like, Flora, you liked the challenge of how to do it, and you had rather a graphic image that you wanted to do. How did that begin to change then, and can you even identify what each of you now brings to the process?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It's harder.

MS. MACE: It is harder but—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It started out more clear-cut, as you're saying. I had the ideas initially. I'd say, I want to make a piece like this, and Flora would say, Well, here's how we can do it. And it was much—

MS. MACE: —more defined.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —more defined.

MS. MACE: Joey, to me, is a quintessential artist. She has a vision; it doesn't even have to stand; it doesn't even have to be technical—I mean, technical—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It doesn't have to reflect my technical knowledge, is what you're saying. Let's be honest.

MS. MACE: That's a really good—but she will have an idea. And so over the years she has always challenged me to help her visualize her work, her images, into three-dimensional forms that are technically sound.

MR. HERMAN: And has that been difficult, to translate your ideas to Flora so that she can help you see how to move forward with them?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, it's difficult, because I'm an impatient person and she will never work fast enough for me but—

MS. MACE: That's what I was going to say. The hardest thing that Joey has had to deal with is my slowness in being able to figure out how to achieve the simplicity of her lines, for the object to look spontaneous and yet be as structurally sound—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And have integrity when it's sent out.

MS. MACE: Yeah. Or I will say, "Oh, I'll do this." And she would say, "It can't have any structure there because"—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Visual, yeah.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: Or it can't have any nuts and bolts showing, or, "It has to look more magical." So to me, that is the magic of our work. How it's put together most people will never know, but to me fulfills—

MR. HERMAN: You don't want the details to call attention to themselves.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Correct.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MR. HERMAN: How then did your work progress? I remember that there were then big blown heads, and I'm not sure whether there was another body of work between those sculptural pieces and then the beginning of the fruit arrangements.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The big blown heads began when we moved to Seattle, and I think that because we had views that were very different, and, of course, we weren't in the woods anymore, the work took on more of a contemplative air. I mean, the big heads were on their side, which, for me, was emoting the idea of thinking, thought. And there were these objects built on top of them, and instead of talking about issues of being in nature and trees and things that we had—and being the musical instruments that we were dealing with before—we started being really aware of water, because we had two places on the water.

And the work became less active. In other words, up until this point, I always viewed the figure in our work an active participant in nature; it was representing some kind of movement. And these new pieces were more about illustrating the figure thinking about something conceptual. And we became really interested in the idea of the water and—

MS. MACE: The image. The image—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Wait a second, wait a second.

MS. MACE: Okay.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But what's the water when it comes up and down?

MR. HERMAN: The tide?

MS. MACE: The tides.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, tides, gee. I've been talking too long. The tides. And we started thinking about how tides work with eclipses and all that sort of thing.

We were very involved in thinking about states of mind, like the idea of being eclipsed as a person. So the pieces were very, very different than before, with this big life-sized head, as opposed to the figures that were in nature. And that was completely a function of moving to Seattle and having these water views.

And, you know, an artist—I say this in our lectures, so I hate to repeat myself—but an artist interprets their world, and it's all about what you see. And obviously, when you dramatically change your view, your work is going to change.

MS. MACE: Your life changes. It's the same as if you move from house to house, or how your backyard will change, how you envision it.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: In our lectures, when I'm talking about the big-headed pieces, I always talk about how [Ralph Waldo] Emerson used to talk about [how,] for every appearance in nature, there's a like state of mind. And I feel like when I read that after we started making the big-head pieces, that in fact, that's what our work was doing.

For example, you don't know what the word "twisted" means unless you see a tree growing up twisted. You don't just know what that means. Your vision—what you see visually informs how you understand concepts, and that's really what I believe.

And so the change in atmosphere from Pilchuck to down here on the water really changed how we saw work. And we were taking on what we see in terms of an eclipse, you know, and using that imagery from—the shapes from an eclipse helps us understand what it feels like to be eclipsed by something. And that's the kind of things we were thinking about when we were making this work.

MR. HERMAN: I'm wondering what role, because you came from Iowa, not near the ocean—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: Maybe you weren't near water—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No.

MR. HERMAN: —and Flora came from the seaside in New Hampshire.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MR. HERMAN: How that then brings different ways of how you individually look at the influence of water, or whatever it may be.

MS. MACE: After going to Iowa, it's a big ocean of wheat fields and cornfields.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. There are a lot of different kinds of ocean.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: Yeah, the wide, open spaces. It's an aesthetic that you pick up, the things that you find sensual in the environments that you live in.

MR. HERMAN: Well, it's interesting because realism always—or even surrealism, in the sense of the blown-head pieces, because they're not an exact narrative and they are abstracted. That has always seemed to play a role in your work. I'm curious, then, how you started doing the fruit.

MS. MACE: We needed a symbol; we needed a symbol of the fulfillment of life and the expected year-in-and-year-out of that symbol—what would be a symbol in everyone's life that would show the fulfillment of life and the abundance? And we were doing a sculpture that we needed a symbol that would be representative of all of that.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Although we lived in Seattle, we were at Pilchuck when we thought of making the fruit.

We had been asked to go back to Pilchuck in '88, I think, as artists-in-residence. It's the program we started. Well, they weren't having glass artists go to Pilchuck very often as the artists-in-residence, and so it was great for us to go back to Pilchuck and get to just concentrate on our work and not teach.

Well, we were on campus, and so now we're looking at nature again in a different way, and when I say "nature," I mean tree nature and being back in the woods and whatnot. And we started thinking about this idea of, as Flora alluded to, the cycle and the seasons in nature, and I wanted to make this work that symbolized this dependence on nature that we have.

And we were walking across campus, and I don't truly remember who said it, "Let's try and just blow some fruit."

MS. MACE: I think it was you, and I said, "Uh"—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And so we thought—

MS. MACE: —"how could we ever do that?"

MS. KIRKPATRICK: "We're at Pilchuck; we'll try and blow some fruit that we can fabricate into the sculpture to represent this idea of the harvest."

MR. HERMAN: These were still the—

MS. MACE: Mostly the large-headed sculpture.

MR. HERMAN: Not the glass figures. You were going to incorporate it into other sculptures?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. And so we started going into the hot shop, and, of course, we went to our friend Billy.

MS. MACE: Bill Morris. And said, Bill—because we had worked together with other artists-in-residence on trying to figure out their ideas. So we thought, Oh, God, let's go to Bill again, and maybe he can help us with this. And he said, "Sure, I'll help you do some fruit."

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So we started blowing little life-sized fruits and using glass powders as the color. Glass

powders were just kind of starting to make their way into the palette of glassblowers.

MR. HERMAN: But you had been using glass powders to fill in color for the wire figures.

MS. MACE: No. Those were all glass threads.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, they were all threads.

MS. MACE: Powders didn't exist yet.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. Powders—we were making our own powders, but we just kind of—I mean, at this point, we were just understanding that this is a way that we can color the glass differently than by using the glass rods that you're probably familiar with.

MR. HERMAN: But you never used enamel, which would have been another—I mean, it's also glass powder but in solution, but—

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But we never used that. And again, that was an application, and I didn't want to make an application, if you know what I mean. To me, there's a difference between having it be of something, rather than applying something.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, I see what you mean.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Which is interesting because being a painter, you'd think I'd want to. But I saw the three-dimension as totally different. I didn't want to make an application to it. I wanted it to come from its interior, if you know what I mean.

So it's something about the volume, that I wanted it to be what it was rather than—I don't know. There's just some way—I couldn't see it that way.

So we started making these small fruits and incorporating them into pieces with the big heads, which now instead of being white, they became clear, the heads, which abstracted them from the human one more step, so that we felt like there wasn't an identity to them. We wanted them to be unidentifiable and more—

MS. MACE: —watery.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, watery or more about—just more kind of—

MS. MACE: —ethereal.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, ethereal, more thinking. And so we made these beautiful pieces, if you will, or I thought they were beautiful, this clear glass head on its side, with maybe a black branch coming up over it.

And so we're back to using wood, not with the sort of eclipse like we were before, but in—with these trees, because we were up at Pilchuck, and then these pieces of fruit. And of course, one thing leads to another. It progressed—it's one of those examples as an artist where you start with an image that takes over. I mean, it took on a life of its own because it was so exciting to be making these realistic things.

For me, I felt like I was literally being able to take the crushed-glass powder as a painter, and I'm thinking as a two-dimensional painter, and I'm applying it to a blown form. And, I mean, I was in my—it was heaven. I got to be me doing this, in a way that I was thinking like a painter.

MS. MACE: And the way that the collaboration worked prior to this is that Joey might come up with an idea and I would have to figure it out, and I was developing equipment. I could weld, so I was making equipment so we could make bigger pieces, like rolling yokes. Then we were blowing into molds, huge plaster molds, and that hadn't really been done in glass.

So I was—and I was making these big forms, and then we'd get Bill Morris and he would go, "God, how are we going to fill this mold with glass?"

So Bill Morris was helping us develop our work, and I was trading, doing drawings for Bill. So we never paid each other. We would—the work was the most important thing, so we'd exchange ideas and information and our skills.

But doing the fruit was the first time I didn't have to fabricate something for the work. I didn't have to make a

mold for the apple, or I didn't have to—I could then be involved in the blowing and figuring out how we could go to the next scale.

MR. HERMAN: So they were all free-blown—

MS. MACE: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: —or sculpted while hot or manipulated further?

MS. MACE: Yes. And then one thing that happened at the same time is, after we started doing the fruit, Joey thought she was getting lead poisoning, because this is the time that everybody was worried about lead poisoning in the pipes and the water and paint. And we said, "God, we can't do this because we don't want to be breathing the powder."

So there was a big discussion, and Johnny Ormbrek, an artist that was working for Bill, said he thought he could make a dust booth for us. And he left and went to Eastern Washington [University], and he came back with a box with a dust filter in it. That started the whole concept of dust booths, so we could use the glass powders and not breathe them.

MR. HERMAN: How were the powders applied to the hot glass?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The powders are like having a watercolor set. You know, I've got all these pigments—

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —laid out, and all we do—it's completely untechnical; I think that's why I love it so much—is, I take a sieve from the kitchen with a handle, you know. It's got half a bowl shape made out of screen material, and they come in different sizes. I would put the glass powder in the sieve, tap it, and the colored powder would fall onto the hot-glass fruit shape as I wanted it.

So sometimes I would have three or four sieves, one inside the other, and then I'll put the powder in and it will come out in smaller amounts so I could control the colored surface on the piece.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah. So you would keep it moving to get—if you wanted to get a red—

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: —side of an apple or something.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: They'd turn to that side, and I'd knock the sieve, and the dust would come out to make the blush, let's say, and then it would start to slump, and they'd have to turn it over, because it's hot while we're doing it—

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, sure.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —it's connected to the pipe. But again, the surface quality that we were able to get was really exciting for me because it was—it was reflecting my painterly qualities.

MR. HERMAN: I'm interested in how you started out with a realistic size, and then I remember seeing that one bowl of fruit that I think George Stroemple owns. It has like a waist-high pear.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right, they're huge.

MR. HERMAN: I mean, they're just astounding pieces.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, the work, again, was about this idea of the harvest, and it was a symbol. But we clearly got interested in the fruit as its own form, and it sort of moved from the idea of it being a symbol to being itself. The best way for it to be itself, meaning a pear is a pear, is to blow it up and make it a little bit more confrontational.

We started thinking that by blowing up the different fruit forms and making them more confrontational, we were investigating form and [at] the same time celebrating something from everyday life that everybody has an experience of. And so that's what I meant when I said the idea had a life of its own. It kind of started telling us what it was about, and that's a great feeling as an artist, you know.

So this idea of working with these gigantic still lifes, where the pear was 31 or 32 inches—it was the late '80s,



where glass, you know, is getting bigger, and part of the challenge is bigger. And that doesn't mean better, I realize; everybody was making bigger work.

MR. HERMAN: To do those big pieces, were you still able to blow them or—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No.

MS. MACE: No.

MR. HERMAN: —did you have to get—

MS. MACE: Then we went back to Bill Morris again, and he helped us with the first big fruits. We also worked on the fruit for many years with a wonderful crew that included Paul DeSomma, Boyd Sugiki, Paula Stokes, Pat Davidson, Tracy Kirkpatrick, and others.

[Audio break.]

MR. HERMAN: This is Lloyd Herman interviewing Joey Kirkpatrick and Flora Mace at their studio in Seattle, Washington, on September 6, 2005, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This is session three, disc two.

We were talking about how you had progressed to making the fruit, and I remember that in addition to making very large fruit, you also did some using the canes, so that they were not at all realistic, but looked like they might have come from a Venetian studio.

MS. MACE: A friend of ours—we were living in Seattle at the time—had a studio and a glass furnace running 24 hours a day. She was going to leave town for a couple of weeks and didn't want to shut her furnace off.

MR. HERMAN: Who was this?

MS. MACE: Ann Welch.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: She had a studio down by us—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The Sunny Arms building.

MS. MACE: The Sunny Arms by Boeing Field. She was one of the first women I ever knew that totally built her own hot shop. And [she] was leaving town and she said, "You know, I don't really trust anybody to watch my studio, but if you were working there, I know that you'd take good care of it, and I'd really like for you to use my studio."

And I said, "My gosh, what a gift."

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And we didn't have a hot shop at this time.

MS. MACE: Yeah, we were—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We were living in Seattle, and so it was a big—it was a nice offer.

MS. MACE: So she offered her studio. But she said, "I have one request. If you use my studio, you can't do anything that you've ever done before."

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: And I went, "Oh, no. So I've got to really think." And I got to thinking that I had always wanted to figure out how the Venetians made their glass canes. And so I—there was a young glassblower that had worked with us off and on, a student teacher of ours at Pilchuck, which was—his name was Boyd Sugiki, a glass artist that now—he's from Hawaii, but he now lives in Seattle.

And I called Boyd up and said, "I have this chance to use a studio for a few weeks, and I can't pay you, but I think what I want to try to experiment with, I think it will be worth your time." And I told him what I wanted to do, and he agreed.

And we spent the next, I think, two and a half or three weeks figuring out how to make glass cane, having never seen it before. And by the end—we pulled over a ton of glass.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The Zanfirico cane, you should say.

MS. MACE: Yeah. Zanfirico—

MR. HERMAN: Zanfirico.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah.

MS. MACE: —meaning colored cane. And after two and a half to three weeks, we pulled over a ton of glass, because I knew that that was the only thing I had to pay for, was the glass. And by the end, we had pulled kind of our first glass colored cane, and it looked like colored cane when it was finished. We didn't even make anything; we just pulled the cane.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: And the very last day, we blew our first object with it. We didn't know how to do that and the canes all fell apart. But over the next four years, with that being the initial experimental period, Boyd got really good at making canes and did some in his own work.

And with Boyd's help, and Joey's insistence of taking this process and making it our own—because the Venetians developed the technique, and we just didn't want to borrow the technique to make more Venetian glass, but to make our fruit with the technique that we had re-explored—we again made large-scale fruits, but with Zanfirico canes. The Venetians, the only objects we had ever seen, were really making small objects.

And by the time we finished with the series, we were making pieces over 24 inches tall, with very clear cane. And we were very honored that Pino [Signoretto] and Lino from Venice couldn't believe that we could achieve the clarity. Because the Venetians were the greatest canemakers in the world, and we were able to use glass color which was not Venetian and then develop a series of work using the fruit image.

We took—to us—the color DNA of the fruits, and made the canes to replicate the DNA of the fruit that we were using. So we took all the colors that we made the realistic fruit [with] and then put them into cane form, to create the form.

MR. HERMAN: How many of those big cane pieces did you make then?

MS. MACE: Totally?

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. I don't think I've seen very many of them.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Not that many. They're very difficult to make.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: But they got really big.

MR. HERMAN: What year would this have been, then, when you did that, because I was thinking, well, both—

MS. MACE: Mid- to late '90s.

MR. HERMAN: Oh. Because Dick Marquis had been making cane and using cane, and even Fritz Dreisbach, in a much looser way.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. And that was our challenge for ourselves; we wanted to make the objects and have the integrity of the cane hold up, rather than make it [and] blow it out so much that it was so loose. That's kind of how we challenged ourselves. But—

MS. MACE: We hadn't—I hadn't personally ever seen cane made, and Dick Marquis had the option that he worked with Lino, and Lino gave him Venetian color. The color rods from Venice are what we call "hard" colors. They hold up better when being blown out.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: So he was using the Venetian color to make his pieces. But I didn't have access to the visual of how they made them.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I mean, certainly other American artists had used the Zanfirico cane. That was not unique to us in any way and I don't want to make that point at all. Many people—

MR. HERMAN: But making the cane—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —had used cane in their work. I mean, all the—a lot of the young male glassblowers made canework at that time. But again, our challenge was to make it large-scale and keep the integrity of the design of the cane and make the cane ourselves.

And we didn't make very many pieces, because it was so damn hard to make them. I mean, it took days and days of pulling cane to get enough good cane together to make one day's worth of four pieces. So, you know, it maybe took us a week to make four pieces—blown pieces—and hundreds of yards of cane once we even pulled it.

We'd look at it through a slide loupe, and if it had a little air bubble in it, we'd have to throw it out, because we wouldn't want to pick it up and have the bubbles expand. So it was really one of those projects where once we made some beautiful pieces, then we were done with the project.

And that's kind of how we like to work. I mean, people think because of our world order, which is full of photography and the Internet now and stuff—they see [our] fruit all over the place, but we didn't make a terribly large amount of fruit.

We have this sort of routine that Flora alluded to earlier, which is, we'll turn on our furnace a couple of times a year, and we don't make the fruit at all anymore, but when we did make it, we'd turn on the furnace for maybe three months in the fall and three months in the spring. And we'd spend some time making the fruit a couple of days a week maybe, and then the rest of the time we'd be making the big, clear cylinders for the paintbrush pieces or—

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —or the mini-fruit for the sculpture or whatever. So we never went in day after day after day and make anything, any one thing. And so I think that because people see pictures all over of the fruit, they think that's what we made for several years and that's the only thing we made.

MR. HERMAN: It's just that that's probably been photographed, and it's so reproduced.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Exactly. It's so reproduced and we're so well known for it.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But the cane fruit—frankly I don't even think we made it for four years. I think it was a shorter period that we actually signed them and sent them out. I mean, it took, you know, one year to learn how to make them when we didn't have any product so—

MR. HERMAN: How was that cane fruit received then?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, it's funny that Flora mentioned about the DNA. It was—I think it was received very well, but interestingly, when we made it, we never thought about showing it with what we call the "real" fruit.

Michael Monroe came from the Renwick to pick out some work for the museum, and he was the first one—I should remind him of this—who came, and he'd never seen it before, and he is the one that said, "Oh, my God, look at the cane or—it's like DNA. It's like the different colors."

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And he said, "I love it together." And so he picked out, I think, whatever, four or five pieces that mixed the real with the cane fruit. And frankly, we hadn't even thought of doing it yet. We hadn't gotten that far in our minds.

MS. MACE: We didn't dare—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Now I love to, like, put up a big, beautiful real apple next to a big cane apple, because I love the idea of it; it starts to get people to think about what kind of information they need to be provided to identify something as itself. And, you know, I'm always interested in how people are thinking.

MR. HERMAN: That's really interesting, because I think to a casual observer, particularly the realistic-size fruit bowls—I've seen glass fruit bowls before—so I was really interested when the scale, when you began to play with scale. I'm wondering what the kind of intellectual process was, whether it was irony or, you know—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It wasn't so much irony as it was kind of—it was more about—to be honest with you, this word

"confrontation." The idea—first of all, in retrospect—and again, I've said this in lectures before; I'm trying to say something different all the time.

MR. HERMAN: Well, I don't have your lectures, so it's valid.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: In retrospect, the idea of the still life has such a history in terms of art. I mean, there were still lifes on the caves, cave paintings. It is one of the most consistent art genres that ever existed—in fact, some people say the most consistent art image, because landscape painting and portraiture kind of come and go, but still life has had a phenomenal traditional history.

Now, that's not what made us make them, but once we sort of started thinking about the still life, we became aware of its significance. Also, when you think about it, it's what women were allowed to paint—

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —you know, early on. So that kind of intrigued us.

MR. HERMAN: Well, that is irony.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, that—but we only learned that in retrospect. Our thinking was, Make this confrontational, and make somebody re-look at how they see something that they see every day. My interest is to help people to see, and see things that they're used to seeing in a new way, or at least appreciating what's out there already that's free to look at.

And so it was more about reminding them of the visual world that surrounds them in an everyday way that they don't take the time to stop and look at. So that's kind of why we started blowing them up. And also we were interested in the form, the investigation of form and the—you know, again something that hadn't really been done in terms of coloring glass forms.

MS. MACE: And we moved to a new studio. We moved to the new studio, which was the Yale Street Studio, and it had a hot shop. And we had a photo shoot—and we first had a small studio, and now we were doing a photo shoot [in a large studio]. And the photos that came out of that photo shoot, people thought that our work was teeny. So we had to start making it larger than we would have, for the visual effect, to break that persona.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, but it [was] teeny, so I don't even get what you mean.

MS. MACE: It was small.

MR. HERMAN: But even the big fruit?

MS. MACE: Yeah. We started off small, and then we photographed even the large, the next size. The work looked still so small.

But then we were able to explore, because now we had a hot shop, and we really tried to make them even bigger. And then access—we had a museum show.

MR. HERMAN: Where was that?

MS. MACE: Oh, where was it?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I don't know. I've lost you there for a minute.

MS. MACE: Brunnier?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The Brunnier Museum, yeah, huge show, a huge show in 1994, I think, or '93 [*Kirkpatrick/Mace*, Brunnier Gallery and Museum, Ames, IA, 1993]. And we showed an enormous installation of fruit. I mean, it was the biggest installation we ever did. We probably showed 40 pieces of different fruit. It was huge.

But that's not why we started making it big. I just think it—I'm misunderstanding you, or I don't want to be misunderstood. That's not what made us make it big. What made us make it big—that was just the aftermath of it, you know. But we didn't think, Oh, we're going to have a show we have to make big work. Did we?

MS. MACE: I was pushing to make bigger work. She was—she was lagging behind. [They laugh.]

MR. HERMAN: Well, I'm interested whether that body of work led to commissions, or whether you had commissions prior to that. I know of one commission that included fruit, so I—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: You do? What one? Because I would have said we don't do commissions.

MR. HERMAN: Well, Joan Borenstein.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Oh, sure, sure, sure. Yeah.

MR. HERMAN: The first—I was taken to her house in Los Angeles, and I was amazed, because I've never seen you make anything functional, and then to have the stands of each one of those goblets a different fruit—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That was a fun project.

MR. HERMAN: How many pieces were there?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Forty. We're up to 40 goblets, each with a different fruit or vegetable for a stem.

MR. HERMAN: You had to do a lot of research then.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, yeah. We were able to make a greater variety of the fruits and vegetables for the goblets—we couldn't make certain fruits big because they had little weird trickles coming off of them and stuff. You know, you couldn't make them gigantic.

Making the goblets was a different and wonderful direction that, as an artist, you get to allow yourself. I mean, certainly we're not about being functional. But the fruit was so interesting to us, and again it was another way to be celebratory, and we were concentrating on this idea of being celebratory toward everyday objects. So again, the idea told us what to make, and we started making these goblets.

And then we started thinking, Okay, if somebody was going to get a set, whatever that would be, two, four, whatever, every one had to be different. And we started installing them—it grew to 40—and we started installing them on the wall on real small shelves. Like, let's say, 40 of them, there would be four shelves, one over the other, and 10 on each shelf, so that it was almost like an installation or a painting, at that point.

And so we actually showed those kind of installations; Brunnier Museum was the first place, and it was just exquisite, because it looked like sort of a three-dimensional painting, in a way. It wasn't just about being goblets, but it was also about the installation.

MR. HERMAN: So had you made those before you were in Ann Welch's studio, because I think of the martini glasses she became known for with animal skulls.

MS. MACE: Yes, we had made the goblets before, working at Ann's studio. We never—did we even send any out to galleries?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: A teeny bit, but then we immediately learned that was a mistake.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MR. HERMAN: Because people would buy those and want more of them probably, and then you'd be in production.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And we just had no interest in producing them. And also, you know, they were finicky.

MS. MACE: We had made them. I was probably more of a glassblower, and I thought, God, to really be a glassblower you need to make a goblet. When we were doing the fruit, I thought, God, if we could put the fruit in the stem, it would be a crossover.

MR. HERMAN: So you had already done that before Joan Borenstein—

MS. MACE: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: —asked you to—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. She had seen a few.

MS. MACE: We did 12; we did 12 different fruits or vegetables, I don't know.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I actually—I'm glad you're jogging my memory, Lloyd, because I think it was Joan—it was Joan, who we've lost contact with. I'd love to talk to her.

MS. MACE: It was her that got us to do them.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And she said, "I want 30 of them." And we said, "Oh, good. Well, we'll just make three of the sets that we've made before." And she said, "No, uh-uh. I don't want you to make any repeats." I believe it was her challenge.

MS. MACE: It was; it was her. Oh, it was her. And we just died. It was like, Oh, God, we don't want to think about this goblet thing.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Oh, it was so much fun. It was really a fun project, and now I can think of three people in the States who have a set of—now we're up to 44. We don't make them at all anymore, but as we—if somebody got them, like Joan, then she just said, "If you create new ones, then just keep sending them to me." So we did that for a while.

MS. MACE: Well, you know, like the coffee companies here in Seattle caught wind that we were doing them and then they needed a couple. And, you know, this guy in Texas who was one of the largest garlic growers in the—

MR. HERMAN: —wanted a garlic clove.

MS. MACE: Garlic. And, you know, people would ask us to do one, and it was like—you just don't go to a book and figure—you've got to really think about it. What glass technique will give you a surface that will look like—or what colors will add—

MR. HERMAN: A lot of work for a small thing. How did you even go about pricing those, because it would be as intense as a big piece.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It was hard to get people to understand that. You obviously do. I would say, you know, the goblets are as much work or more than one big piece of fruit.

MR. HERMAN: Because you're working on a really small scale, too.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: You're working very small, very finicky. You have a lot less time to affect the glass between reheats, because the smaller it is, the faster it cools down. I mean, a big old pear you can actually work on it for a couple of minutes out there in space without it cooling down too fast and exploding.

[END TAPE 2 SIDE A.]

A little goblet that's this small, you've got about, you know, 18 seconds before you have to reheat it. And so they were always much more difficult. And what we would do is, people would want them, and we would just start a list, and then maybe once a year we would say, Okay, we're going to make goblets now.

But the last 40 we made for a lovely woman here in Seattle. We doled out her 40 over like a two-and-a-half year period, and she was just very patient.

MR. HERMAN: So was that the only thing that you would consider was a commission, the Joan Borenstein challenge?

MS. MACE: It was a Joan Borenstein challenge. She didn't know if we'd come up with it, and she didn't know if it would be what it would be.

MR. HERMAN: But you've never been interested in commissions?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It's not our thing so much.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I mean, I always say, I just like people to come in, like it, and get it. It's a lot less trouble. Part of it is that we're introverts. We don't go out after commissions. And it's much more our nature to make something we love.

MR. HERMAN: Well, if you don't have to deal with a client and their—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It's much easier.

MR. HERMAN: —requirements and—I mean, it's probably enough to deal with a gallery and what they want or don't want.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right, right.

MR. HERMAN: It's interesting, though, those goblets will probably eventually get you not only—because you're already in contemporary art or sculpture departments in museums—that gets you into the decorative arts department too.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MS. MACE: Yes.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, and also we just won this award in Seattle called the Seattle Design Award, given by *Seattle Art and Homes* magazine [Design Achievement Award, *Seattle Homes & Lifestyles*].

MR. HERMAN: Oh, really?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: The [Seattle] Design Center gives it out every year, and five people got it. One was a designer; one was a landscape designer; one was an architect; one was a sculptor; and one was us. And I looked at Flora and I said, "What did we design?" And you reminded me that maybe we were supposed to give this little slide show. I'm going to show the goblets. That will at least reference their world of design.

MR. HERMAN: From the fruit, the next body of work I know were the bird tablets or bird pages. Was there anything in between? I mean, that seems like kind of an abrupt shift from flora to fauna.

MS. MACE: When we moved—but actually, when we moved to this studio here, this new studio, we moved in the year 2000, and before we moved to this studio, we knew that the renovation was going to be extensive here and that we needed to make parts for work because we wouldn't have a hot shop.

So we prepared for the move by making objects that we could develop into our sculptures, and we realized that moving was a great time to stop making the fruit.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But also don't forget that we never just made the fruit, you know. So even when we were making fruit, we were making sculpture. We were always making the wood-and-glass sculptures. The fruit was—

MR. HERMAN: No, I didn't realize that. I was thinking one ended and the other began.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No, never.

MS. MACE: We were always experimenting. I was always experimenting, trying to pull off the sculptures that she had done the drawings for maybe a year earlier.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: You know, we were always making—since we've been making the fruit, we've been making large-scale figurative wood-and-glass sculpture, always. And the fruit was probably, in terms of if you wanted to count the time put into it, much less time in any given year than for the sculpture. It's just that in some ways, people aren't as aware of it, because once again, the sculpture was shown more in a museum context and shows at Don Foster's. We might show one bowl of fruit, and then the rest would have been wood-and-glass sculptures.

So we started making the fruit in the very early '90s, and then we stopped making it in 2000. But we didn't make it every year or every season. We made a lot of the larger-scale figurative work, and we went through a period of using huge limbs as figures.

MR. HERMAN: You used what figures?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Limbs of trees—

MR. HERMAN: Limbs of trees, yes.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —as over-life-sized figurative work with the fruit in it, little fruit, some of it. And then we started making a body of work where the figure wasn't solid anymore. It was made out of steam-bent wood, the torso pieces.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, like a basket structure, it was open.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes. And those were figurative still, and sometimes they were filled with glass objects like fruit, white fruit or blue fruit representing water, and whatnot. And so we were in this discussion in the work

about the figure becoming nature, rather than the figure in nature.

Our work over the years, over the 20-year period, sort of went through—and this is always a difficult thing to explain as an artist, because you're so cryptic when you speak this way. It sounds like you're simplifying your work too much. But the work was about the figure in nature, and then it was about the figure, contemplatively thinking about nature and how natural events sort of work, states of mind.

And then we started making work that the figure was actually made out of a limb of a tree, and our questions were concerning whether the figure was nature. So the figure was represented by a tree limb with a big glass head at the top, and it had green leaves coming out of it, glass leaves. I don't know if you remember that body of work. So—

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. No, I remember that. Well, that's where I was thinking I had seen the first fruit as a piece of fruit with glass leaves.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And that's when you did, yeah. That's when you did.

MS. MACE: So we have always done the sculpture along with the totally glass, except for the very first four years that we worked. The first four years we worked, Joey worked on paper, and we made glass vessels with wire drawings on them. After that point, there was always glass and sculpture going on at the same time, right through now.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And when we started making the hollow torsos, which was probably in maybe '95, we slowly began thinking about the work being more gender related. Up until this point, all the figurative work and figures had been very androgynous. It was just "the figure," in nature. And for some reason when we started making them hollow and putting things in them, either big blown-bottle shapes—you might remember—or fruit, we started thinking of them as figure vessels, and we started thinking of them much more as female figures.

MR. HERMAN: Because it was more like a pregnancy or something?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. Or that whole idea of, you know, the female as a vessel and it's—you know, what's inside—the carrier. And we started looking at it as gender related, and it made us kind of go off on this sort of research project for me. I did a lot of reading about the idea of what's historically considered women's work, and we started thinking about that. What was our history, our personal culture as women? Certainly what we do is not traditionally women's work. But we wanted to investigate it from a historical point of view, all the way going back to the women who invented horticulture.

And I did a lot of research on those types of things. And what it allowed us to do was start picking imagery from the domestic world, which was very different for us. We had always picked our imagery from the natural world. You would see the figures with fruit, the figures with leaves, the figure with, you know, wood, trees. Now we were having the figure held up by a stool from the domestic world—

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —or buckets. So we were now trying to allude to the fact that we were not being held up by nature or supported by nature only, its cycles and seasons, as we've discussed, but by our domestic lives, and that we're sort of thinking that we are self-sustaining in this way. And so lots of that kind of thought went into it.

MS. MACE: And that the image of the fruit at this time, then we might have been doing a body of colored realistic fruit, but there was another part of the fruit that was totally white or totally blue.

MR. HERMAN: That became part of these—

MS. MACE: —sculptures.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: Or we started doing bottles, so glass took on another element, back to the symbol in the sculpture.

MR. HERMAN: One body of work that doesn't seem to relate to the natural world is the big paintbrushes—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: —and glasses.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's right.



MR. HERMAN: I'd like to talk about that body of work and the whole emphasis of birds, and then maybe talk a little bit about how your visual interests and collections also kind of—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's a good idea.

MR. HERMAN: —respond to what you make.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, when we moved here, as Flora mentioned just a bit earlier, we had to renovate the studio and build a hot shop. And so a lot of my creative output was simply delegated to drawing in notebooks, and writing and reading.

And one of the things that I started thinking about—and I'm not sure which came first, the drawing or the thinking, and one never knows; I try not to know the answer, because I don't want it to stop—but I had this drawing in my notebook of this big paintbrush stuck in its vessel, and I started thinking about how that image is such a good metaphor for the creative act.

And I was feeling like I wasn't being creative, so I was very frustrated, and that's probably why I was doing those drawings. And that drawing led to the idea of, Gosh, you know what? Let's make this as a symbol for the creative act, because we aren't being creative right now.

And so in a way it might seem out of sequence to our work, but I will say that we had this women's work series. Because we had brought in so many items from the domestic everyday life, like whisk brooms and stools and the little wooden toys and those wooden spools. The paintbrush didn't seem so different from that, something from everyday life that's an expressive thing.

MS. MACE: And women were only really allowed to paint, as a fine art. That's the only thing they were relegated to.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So we felt like it was a series that was very interesting for us. And we had these large, clear cylinders blown, and then we'd blow the colored inserts—what we call the inserts—which replicates the paint.

And it was enormously satisfying and sort of a challenge to try and blow glass to make it look like it was liquid, like how the brush enters the paint and how it drips off of it.

And so then we started thinking about, well, the intention of being creative, because it's in the middle of the act of taking the paint out. And so that's kind of what our thinking was. So much of our work is about metaphor, and it's about setting up a visual image that represents not only what it is, you know, a paintbrush, but the idea of just being creative or the intention of being creative.

And it seemed like the perfect series to move into a new studio with, which is really the first thing that came out of being at this studio. However, and sorry if I'm talking too much, Flo, but also when we left the old studio and we had our last fruit blow—I think it was in 1999—but I had had this little idea that I asked Flora if she would do, right before we left that studio. I said, I want to make these little glasses with bird images on them. I didn't even know what they were for. They were more for a personal use, because I had been getting really interested in birds from a lot of different points of view. One is watching birds; one is reading about birds; one is the literary metaphor of birds in poetry and stuff. And I had started collecting bird books. And our collections do really affect our work.

MS. MACE: And many times through the whole transition of our careers together, there's always been what we're working on, what we're experimenting with, and what we're thinking about.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right. What you see is not the whole picture of what's happening in our studio, if you see what I mean.

MR. HERMAN: No, no.

MS. MACE: And maybe that's why we never had a lot of people working for us, because we were always at three places at once, and we never knew if any one area was going to develop very far.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So what happened was, we spent about, I don't know, very few days making these little bird glasses—

MS. MACE: An afternoon. Two afternoons.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —that I wanted to give away to my sister.

MR. HERMAN: Bird glasses. So they were tumblers?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, just little tumblers, like Flora is going to show you here. Very simple, very primitive.

And then we shut the furnace off at our old studio, and we didn't have a furnace for a year and a half, or at least a year. And so this idea brewed in my head.

So I started painting and drawing birds on paper, and I got more involved in collecting books, and I started, as I always do, reading about my ideas, which is, I started reading about the history of ornithology, and I got really involved in it, as a culture. I'm really interested now in the culture of ornithology and how that came about in people's lives and how it's one of the few sciences that laymen get to participate in, because they used to go out and get the skins and stuff. We'd always come back to the everyday in our work and sort of how the layman can have, you know—

MS. MACE: —input.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah.

MS. MACE: Input into the thing, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And so because we didn't have the hot shop, I was drawing and painting more. And we had these paintings and we started thinking about, you know, oh, what I'm painting from real life. We're moved onto the canal, we see birds, but I'm also collecting books and looking at illustrations, looking at field guides, and I got really involved and interested in the concept of the field guide, and naming things, and how our culture—going back to that Emerson quote—sees something and has to name it. You know, as humans we feel like we have to name things to understand them.

So I thought, Well, this is the first perfect culture in which I can choose to illustrate this idea, that as humans we feel like we have to name things. And so I talked to Flora: How about this? How about if we do these bird drawings on—the first ones we did were glass vessels and we actually write the word "bird" on the vessel. We're not trying to teach people really what the redheaded woodpecker looks like as much as we're trying to show people how, when they view the piece, their mind works in such a way that they identify the piece and read the word.

I liked that moment. That was a moment I was after.

MR. HERMAN: Well, and it makes them more than mere decoration.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MS. MACE: And we tried to put them into our sculpture. So we did a stump—not a stump but a tree branch—and then I made a little platform for the vessel to sit on.

MR. HERMAN: Oh. So the bird would be sitting in a tree.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And also I have to say that we did do a couple of pieces in the mid-'80s with those big heads on their sides and trees; we cut clear little bird shapes out of flat glass, and on them I painted the bird image, using glass enamels. Then we kiln-fired them.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: So we had had a previous interest in using bird imagery in our work. I mean, birds had been in about four or five of our pieces previously.

MR. HERMAN: Had you been birders before you put that in?

MS. MACE: Joey especially, coming from Iowa.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, what does that have to do with it?

MS. MACE: Well, it's a migratory flyway. I mean, it was just—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It sounded like an Iowa putdown, didn't you think?

[They laugh.]

MS. MACE: Well, you know, her family was all into birds. When we moved the studio, really, this studio being right on the water, the birds and ducks that migrated from Alaska that landed on this canal right outside our studio, Joey would run down to the canal and do these great sketches and bring them back and go, "God, you

won't believe what I just saw." Instead of bringing me down, she brought the drawing back.

MR. HERMAN: But you always did drawings. Did you ever take photographs and then work from photographs?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No.

MR. HERMAN: Always sketches?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No, always sketches. And I work from photographs in books, too. But I was a casual birder. I loved the idea of birds. I wasn't one of those people that went out with binoculars.

MR. HERMAN: Check off each species as you see them.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But now I have my binoculars. I never go anywhere without them, but I'm not like a lister. I'm more interested in the culture of it, and I love to see birds. I mean, I do love to see new birds. I added a tremendous amount of birds this summer in Iowa, because I spent so much time there, that I'd never seen before.

And so we made the vessels and we made beaked shapes. You know, they looked like pitchers. We never considered them functional and we never considered them pitchers, but we considered them almost like winged, beaked vessels.

MR. HERMAN: Well, I think I saw those in the Habatat show, didn't I?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: Didn't you have those there?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yes. And we had one—

MR. HERMAN: Those were the first bird pieces I saw.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And we had one big installation of those first pieces at Habatat on wall shelves. We always show them on a wall because I want to replicate the idea of a picture almost, not a pitcher, but a picture.

And then, of course, as things evolved, we decided we wanted the pieces to be flat, so they were more like a page out of a field guide.

And so Flora, in her genius, once again figured out something that's never been done before, which is almost printmaking in glass. First I lay out the glass powder on a metal plate and—which takes hours. You know, an owl, a big old owl, could take me 18 hours of just sitting there with my razor blades and my little tiny sieves and laying down the powder. And then Flora had to figure out, Well, how are we going to pick that up on a piece of flat glass that's only three-quarters-inch thick?

And so she designed a whole—what would you call it?

MS. MACE: A mechanism to hold and flip the glass.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That holds the glass.

MS. MACE: So we can register the page on her powder drawings. And this took—so when we were blowing the vessels, I was trying to figure out how we—when you blow a vessel—we ran into the same problems that we did 20 years ago. The image that we were using, as you blew it, it creates a jizz to the character, whether it was a figure or an image, or now we're dealing with a bird. The glass is like a third collaborator.

When we blew the birds, they took on a persona that they were a little bit more gestural. They were—they capture the jizz, but blowing the glass alters the image. And what we were trying to do is do a field guide. So we were capturing the field guide on the vessels, but it wasn't quite the character that we wanted.

MR. HERMAN: So the pages, the flat panels did that.

MS. MACE: The flat panels—yes, the flat pages evolved. And so developing a mechanism to be able to register Joey's powder drawings within the liquid glass and keeping the image as defined as possible.

MR. HERMAN: Now is that series continuing, because that's the most current—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We did a—

MS. MACE: —commission. Well, I won't say it was a commission. We did a series—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —not—well, it was kind of a commission. We were doing a series of them that turned into a commission. We've done different sizes of them, but the biggest size we just finished. They're like 17 inches tall by 12 inches or something. And we've just finished 60 of them—

MR. HERMAN: Wow.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —that are going to go together as a group and travel together. We're working on a traveling show with—George Stroemple is working with us on this.

So they're continuing, as long as we have more birds we want to make, although we only want to do one image of each bird.

In the meantime, we've also been working on the steam-bent wood drawings, which we call the Woodland Drawings.

MR. HERMAN: Oh. So you're not devoting full energy to that?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: No. Our most current thing is that—and it's been a blessing in a way, because I've been out of the studio so much with my mother's illness—we've been transcribing these steam-bent wood drawings, that we call Woodland Drawings, that Flora makes off of my drawings, that are flat, into bronze. And so now we're doing outdoor bronze pieces.

MR. HERMAN: I have seen them, but your describing them is helpful, I think, on the disc, because they really—they look like twig drawings, very, very precise, more precise than you're able to get, because you can have sharper edges and points.

But I'm curious. Going into bronze, then, are you beginning to think in terms of edition pieces that galleries can have?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Actually, we just did a small edition of two of the birds. We're just finishing up. It's a small edition of seven. We've never done an edition before. The first bronze pieces we did, which were very large-scale—the spheres—were just one piece.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, oh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And so this was an idea that we had to, you know, try an edition, and we'll see. I mean, there's been a tremendous amount of interest in it.

MR. HERMAN: Where do you see your work heading now? What other new things are you exploring here in 2005?

[Silence.]

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Both of us want to hear what the other one has to say before we answer. I'm not going to say a word.

MS. MACE: I'm not sure. One small idea will grow out of a very small concept, out of a piece that you're working on.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: You know, what's so interesting about being an artist is when we look back, on one hand, ideas take a long time, but anytime we look back, the germ of the idea took just a few seconds. But that few seconds of inspiration doesn't come without the hours and hours in between, working through drawings, building, woodworking, research, and thinking.

MS. MACE: It is the seed.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —of work that grew out of like a five-minute conversation. And we never know what that five-minute conversation—which one is going to hook.

MS. MACE: Germinate.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But, you know, one of the big projects we're working on right now is a book on our 25 years of collaboration—or 27 years now, and that's—

MR. HERMAN: That about your sister's writing?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: My sister is writing for it; Mark Doty is writing for it; and the curator from the Lewis and Clark [College, Portland, OR] museum [Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art], Linda Tesner, is writing for it. So that unfortunately, as an artist, it takes a—it actually takes a heck of a lot of time, you know?

And so that's been a large part of what we've done currently, but I think that bronze is a direction that we both have an interest in pursuing. Many people have asked us, Can we put these big sculptures of yours outdoors? And of course, you can't; they're wood. And so I'm pretty sure that our excitement about it is going to translate into more of the pieces. And so I think the bronze work is a big part of our future.

MS. MACE: Yeah. Research and development on any three-dimensional idea takes a long time.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: You can have a great idea in paper and pencil, or in your head, but when it comes to the reality of executing, you have three things against you—finances, housing, and galleries' acceptance. And trying to pull all three things together sometimes is tough.

MR. HERMAN: I would think that going into bronze will be a very great change from the kind of hands-on approach that you both have had. It's almost—well, it is, in fact, like having a production line, because once you've done the initial creative work, it's really then out of your hands and they're casting it and—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Except for this factor, which is that because we're replicating in the bronze, like a piece of wood, the patinaing is very specific. It's not just a spray patina or—

MR. HERMAN: No. But will you do that?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Flora goes over and works with the foundry to help with the final patina.

MS. MACE: We have our work done at Walla Walla Foundry, and what's been really interesting—Walla Wall Foundry started their foundry about the same time Joey and I started working together, 25 years ago. They're excellent at what they do, and do 99 percent contemporary artists. They don't do cowboy art, or turn-of-the-century art.

MR. HERMAN: I know major American artists have their work cast at Walla Walla.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MS. MACE: But what's been interesting is that I used to do bronze; when I was in graduate school, I did bronze, and really enjoyed the bronze. But I had to—the bronze foundry was in the same room that we built the hot shop in.

MR. HERMAN: Oh.

MS. MACE: It was in the ground.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: So I have done some bronze, and now to find a foundry that's in Washington State that does incredible work—I've gone over there and worked with the masters in the foundry, and worked on the patinas, and it's been quite interesting, because many of the workers there are very surprised that I'm so hands-on.

MR. HERMAN: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Because a lot of the artists whose work they cast [have] probably never even see it.

MS. MACE: No. And there's probably something to be said for the amount of time that an artist does or doesn't touch the piece, but I really enjoy working with those masters. I learn from them and them hopefully from me. And it's an exciting community, and we were going to discuss a community.

But for me, working with other great artisans, you know, working with Bill Morris over the years, or Ben Moore, or Dale Chihuly, or Italo, and the young glass artists that have come and worked with us and helped us with our work, it was always twofold. The young artists that worked with us, we always encouraged them to do their own work and really pushed them, which, in a way, shot us in the foot because we knew that they were always going to go and do their own work. But you know, Boyd Sugiki, and Paul DeSomma, and Kathy Gray, and Nancy Callan, and—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Paula.

MS. MACE: —Paula Stokes, there have been artists that have come and worked with us that are now young professional artists doing their own work, and we're just really lucky to have run into them.

MR. HERMAN: Well, in a sense, it's the same sort of opportunity Dale Chihuly gave you, and nurturing you as young artists.

MS. MACE: Absolutely. And saw what we had, and encouraged us to keep doing our work.

MR. HERMAN: Do you think that this sense of community is unique to Seattle because there are so many glass artists, or do you have friends who are artists in other fields that you also get something from?

MS. MACE: I think that it's unique here, because Pilchuck has set up this opportunity for artists from all the nations of the world to work together and to share their ideas and techniques and philosophies, and then everyone leaves and goes to their respective studios. And most of the young or mid-career artists that live here in Seattle have gone through that schooling, where you go and you work and you work with each other, and then you go and you do your own work. So it's been a back and forth.

MR. HERMAN: But do you feel that you're more a part of an international tradition than purely an American one?

MS. MACE: I think it's twofold. I think that the Europeans have come here and realized that their personal integrity is really valuable outside their companies, and many of those artists—even Bertil [Vallien], and Ann Wolff, and Ulrica [Hydman-]Vallien, and Lino—all these artists were with companies, and did work for the company and only for the company, and then having come to Pilchuck, or the Northwest, and working with young artists, realized how valuable the personal integrity of their work was, and started showing here in the United States, and gave them enough backbone to do their own work. Many of them still work in the companies, but take a certain amount of time per year to do their own work, where many of the young artists that live here in Northwest work with each other, but always take time to do their own work.

It's a great community here, in that if you need to do something, and you have an idea to do something, there's someone here that wants to explore that avenue also.

MR. HERMAN: And is generous enough to help you with it.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right, right.

MS. MACE: Yes.

MR. HERMAN: —which is one of the things we were talking about off disc, is the whole idea of sharing, which artists in other disciplines don't necessarily do.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Not as much. However, I do think that our commitment to our work is not just informed by—it certainly—you know, my artist friends are actually not—

MS. MACE: —glass workers.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, they're not glass workers.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I mean they're in other fields. I have a large connection to my sister, who lives in the Midwest, who's a writer, and so a lot of my friends are writers. They're novelists; they're poets. That's why I was so interested in having Mark Doty write for our book, because of my interest in writing, and words.

So I think—you know, I have dear friends in the glass community as friends, and certainly have helped me, and I hope that I've helped them, but on a day-to-day basis we're reclusive enough, and people are busy enough, that I think other outsiders would be surprised at how little interaction between the different artists you have in your own field. I mean, we're all busy doing our work and focused on it.

So I feel like my connection to glass, in answer to your question, is not international. I came into it in the contemporary glass movement, although I feel sort of at the borders of it because I'm not a great glassblower. It's not where I find myself, if you know what I mean.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah. What role, if any, do—I mean, we're talking about gender issues, being a woman—what about race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, play in your work?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: You know—

MR. HERMAN: Spirituality.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: It's going to sound corny, but we don't think about those things specifically in our work. My spirituality is when I go out in nature. That's where I find it, and that's—

MR. HERMAN: But that's an authentic spirituality.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah. And that's where I seek, you know, my muse, if you know what I mean.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And I think that the other things are just not consciously put into our work. How we live our lives can express how, you know, where we're at with those things, but it's certainly not a conscious thing in terms of our work. I just think your politics are how you live, rather than what you say about being political, if you know what I mean.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We express our politics through—

MR. HERMAN: By example.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, yeah.

MR. HERMAN: No, I think that that's true.

I think probably a question that's often asked, because you live and work together, and I would think if you had disagreements at work or at home that it would carry over, but yet, when I've been around you, I never sense any friction at all. Spending that much time together, does that have any negative—I mean, do you need to get away from each other to sketch, to develop things?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, I'm glad you asked that question, because I do think people think we're together an enormous amount of time, but we're really good at being alone when we're together. We both always have our own private space. I mean, this is basically my painting studio. Now this is not to say Flora doesn't come up here; we don't do things together up here, but often I'm up here drawing by myself, and she has her welding area.

MR. HERMAN: And you respect each other's own need to have that time.

MS. MACE: Respect, I think, is the key word everywhere, and we don't agree on everything, at all.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. MACE: But we try to negotiate the true meaning of what we're trying to get across, and in our work sometimes it's maybe like a poet. You kind of skinny the idea—you have this big idea, and then you go back and forth, and you bring down the essence of what you're trying to say.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And I think that we try to make the work more important than we are, and that may sound funny, but in terms of decision-making about the work when we might not agree, we have to—I try to say to myself, and this is not to say we don't have our arguments, but I try to say to myself, What I want isn't as important as what's good for the work, so that I can let it go if I can see that my wish is isn't as good of an idea as hers, because it's what it does to the work that's most important.

MR. HERMAN: That's important.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's sort of how we both think. But certainly we don't agree on everything and we have our battles. But the truth is, I think Flora is an amazing artist, and I just so much respect what she does, and it's easy to say that, because, again, our realms within what we do together are so different that we don't really step on each other's toes, because I don't try to be a welder.

MR. HERMAN: So you really are complementary rather than competing.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Yeah, I think that that's—the only time we compete is when we talk, and that's about it.

MR. HERMAN: How would you describe the quality of your work environment?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: What—

MR. HERMAN: Well, I guess whether—it sounds like because you each have your separate space that it would be a quiet, contemplative environment, part of the time, and yet if you're involved in a blow, that's an intense time.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well—

MS. MACE: I think what I want to say right now is that, because Joey and I run our whole business, there are just two of us, that if we can squeak out any part of the day that is smooth, it almost seems like a miracle. There is—there is deliveries, scheduling, crating, making work, trying to come up with new work, interviews. I mean, we should have other people do it, but we just never have.

So there's always things that you're dealing with. And so whether it's early in the morning that you try to be creative or later at night, it's an ebb and flow all through the day.

The studio that we're in is absolutely an incredible environment that we've been able to create here, because we have a couple of different work areas and we have an office, so we don't have to always—even though we know it's there, we don't have to go through it all the time.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And we balance that. I mean, you're so right, Lloyd, about the intensity. We balance the intensity by not having our furnace on all the time. We know not to have—

MR. HERMAN: There's not that pressure.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And people will say, Why don't you rent out your studio? Again, we just try not to have too many people around us, so that those moments that Flora is referring to, where we have an open moment, there's not somebody here that's staring us in the face, waiting to be told what to do.

And I just prefer to think alone, and so, you know, Flora knows, when we turn the furnace on, I'm always moody at the beginning because I know there's going to be an influx of people.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I love all the people, but I don't like the chaos. But again, we're both really good at finding our little space within the chaos, by having the separate spaces or, you know, by having us each have our jobs within the big job.

MR. HERMAN: Do you feel that there's an element of play in your work? And I guess my related question is: What do you do for recreation and play, because it sounds like you're working all the time?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think that Flora would say we don't have a delineation as much as we should. We play well; I do think that; we just don't play a lot. But our interests are so overlapped in what we look at in the world and what we try and make.

I mean, we love to be on the water. So much of our work makes references to water, for example.

MR. HERMAN: And you have boats, I remember reading.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We have boats. We have a large boat collection. We probably have, I don't know, six boats right now. They're not huge. We used to have a beautiful 30-foot 1919 Salon boat, wood, beautiful. It burned down a couple of years ago at that Lake Union fire. But we're—we have a lot of vessels.

We used to make sculptures where we'd cut a boat shape out, a four-foot boat shape out, and put it on a figure's head. So one thing informs another, and I don't really see when one stops and where one begins.

MR. HERMAN: A division between.

MS. MACE: Yeah, the passion of one carries over to the other. I always wanted to—when I was a kid, my dad built that little boat that I thought was just amazing, and so [as] an adult, I always wanted to build a boat, and then had a chance to. And the things that I learned in building that small boat—I learned to steam-bend; I learned to put wood together. I used fiberglass, different materials. That really helped inform our sculptures, and used some of the same materials and structures that I learned on repairing or making some of our old boats.

So I look maybe at taking a class to do aluminum casting, or a boat-building class, or fiberglass class; even though it's one thing, it always seems to carry over to another. So I might say, God, it would be really



interesting to do this, but it almost always comes back to the work.

MR. HERMAN: Oh, yeah. Powerful influences? I think you've talked about some of them, certainly Dale has been. Are there others that have—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And Italo.

MR. HERMAN: Italo, yeah. I would think because he's one of the artists who has combined glass with other materials—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: —that he would be very closely related—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We worked with him and he was a very informed person, which I was attracted to. He read a lot. He knew a lot about art in general, and so we had a kind of rapport, and a communication, where we got to go outside of glass and Pilchuck and all of that. We'd send books back and forth to each other of our favorite artists. So he was a huge mentor, and we miss him very much.

MR. HERMAN: How do you feel American art involving glass ranks on an international scale? A lot of artists have come through Pilchuck and probably—well, and this is a related question: What is the role of periodicals, and the exchange of information you get, apart from the people you've met at Pilchuck and those whose work you've seen in galleries?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Well, the first question, I think, that you're alluding to, like the artists-in-residence that have come, like, let's say, Judy Pfaff and—

MR. HERMAN: That would be part of it, yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —how others use their knowledge of glass.

MR. HERMAN: Well, I'm really thinking, really more than that, about glass art specifically on a world basis, and how you feel American work competes, and how you feel about it as a medium for personal expression.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: I think that glass is an excellent medium for personal expression. Truthfully, I think that the glass arts—you know, your question changed.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah, it is that.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Glass art really doesn't have an international view. I really don't think it does. I think it's still a small pond, I really do. It's changing. I think that the use of glass by international artists who have the visibility, like those that we've mentioned so many times already—Judy and everybody; Kiki Smith; Maya Lin came to Pilchuck and had two huge installations, a museum show that was traveling around the country—I think it is changing, but I think that when you're in it, you think it's changing more than really it is if you're out of it. I don't think it, still, has the visibility that any of us would like it to have.

MS. MACE: And I think that there is a lot happening in many countries, but the idea of finances and being able to carry off projects, you know, carry out projects and then have the visibility for other people to see them—so periodicals are important, but I think nowadays, websites and all that—it's changing so radically now. There's so many really good people that were never heard—people didn't even hear about them because they didn't have any exposure.

MR. HERMAN: Well, just as when you were starting out, you didn't know about a lot of people working glass, now I think the available information about what's going on must be really a very great change, particularly for young artists coming up today.

MS. MACE: Oh, God, yeah. I mean—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: In the meantime, there's so many more that it just makes it equally hard to be aware of them even if you could be.

[END TAPE 2 SIDE B.]

MR. HERMAN: I haven't talked about teaching and travel, and how that's been good or informed you. You've been artists-in-residence a lot of places, and have taught workshops and given lectures.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We haven't—we did at the beginning of our collaborative careers a lot. We traveled so much

in the '80s—we'd go to Europe for one thing, and come back and teach at Haystack for two weeks, and then go back to Europe—that in the last 10 years, we've traveled less.

MS. MACE: We did travel a lot.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And we learned a lot, and we traveled with Dale and Billy a lot, which was wonderful, and it exposed us to a tremendous amount of things. I'd say now we suffer from not traveling enough, because our careers have been so ever-present. We taught for 14 years, I think, straight at Pilchuck, and then just found that, given the intensity of our career, if we did take time away from the studio, we didn't want it to be more of the same, if you know what I mean. We wanted to be free to go out on the boat on the water.

MR. HERMAN: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We certainly travel within the United States, but we haven't gone to Europe for several years. We went over to the *Chihuly Over Venice*, and we were part of that show at the museum [Venezia Aperto Vetro, Museo Correr, Venice, 1996] there.

MR. HERMAN: Right.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But teaching was extremely important for who we met, and if we were as isolated then as we keep ourselves in the studio now, I think it would have been—

MS. MACE: —detrimental.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: —detrimental, because we were emerging as artists, and we were learning about ourselves as artists and whatnot. But now I just think that, being that we're older and that we're further in our careers, your career takes a lot more time, and we barely see Billy. We talked to him on the phone this week and he's great, but, you know, we're almost too busy to have that anymore, and it's too bad. I mean, we miss it.

But I think that it was more important that we did it in our formative years—

MR. HERMAN: Are you active in Glass Art Society or other organizations or memberships?

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Not at all.

MR. HERMAN: Members? No.

MS. MACE: Yeah, we're members of lots of museums and—

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But not glass organizations.

MS. MACE: No. Uh-uh.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: We're not—I'm not a joiner personally. I shouldn't say that to you. I mean, you belong to everything.

MR. HERMAN: Well, no, I don't. But where do you see—I guess you've already said you don't know where your work is going—the future—as you begin to get older, and may find it more difficult to lift a heavy gather of glass.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: That's a really good question, and we've been talking about that lately.

MS. MACE: We did also—about 10 years ago, I knew that we wanted to really do that big fruit, and the big other sculptures, and I realized that it's really important to get some younger people that really—that's what they wanted to do. We would be in it as much as we could, but it was the idea that was the most important. It didn't matter who—

MR. HERMAN: Who did it.

MS. MACE: Yeah.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: And now we look to Lino as a mentor there. He's still hefting his work, and I don't know how old he is. But I think that we all can work harder longer than we thought we could, but there certainly is—every time we turn the furnace on each year—this fall, it's like we look at each other and go, you know, It's tough; it is harder. And we do talk to our friends about it.

MS. MACE: Yeah. If any of us worked 300 days a year doing the same physical thing, you stay in pretty good shape, but when you do one thing for one period and then another thing for another period. Lino is working—

MR. HERMAN: Always.

MS. MACE: He always seems to be physically doing the same thing. So a glass worker stays in shape for doing glass by doing glass.

MR. HERMAN: Because he's in training constantly.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: Right.

MR. HERMAN: You don't have to—

MS. MACE: Totally in training.

MS. KIRKPATRICK: But, you know, look at our work. We're about expressing ourselves, and we've found a lot of different ways to do it. If we can't do glass, we'll paint. If we can't paint, we'll—that part doesn't worry me. It's just that sometimes—I love these bird pages, and I want to do one more session of them, and can we do it? Yeah, I think we can, but if we did it in 10 years, I don't think we could.

So you just find a way to express yourself, and that's why I think it's so important to not define yourself as a glass artist, or a bronze artist, or whatever. If you truly want to express yourself, you have to be open to any material, and I think then you don't have a problem.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]