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Oral history interview with David McKee,
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a digitally recorded interview with David McKee on 2009 June 30. The interview took place at the McKee Gallery in New York, N.Y., and was conducted by Kathy Goncharov for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Funding for this interview was provided by a grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Interview

KATHY GONCHAROV: We're interviewing David McKee in his gallery on Fifth Avenue at Fifty-seventh Street.

So, David, where were you born, and how did you get into the art business?

DAVID MCKEE: I was born in western England in 1937, and grew up in the Lake District, which is very beautiful part of England, with a landscape that has somewhat affected the way I see things ever since. And probably from a very early age I had a romantic notion of what landscape should look like. And my first great hero was [J.M.W.] Turner when I was a young student of about 14 or 15. I'd always painted and drawn when I was a child. And I can't say that I was encouraged to do it at school because nobody recognized the arts at boarding school. And then you had to choose between languages and science, and I chose science because I was very good at drawing botanical leaves or biological specimens. And that seemed to get me by. And then when I was 18 and had to choose where to go to university, something personal happened in my life, and my father left home. And that sort of parental control lapsed, and I told my mother I wasn't going to university. I was going to art school, which was the only thing that interested me. She said, "If you can find a university that has an art school, you can do it. But if you can't, you can't go. You've got to go to university and do a degree in something."

Well, I did find an art school. It was a very interesting school. It had been founded by Lawrence Gowing and Victor Pasmore and Richard Hamilton in the north of England at Durham University. And I made inquiries, and they said send a portfolio of work. So I sent a portfolio of work, and they said: You have a place. Come. And I did indeed go there, and found, to my horror, that everybody was much more advanced than I was, even though we were the same age. They somehow knew more than I knew, having grown up or been educated in a very strict academic environment. And they were much looser, much freer and knew so much more about the world than I did. And I felt out of place doing my Turner-esque landscapes and struggling to find out what it was that they knew that I didn't know. They knew about Cubism, and they knew about Surrealism. No matter how much I read or tried to catch up, it just wasn't part of my artistic makeup.

And I felt out of place. And then at the end of the year Lawrence Gowing said, "Perhaps you would like to be an art historian since your work doesn't seem to progress at all." Which was absolutely true. And I said, "Well, I don't want to be an art historian because I like being involved in the arts, and I like putting on exhibitions of artists," which I'd done when I was at school—or of other students at school. And so I left and went to London to find a way of continuing in the arts. It was very difficult to crack that particular door opened. No dealers wanted to talk to you. They were mostly Old Master dealers. I actually went to see Sir Anthony Blunt. This was a long time before he was notorious at the Courtauld [Institute of Art, London], to see if there was any possibility of going there. Or asking advice. And he was very civil and every helpful and made suggestions like trying dealers and trying the auction houses, which I did. And it was difficult.

But ultimately a dealer called from Bond Street and said if I wanted to stop by, he would give me the benefit of his advice. And I remember thinking, fantastic! At last I've got a job. And I went to visit him, and he said, "Well, I have no job. But perhaps I can help you, guide you." After a while he said, "Well, look, if you're happy just sweeping the floors and polishing the glass on the English watercolors, you can start on Monday morning for five pounds a week." And I said, "I'll be there." And that was how I entered the business. And it was very much a gallery that dealt in Old Masters: English, Dutch, German, Flemish schools. And not so much the Spanish or French. And some Italian Old Masters. And an emphasis on old English watercolors, which really appealed to me.

After a few years there, it was exhilarating just being in the business. I felt at home immediately. It was just—I was in heaven even with five pounds a week, which was a struggle. And after about three years, I went off to—I asked him if I could have some time off to go to Italy and look at Italian painting because you can't read and understand about Italian painting. You've got to be there and go to the different regions, look at the topography and the people. You've got to understand geographically, which I did. And he was very kind to let me do that. And he said I could do it as long as I learned Italian and looked after their interests of the Palazzo Strozzi Antiques Fair [Florence, Italy] in September, which I did. But by then I'd met a lot of American girls in the pensione who talked about everything except the Old Masters. And they really opened my eyes to a different approach to life and, you know, they would talk about literature, modern literature and poetry and philosophy.

And we'd have great conversations going into the night around the stove. And it was very exhilarating there. It really made me recognize that I couldn't stay in the past.

When I got back to London I saw an exhibition done by an artist called Brett Whiteley, an Australian. And he had a rather remarkable exhibition of paintings of his wife in the bath. But they weren't like [Pierre] Bonnard's. They were very tough and aggressive—aggressively drawn, a bit of [Henri] Matisse, with the simplicity and sureness of line] of Matisse, etc. But they were very, very powerful images. And I remember saying to myself, god, if there's painting like that to look at, why am I going back to a room of Old Masters in the gallery? And I decided to leave. I'd seen a show of new English painting at the Tate Gallery [London] in 1959 or '60 or so. And funnily enough, the two artists who I liked in that show, that was a landmark show in Europe organized by the Museum of Modern Art [New York, NY], and the two artists I really responded to were [Mark] Rothko and [Philip] Guston because they most resembled what I felt was a relationship to landscape. And seemed to have taken Turner into a new area. And that was why I responded to them. But it didn't affect my own interests as a painter or desire to be a painter. Although I'd I seen them—

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, you were still making art?

MR. McKEE: I know very little. I just decided I wasn't a painter. But if I'd seen that five years, eight years earlier, it might have affected me. But it was too late. I was enjoying doing what I was doing. I seemed to be— I liked seeing things. I always seem to see things differently than other people. My eyes were very sharp in a way. And I was very confident in how I saw things. And able to translate that into helping people who came into the gallery. It seemed second nature to be able to do that. And so there was never any question of what should I do, or how should I do it. It all seemed to go from one stage to another to the next, you know, without any difficulty. Or any thought even. It was just natural.

And the next thing I remember doing was buying a ticket to New York, which I did. I came over on the *Queen Mary* down in the lower part of the ship. And got off. And the first thing I did was move into the Y [YMCA] on Thirty-fourth Street with my trunk of art books. And once I was in the room, I sort of spread everything out, and then left and walked to Fifty-seventh Street because that's what I thought everything was happening in the art dealing world. Not in the art world because a few weeks later I was sort of looking—I was looking for the Cedar Bar without realizing of course that era had ended and there was nobody in the Cedar Bar.

MS. GONCHAROV: Now when was this?

MR. McKEE: In '64. And so— Is this too personal?

MS. GONCHAROV: Not at all.

MR. McKEE: Or too irrelevant?

MS. GONCHAROV: No, no, it's not irrelevant at all. What was the name of the dealer that you worked for?

MR. McKEE: Ledger, Ledger Galleries. They had a gallery in London and Brussels. And they were an old established 1875—or something like that. And he was—the owner of the gallery was immensely helpful. He was tough on all of his staff because I think they were all relics from the First World War, and they could hardly get up the staircase. And here was this young man running up and down and eager to do everything. And he would say, "Go off to Sotheby's and check the paintings in tomorrow's or Thursday's auction" or whatever it was. And sometimes he would take me, and he would take me and try to fool me. He'd say, "That's a beautiful Titian [Tiziano Vecellio]," or something like that. And if I said, "Yes, it's very nice," he'd scold me and say, "Use your eyes. Use your eyes." You know. And he'd point out it would be a school of Titian. I'm just using an example there. But he was very kind in that way, in helping you learn the pitfalls and the pleasures of the auction world, which were much more innocent in those days because they had auctions every week, and they used to have country auctions. And it was a delightful thing to be able to do, was get on a train and go down into Wiltshire [England] or somewhere to a country auction and have a pub lunch and buy something in the auction. And then to back to New York with it—to London with it. But anyway, that's going back a little bit. Now I'm in New York and having a very hard time getting a job.

MS. GONCHAROV: Did you know people in New York?

MR. McKEE: I did. I knew the Newhouse—Clyde Newhouse—who had bought from the gallery in London. And he had said, "If you ever come to New York, come—drop by, and I will see what I can do for you." Well, I did, and he gave me a little bit of research work to do. But my heart wasn't in that anymore. I wanted to know more about contemporary art, and I was sort of looking at the Kootz Gallery and the Castelli Gallery and Marlborough Gallery. Marlborough wouldn't hire me because I didn't know anything about America, and they had just recently opened in 1963 or something like that. They'd only recently opened, and at that stage they wanted American staff to build the gallery. It had a remarkable roster of artists. And funnily enough, in the end, most of the people

who worked there were Europeans, either English or German. But I didn't get a job at all in New York the first time around.

And then I spent some time in California for a dealer there who wasn't a very—in San Francisco—it wasn't a very high-class gallery. But one tried to do one's best there. And I stayed 18 months and enjoyed San Francisco very much. And one or two things came our way, which I was involved with. One with the psychoanalytical drawings of Jackson Pollock because his psychologist or psychoanalyst, I guess, Joseph Henderson, Dr. Henderson, had lived there and had many of these drawings of Pollock. And he brought them in once, and he bought the whole lot. And that was quite significant. I also met and sold the first painting to Hunk Anderson.

MS. GONCHAROV: Who, Sorry?

MR. McKEE: Hunk [Harry W.] Anderson, who probably has the greatest collection on the West Coast, or one of the greatest, let's put it that way. And this was at the very beginning. I enjoyed helping them build their collection. And then I went to—I contacted Marlborough again, and they said, come to New York for an interview. And I went there, and they offered me a job. And that was in April of 1967. So it was a very fascinating time to be there because Stephen Wile, who was the director of the gallery, was on the point of leaving to take over the management of the new Whitney Museum [of American Art, New York, NY], which was just being completed. And he left the gallery. And Frank Lloyd, the owner of Marlborough, asked if I would take over—if I thought I could take over the responsibilities of the David Smith Estate, with [Clement] Clem Greenberg, and a group of artists, which included [Robert] Motherwell, [Adolph] Gottlieb, Guston, and [Conrad] Marca-Relli and [R. B.] Kitaj. He said, "Do you think you can handle that?" And I said, "Yes, I think I can." And he said, "I think you can as well. And I'll increase your salary."

That was a very auspicious moment actually because it shaped the whole course of the next seven years of my life. Because it was a very thrilling time to be involved at Marlborough because Marlborough had such depth of inventory with estates, [Kurt] Schwitters and [Emil] Nolde, and [Jackson] Pollock, [Franz] Kline and [David] Smith. It was just endless. Their association with Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. It was just amazing, the amount of inventory. [Jacques] Lipchitz. You would sit and talk to Lipchitz, and you'd be talking about somebody who knew Picasso and [Juan] Gris in the time of Cubism. It was a very thrilling time to be at the gallery, that its peak in a way because of course it all fell apart after the Rothko scandal.

But a particularly fascinating moment for me was visiting Philip Guston, who was reluctant to have me visit. Because what had actually happened, the first thing he did was say, "Well, it's not going to be the sort of work that you're expecting. My work has shifted. It's moved into new areas which are interesting me." And when I went there, I saw all these drawings of just lines and one or two objects, but mostly lines of just abstract drawings. But what was particularly interesting was going to Motherwell's studio and finding that he was no longer doing *Beside the Seas* and *Elegies* and all this, but he was doing the open drawings, which are very related to Guston's drawings of that period. Even though neither knew what the other was doing. It was uncanny. Except Guston's line was done with a different sort of confidence than Motherwell's. Motherwell's was extremely tentative. But it was obvious that both had come to the conclusion that they'd exhausted the possibilities of their fifties and early sixties period. And were now curious about taking their work into other directions. And that was a very—I never told the other what the other was doing. I couldn't. It was like a secret that I held.

Ultimately, of course, Guston moved into the figurative language that we all know now. Whereas Motherwell's "Open" series just developed into sort of explorations of line and color really in different formats of reduction and minimal drawing, which frankly interested me less at the time. But I was in the position of having to organize that landmark show for Motherwell of the "Open" series. And the show of Guston of his, the introduction of the Klan figures, which I love because Philip and I used to have very interesting conversations about Italian and Flemish paintings, and he'd lend me books that he enjoyed, Adrian Stokes's books on Flemish painting. And we'd have long discussions about figuration and the past, Italy. There was common ground. That was exhilarating for me. And actually it's what established our relationship, which just grew stronger. So that when he left, I left. It was just natural in a way we would team up again continue it, even though at the time, I had no idea that was going to happen.

And there were many other exhibitions to do at the gallery. It seemed there was always some momentous exhibition, whether it was a big Schwitters exhibition with endless supplies of amazing work in a very large gallery setting. Do you remember that gallery?

MS. GONCHAROV: [Inaudible.]

MR. McKEE: In the Fuller Building.

MS. GONCHAROV: Yes.

MR. McKEE: It was enormous. And yet it would be a museum exhibition and Nolde watercolors or [Egon] Schiele, an extraordinary exhibition of Schiele. Drawings, amazing drawings, of the quality of which you don't see today. And more exhibitions. Smith exhibitions of the thirties, Smith of the forties. Wonderful exhibitions working with Roz [Rosalind] Krauss on an exhibition of Smith in the forties, which was a wonderful show. And she did the catalog essay, and she was a delight to work with. And Clement Greenberg was a very able executive of the Smith Estate. We used to have a regular lunch maybe once every two months and assess the situation with the estate. And determine what to do next. [Extraneous noises] Can you turn that off? [Phone conversation.]

Yes, Clement Greenberg. You know there have been many questions about Clement Greenberg and handling the Smith Estate. But I found that he was very committed and attentive and very astute in his building what was already a very respected career. But building the importance of it and the timing. He was very shrewd in judging where to go and how to take it to the next step, whether it was in pricing or which area of Smith's work to show next. Then there was a little problem at the end of my period with him when he had decided to remove the paint from two of the sculptures that had been painted with white undercoating. And Clement used to talk about it in terms of this was an undercoating that Smith never could resolve what to do with these two sculptures and had left them like that. He said—I remember him saying these two sculptures would be better if they were stripped and back in their original state—I think they'd better sculptures. And so without ever knowing that he, what had happened, he asked Leon Pratt, who was Smith's assistant, to strip them. I always thought subsequently that it did affect how one perceived those two sculptures, and they did not have the same commanding presence as they did when they were painted white. And I think Greenberg just misunderstood that maybe he couldn't add color because Smith understood that color wasn't going to work effectively. And perhaps he was happy with it white because they stood very starkly against the Bolton Landing [NY] landscape. But at that point Rosalind Krauss wrote her famous article criticizing Greenberg, his decision to strip the sculptures. And she's right, you know. You don't take off a layer of paint on a painting if you think there's a better painting underneath, you know. And he shouldn't have done it, of course. But, fortunately, I don't think he got to work on a lot of things that he would've liked to have done. It was limited to two pieces. Do you want to go into—

MS. GONCHAROV: I was going to ask you about some of the other people from [inaudible.]

MR. McKEE: Yes, go ahead.

MS. GONCHAROV: Harold Rosenberg, and what collectors were you dealing with at that time?

MR. McKEE: Who?

MS. GONCHAROV: What collectors were you dealing with?

MR. McKEE: Oh, well, Anderson had become a significant collector. One didn't so much have relationships with big collectors because they were generally reserved for Frank Lloyd. But every now and again you had an experience which was unforgettable. For example, I remember going around with Al Lerner and Joe Hirschhorn once. And Joe said, "Well, which five should we get of the Clifford Still's?" And we went around the exhibition, and he picked out five paintings. And then Frank Lloyd came back from lunch or something, and they got into a conversation. And Joe said, "Well, how am I going to pay for these? I've got a villa in the south of France. Maybe we can do an exchange." Which they did. It happened that Frank, the idea of a villa in the south of France appealed to him at that time. And they did it. I don't know what arrangements they made. But it was very amusing when it all happened so quickly right there. There were— I used to help— How do you mean, collectors? Meshulam Riklis and Celia Asher. Do you remember Celia Asher? No? She advised him on buying Constructivist art, and he built an exceptional collection of Constructivist art through her expert advice.

I had a very amusing occasion once when he came to buy a David Smith and wanted to buy a Cubi, and Cubis weren't available for private individuals. And Clement Greenberg—Riklis said he would buy it and give it to the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. And I said, Well, I would have to speak to Clement Greenberg about that since he made the decisions, and of who to sell them to, the Cubis. And I called Clement Greenberg and obtained his permission to do it if it was genuinely going to a museum. So Riklis thereupon said, "Well, let's call Teddy Kollek in Jerusalem," who was the mayor and a very lively and charismatic mayor of Jerusalem. And Riklis said, "Teddy, could you do with a sculpture that I'm looking at at the museum? It appears that I have to give it to you." And Teddy Kollek said, obviously, well, who's it by, because Riklis then said, "Well, David, you'd better tell him about David Smith." So I got on the phone. He said, "Teddy, here's David; he'll tell you all about David Smith." So I told Teddy Kollek all about David Smith, and the deal was done. But that was very charming moment, looking back on it. And the conversation with Teddy Kollek. Interesting little things happened, you know, that made it special and enjoyable.

MS. GONCHAROV: Who were some of the museum directors and curators you dealt with?

MR. McKEE: Andrew Ritchie, Bill [William] Seitz. Bill Seitz was the director of the Brandeis [University, Rose Art] Museum. But he'd been a very important curator of the Museum of Modern Art [New York, NY]. And was a very

interesting man and very supportive of the gallery. He would always come. Also Andrew Ritchie was director of the Yale University Art Gallery [New Haven,CT] and was a very civilized person. These were directors who ran their museums. In those days curators didn't run museums, but directors did. And they advised curators and their trustees what to do, what to buy for them. They were very strong individuals. And these museum people, Gordon Smith in [the Albright-Knox Art Gallery] Buffalo [NY] with Seymour Knox. Leon Arcus was very supportive, a very good friend of the gallery. At the time Carnegie Museum [of Art] in Pittsburgh. They all had very clear ideas of where they wanted their museums to go.

And this was a way of dealing with contemporary art that perhaps isn't in favor today. Because it was so personal it reflected the taste of that individual. It wasn't as democratic, it wasn't as international. Although Leon Arcus built up a very good collection of the CoBrA School. He was later ridiculed for having put together such a collection of CoBrA. But it interested him. And let's face it, everywhere looks the same today. And it's sometimes important to see the commitment of one person to something. Just as one saw Alfred Barr's commitment to French painting, you know, whether it's [Henri] Matisse, [Fernand] Léger, [Pablo] Picasso. What was going on in Paris. We don't criticize that so much today because we think it was so important, you know. But it's the same story as what the others were doing. But they were always in New York, always visiting the gallery, took an active interest, which is something you very rarely get today. You don't see any museum directors in galleries now.

MS. GONCHAROV: They're all busy raising money.

MR. McKEE: Yes. And only Jock Reynolds maybe and every now and again one will see Glenn Lowry. And you see the curators much more than you did then. But there was something very commanding about the way they existed within the art world. And they always had very powerful trustees who were willing to pony up and buy whatever they wanted and I mean, I think in today's terms, perhaps, Philippe de Montebello had that power to get what he wanted. But I don't think many of them today have that sort of charisma or personality to persuade the trustees to do it. There are a few curators who are very good at it.

MS. GONCHAROV: Who do you respect?

MR. McKEE: Hmm?

MS. GONCHAROV: Who do you like among curators working now?

MR. McKEE: Well, I like Ann Temkin very much. I tend to like curators who like what I like, of course. [Laughs.] Gary Garrels is a good curator. A few international curators are good. It's hard to be specific.

MS. GONCHAROV: You know another diversion since we're talking about Ann Temkin at MoMA. So I'm thinking of MoMA. But what do you think of the reinstallation of the collection?

MR. McKEE: Of the Met [Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY]?

MS. GONCHAROV: Of MoMA [Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY]?

MR. McKEE: Oh, off MoMA. Which one?

MS. GONCHAROV: [Laughs.] Well, when they really took apart Alfred Barr's --

MR. McKEE: Oh, when the museum changed.

MS. GONCHAROV: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. McKEE: It doesn't have the same power to astound. When you walked into those rooms of Matisse or Picasso or Léger and you'd turn a little corner and see everything closer, the effect was so much more powerful than it is today. It's like everything is at a distance and you approach. The museum, unfortunately, is a victim of those spaces where you approach everything long instead of frontally. A room is much more powerful when it's approached where you see the long wall close to, instead of it functioning like a corridor and you're seeing everything on the left and right. And there's too much of that in the Museum of Modern Art. So you don't get the impact. And I'd love to reconfigure that museum. I'd love to re-hang it myself.

MS. GONCHAROV: [Laughs.] So would I.

MR. McKEE: So would everybody. Because one remembers. You know it was very interesting. At an art fair recently a dealer was selling these very large tables, maybe, I don't know, 12 feet long, made out of old timbers. And he had it on a stand. And I said, "That's a wonderful table. Is it possible that you would want to sell that table?" He said, "I had it made." And I said, "Well, that's a really wonderful-looking thing." It was stained sort of blackish color and strong legs. And he gave me the name of the carpenter. And he said, "You know why I had this

table made?" He said that the Art Institute [of Chicago], they had a huge table with the [Constantin] Brancusi, Picasso, [Jacques] Lipchitz, they had all these sculptures on this long table. And once you'd seen that table, you never forgot it. And I was so happy that another dealer, a Chicago dealer, had been affected by that table in the way that I remembered seeing it when I first went to Chicago many years ago. And that table was crucial. It was the Art Institute. And then behind it was *The Moroccans* [1915-1916] and all. What is it they have, that great Matisse? And they had amazing things there. And I thought, you know—no, it's not *The Moroccans*. Just the room itself. But hitting that table frontally that way was so much more exciting than if it had been that way. And that's the problem with looking at art. It's a problem I have with this gallery. And I have to live with it because I can't get what I want always as a, in commercial space. And so I have to put up walls now and again to try and change the emphasis of how people see. And sometimes I'm a little lazy in that respect.

But that shouldn't be a problem at a Museum of Modern Art. Or Tate Modern [London], where you have the same problem. And sometimes I wonder whether they know it, that there's a difference. And yet when they showed Ed [Edward R.] Broida's Collection, did you see that show?

MS. GONCHAROV: Mm-mmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. McKEE: When Ed Broida left his collection to them two years ago. And they did a show where the atrium is, that floor. And they divided it up into a very interesting way that gave you these opportunities to angles where you were directed to this or to that, onto this wall and that wall. So that you always experienced the work in a powerful way. I mean you know where the Pollock room is. And you'd go out of that, and you see a few [Barnett] Newmans and [Mark] Rothkos. Then you'd go through a door, and around here is a [Philip] Guston and a [Willem] de Kooning there. And the [Helen] Frankenthaler down on this wall. And that long wall going down towards Jasper Johns and everything. It's dreary. It feels dreary. Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: So what was Frank Lloyd like to work for?

MR. McKEE: Frank Lloyd?

MS. GONCHAROV: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. McKEE: Frank Lloyd was a remarkable presence because if you got on with him, he gave you complete freedom to do what you wanted and was very supportive. If he didn't respect you, he was hell. Once he got a hold of you, he'd never let go, you know, until you left. He was a terror. But actually he was a very decent, very good man to work for.

MS. GONCHAROV: So you had a very good relationship.

MR. McKEE: I had a very good relationship with him throughout because he'd given me the break, you know. He trusted me in the beginning. I don't think I ever let him down. And ultimately, when I decided to leave, I went to see him, and said, it was difficult for me to say this, but I felt that I had to move on because it had always been a dream to have a gallery of my own. And he said, "Oh, yes?" And he said, "You mean you can't fulfill that dream here?" And I said, "No, it wasn't quite the same, having to deal with somebody else's choices." And he said, "Well, what sort of a gallery do you want?" And I said, "Well, my heroes are Curt Valentin and [Daniel-Henry] Kahnweiler. And I want a gallery like that. That has a personal relationship with the artists, and it's like a trinity of experiences when the artist does his thing, you do your thing, and the collector does his thing. And you're dependent on each other. And it grows over time, and it becomes immensely fulfilling that way." And he said, "And I'm not one of your heroes?" [They laugh.] It was cute, you know. It was sweet in a way to see. I liked him. I mean what happened with Rothko was tragic in a way. Foolish and tragic, and it need never have happened if he'd just left well alone and just let destiny take its course, you know. Instead of trying always to outsmart it. Because he was a very good man. He was kind and supportive. I mean I would've hated to have been on the wrong side of him or to have been a victim. It was an error of judgment. And he was never the same after it. He was the never the same Frank Lloyd. He was haunted by it. You could see it when you spoke to him. He had this penetrating gaze, and his eyes never penetrated anything after that. The confidence wasn't there. He knew he'd lost the thing that made the difference in how he was commanding in his life. You know once I went to Clare Boothe Luce's apartment on Fifth Avenue to look at some paintings she wanted to sell, and he said go up and take a look at them and see.

[END OF DISC 1.]

MR. McKEE: Yes, Clare Boothe Luce, and so I went up there. You know sometimes you're like a stalking horse. You went up to check whether or not—to see what it was she had on her mind. So I went up there, and she was very nice. An enormous apartment. And she said, "I'd like to sell my {Edouard} Vuillard screen, and I'd like to sell my [Camille] Pissarro," and this and that and the other. And then we got into talking a little bit, and she said, "Well, please tell your Mr. Lloyd that I would like to give them to him for sale." And I said, "Yes." And she said, "And how is Mr. Lloyd?" And I said, "He's very well." And she said, "I had a very wonderful evening at dinner with

him once. I was at a dinner party, and he was my partner at dinner. He's the best conversationalist I have ever sat next to." That was quite a compliment coming from Clare. He was—and I say that in support of Frank's charm as a raconteur and as a very, very, extremely charming person to be with. When he was very funny, he had this infectious chuckle. It was like a giggle. And he just made you smile and laugh just talking to him if he was in a good mood, you know. And could talk about anything. Have an opinion on anything. Was very shrewd about politics or finances. Anyway, she said he was the best conversationalist she'd ever sat next to. I thought that was quite a compliment.

MS. GONCHAROV: Yes. Especially from someone like her.

MR. McKEE: Anyways, we did get the paintings and sold them for her. I don't think she lived very long after that.

MS. GONCHAROV: During the time you were at Marlborough, were you making studio visits --

MR. McKEE: Oh, yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: were you looking for artists that you'd like to represent?

MR. McKEE: No, no, no. Funnily enough, I went to two artists. One was [Vardea] Chryssa, and one was Alice Neel. I knew Alice Neel very well. And I bought up most of them with Frank Lloyd but he wasn't interested in either one. And I don't know whether that was because they were women, or they just weren't, they weren't important enough for him. I don't know. It was just scotched immediately, and nothing ever happened. Although Chryssa at the time was a very interesting artist in those days. I mean she'd just done Times Square. Was Vera [List] involved with Times Square?

MS. GONCHAROV: She might very well have been. I know she produced some—she could very well have, I never asked her

MR. McKEE: She may have financed that. I saw Chryssa the other day at Basel, in a wheelchair.

MS. GONCHAROV: Really? What is she doing now? Is she still making art?

MR. McKEE: I don't know. I didn't get into it because if you get into it with Chryssa, it becomes a problem, you know. But I saw this woman coming towards me who looked very old. But there was something in the eyes, something a little crazy. And I saw in it, and I said: Chryssa. And she smiled. And she said, "David, how are you?" You know how she is. "How are you doing? How's business? What do you have here? Do you have anything of that woman who does skies?" You know she's so blunt. Can you hear her?

MS. GONCHAROV: Absolutely.

MR. McKEE: And "Nice to see you, David. How's Gavin?" She knew Gavin when he was a little boy. He's 38 with two kids.

MS. GONCHAROV: So you never showed her when you opened the gallery.

MR. McKEE: No, no, no. Oh, oh. You know poor Chryssa. She frightened me actually because she used to sleep—When we opened our gallery, me and Renée— I had even mentioned leaving Marlborough and opening the gallery with Renée. Which was about a year and a half after I left Marlborough because when you leave Marlborough, Marlborough's so in your head, after everything that had happened there and the good times and the difficult times, that it's hard to remove it out of your system. You know you found yourself doing what they would do when you knew you had to do something completely different.

MS. GONCHAROV: What were you doing?

MR. McKEE: Well, I was just sort of dealing privately and just trying to hang on because I'd no money. And very little openings. It was a difficult time. The seventies had started. It was a downturn in the art business.

MS. GONCHAROV: And the art was in bad trouble in those years.

MR. McKEE: Yes. And New York was in trouble. Everything was in trouble. Because this man had wanted to back the gallery, I'd talked to him, and we got into it. And then he called me and said the property market had collapsed, and he was going to have to batten down the hatch and couldn't do anything. And he said, "But if I were you, I'd go on and do it because you'll make it happen whatever. Just start small. And just do it your own way. And don't depend on anybody." Which is what we did. And I went out, and I rented the Barbizon space for a thousand dollars a month.

MS. GONCHAROV: And where was that?

MR. McKEE: In the Barbizon Hotel for Women, which was their beauty salon. And the manager said, "The women aren't interested in beauty salons today because they were all letting their whole hair grow down to here. And they'd burned their bras. And it was feminism. And the last—no makeup and everything." So he said, "It's finished. The Barbizon is." And I said, "Well, would you be interested in a gallery there. Because I like the space." I asked the owner and the owner said yes. That's okay. I said, "Well, if you can move all those sinks out of there down the center, I'll take it for a thousand dollars a month." Which seemed a lot but manageable. And so I called Philip Guston, and I said, "Philip, I've taken a gallery. He said ",Great, where is it?" I told him. He said, "I'm coming down to take a look at the end of the week." And he came in, and we went over to take a look at the space. He said, "Do you think you can make a gallery out of this?" I said, Oh, yes. It'll be beautiful. Nice high windows, high ceilings. And suddenly he was distracted by pots of paint that were along a counter. And they weren't paint, they were dyes that women used on their hair. And he took a stick, and started drawing on the walls with these hennas and violets and different colors on the wall of the beauty salon. And he said, "I guess it'll do fine." So.

MS. GONCHAROV: Did you take pictures?

MR. McKEE: No.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, too bad.

MR. McKEE: No, no. You know people didn't have cameras in those days.

MS. GONCHAROV: Of course, of course.

MR. McKEE: It's a modern phenomenon, cameras. So that's how the gallery started. And Philip joined. And then Harvey Quaytman, who'd become a friend. I wanted him to join. And then Mario Irazarry, Jake Berthot. A few castoffs from Ivan Karp, I think—or who left Ivan to come. Harvey left Paula Cooper. Well. And then Betsy Zogbaum came with the [Franz] Kline Estate. She came to see me and said, "I can't stay at Marlborough after the Rothko thing. I don't want to be there. And we've always got on very well. Would you look after the estate?" There wasn't very much in the estate. A lot of drawings, but not much painting. And I said, yes, that would be great. And they became the sort of pillars, Guston and Kline, because I like both artists. I didn't like a lot of the—wasn't a Rothko person. I wasn't Newman. I never liked Newman. I was always very specific in what I liked. And I've never really deviated from that. I will like something and go with it, then until the next thing I like. And like and like. But I can't embrace art as just a practice of handling creative artists. You know some galleries will take on an artist because simply they respect them as artists making art and will show you and sell you, represent you. And I can't do it that way.

MS. GONCHAROV: And you have a relatively small stable as far as galleries go.

MR. McKEE: Yes. But you know over the years it's been bigger. It's contracted—it expands and contracts, you know. This is a show we're doing in September, photography.

MS. GONCHAROV: Who is it?

MR. McKEE: He's Richard Learoyd, an artist who's never shown before, a photographer. But they're very large, and they're amazing in their intensity and in their concentration. It's almost like the feel of [Francisco de] Goya or something, the way he captures objects or people. Anyways, it just spoke to me, and that's how it is with—there aren't many artists who do speak to me. So there can't be a big stable. [They laugh.]

MS. GONCHAROV: This is the first one you've taken in a while, right?

MR. McKEE: No, there was Lucy Williams, who we showed. That's a Lucy Williams.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, I see. It's architectural interest.

MR. McKEE: And so, what is the common element of it all? I don't know. I'm not interested in a gallery that sort of specializes in Pop or specializes in Minimalism or— I just, whatever moves me. And then it was, you know, the gallery opened in 1974. It turned—it was a difficult time to open. But, you know, it was a very interesting time because it gave you an opportunity to establish yourself because things were very quiet and calm. And people like Alfred Barr and Dorothy Miller would come in a Saturday morning and spend time with you and sometimes buy something. And that was very important, to have a visit from Alfred Barr and Dorothy Miller. It connected the past in a meaningful way, and sort of gave a sort of comfort, I guess, that maybe you were on the right track if they kept coming. A respect, but I was never interested in Pop art or, you know. I remember when Irving Blum said to me once, "Oh, art has to be a reflection of our times." And I never really agreed with that, you know. If Pop art was a reflection of how we are as a consumer society, that's fine for him. But it doesn't mean anything to me. I think that was the value of somebody like Vera [List], you know, who went with her heart on so many

things, her eye and her heart.

MS. GONCHAROV: Yes, she didn't care about the name of the artist.

MR. McKEE: No.

MS. GONCHAROV: She'd say, "You know, who-ze-what's," she would say.

MR. McKEE: I like it.

MS. GONCHAROV: "I want that." Because you know she was an artist herself.

MR. McKEE: I didn't know that.

MS. GONCHAROV: Sculptor.

MR. McKEE: Really!

MS. GONCHAROV: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. McKEE: That's why she likes sculpture]. I never knew that. Well, I'm a bit that way myself. If I like it, I'll do it. And Renée is similarly inclined. She's not easily swayed by fashion.

MS. GONCHAROV: And do you agree on everything?

MR. McKEE: No.

MS. GONCHAROV: On the artists?

MR. McKEE: No. Oh, yes. The ones we show. Yes. Even Kit Rank, you know. Every now and again you have to sort of rinse your eyes out; you get tired of seeing the predictable and the theoretical and the popular. And you just want to see something that somebody does it because they can't help it. And there's a naïveté to it. But it's sophisticated naïveté and honesty. I think honesty is the most important factor of all. And so much of what I see today is—there's so much false art or falseness in the market and the way it panders to the artist and the whole system. So Renée and I have always seen alike in that way. This picture is actually going to Aggie [Agnes] Gund.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, really! Oh, good.

MR. McKEE: It's being packed today to go to her home in Connecticut.

MS. GONCHAROV: It's a wonderful painting.

MR. McKEE: Hmm?

MS. GONCHAROV: It's wonderful. I love it.

MR. McKEE: Yes. I mean—and yet you couldn't get a review or, you know, any of the popular critics or curators in to give her the time of day. But one day I know very well that there'll be a big museum show of her work, and people will want it. And because her two shows—oh, we've had three shows—but two of them were two of the most beautiful shows I've ever seen. Just beautiful! And it's nothing to do with—oh, God, that scene, you know.

MS. GONCHAROV: That scene seems to be going away quickly with this economic [inaudible]

MR. McKEE: I don't know. They keep it going. They have to, you know, the Hauser & Wirth [Gallery, New York, NY]. And these people, they've got so much money behind them. Astronomical amounts of money. But I like innocent art also, that's pure and honest. And she's an unusual woman.

MS. GONCHAROV: But she's from Texas, San Antonio?

MR. McKEE: Yes, yes. Fort Worth.

MS. GONCHAROV: And she lives, what, in—

MR. McKEE: She lives in Sicily.

MS. GONCHAROV: Sicily, that's right.

MR. McKEE: Right. But she's leaving there, and she's just bought or rented a farm in very beautiful countryside

about an hour out of Fort Worth. And she's waiting now to see if her husband's going to like it because he's still in Corleone [Sicily] finishing a book on the Mafia.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, that's why she was there.

MR. McKEE: Well, she came for her show and decided—it was winter, and it was very, very cold—it gets very cold in Corleone which is in the mountains in Sicily. It's not hot, Sicily, in the mountains. And so she didn't want to go back because they'd no heating, just stoves. And when you wake up in the morning, it's freezing cold. And she said, "I just decided to go down and wait it out in Texas until Morgan's [Morgan Rank] ready to leave." And he's getting ready to leave now after eight years.

MS. GONCHAROV: You know another artist that I like a lot, who I'd say is honest, is Daisy Youngblood.

MR. McKEE: Yes, yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: What's she like?

MR. McKEE: As a person?

MS. GONCHAROV: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] But does she still live in Costa Rica?

MR. McKEE: I think she is at the moment. She goes back and forth to Santa Fe[NM]. I first knew of Daisy when at the Miani Johnson [Willard Gallery, New York, NY] showed her. And I took Ed Broida the collector—or he wasn't a collector then; it was right at the beginning. And in 1978 or '9, to— I said to him, "Look, Ed, you've got to get out of this gallery. There are all sorts of galleries around. You can't just—" He said, "I love it here. I feel at home here." He would buy [Harvey] Quaytman. He'd buy Gustons galore. You know he'd buy— He was a wonderful, wonderful person, wonderful collector. And he and his wife were, you know, they almost set up home here [laughs] when they came to New York. And after a while, I said, "Ed, you really have to spread your wings. You know you've got to get out there." And he said, "Well, where should I go?" And I said, "Well, look, I'll take you and introduce you to the galleries I respect."

MS. GONCHAROV: And which ones were they?

MR. McKEE: And they were—I took him first to Willard, to Miani Johnson, because she had—she'd just opened a Susan Rothenberg show of horses. And I took him over there, and he looked at the paintings, which were very painterly. But they're very abstract in a way. And I could see that it was a bit of a problem for him because he was then used to seeing the energy and the drama that went into Guston painting. And these were very serene, sort of spiritual horses in grays. But while he was in the gallery and he was sitting on the floor looking at the horses, Miani said, "I want to show you some work by an artist I've just taken on. She's a friend of Susan's." And I went into the back, and I saw these animals: horses, monkeys by Daisy. And I reserved one. And I knew I couldn't afford it. It was \$4,000 or something, but I've always bought a lot of work, but this was a bad time. And it was, I think we were, you know, just making it, very low income then. And I said, "I'll get back to you about it." In the end I didn't get it, but I was really drawn to this sculpture of Daisy's. And I never forgot it.

Well, I never go after artists. I've never ever pursued an artist. I like artists to come into conversation, talk, get into, let's do something. And when I say going after an artist, I've gone after an artist if they're not associated with anyone. But if they're ever with another gallery, I never go after them; because I sort of have the feeling that it will protect you in the other direction. And if you play fair that way, it's difficult for them to come and poach your artists, even though they try the whole time.

Anyways, so about ten years later—no. Yes. Fifteen years later maybe. I get this very lovely letter from Costa Rica saying, "I would like to join your gallery. I like the artists you show. I think it's the sort of gallery I can be at home in." And Miani had closed some years before. She said, "You probably don't know who I am, but I know your gallery, and I'm hoping that if I came to see you, you could—we could work together." So I wrote back, and I said, "Look, I do know who you are. In fact I once almost bought a piece. And I would be interested in talking to you. And if we can talk and get on together, I'd like to represent you." And it happened just like that. And it's been wonderful. She's very simple, very smart. She has a good mind and a good instinct for what is right in her work. If she hasn't got that feeling, she doesn't do it. She doesn't do it for the sake of doing it. She doesn't journey out. And invariably, she'll say, I've done something. It will arrive in a crappy old box sent by Federal Express. And how it ever arrives intact I'll never know.

MS. GONCHAROV: Because they're very fragile. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: Very casual. And it's always better than how she describes it. It's funny. The only problem is she does so little work. I mean I've got three artists—or four artists—who never make any work: Vija [Celmins], Martin [Puryear], Lucy, and Daisy. They're so slow, it's just painful, you know.

MS. GONCHAROV: And Martin, how did you find Martin?

MR. McKEE: Martin was another sort of special moment. Kathy Porter, who used to be with the gallery—do you remember Kathy Porter? Katherine Porter.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, Katherine, oh, yes! Sure.

MR. McKEE: She was a good painter from Boston.

MS. GONCHAROV: You know I think you gave us one at the New School [New York, NY]. Was that yours? There was a Katherine Porter there.

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: I think you might have given that one.

MR. McKEE: A big one.

MS. GONCHAROV: A big one, a beautiful one. Absolutely.

MR. McKEE: Yes. She became very political. I think that's what made me think of the New School. Anyway, I think it had something to do with San Salvador or something. I can't remember. But anyway, Kathy was in an exhibition of new art when the museum reopened in 1984, the Museum of Modern Art. Kynaston McShine did a big show. And there was a very nice dinner for all the artists, and I was at the table. And Kathy's guest—and I'm not sure if he was in the show—was Martin Puryear. And they may in fact have been going out at the time. I'm not sure about that.

MS. GONCHAROV: When would this have been?

MR. McKEE: Nineteen eighty-four. And maybe not. Maybe they weren't going out. But they were friends. And Martin hadn't really received any recognition yet, didn't have a New York gallery or anything. And we talked a lot that evening. We talked about many things at dinner. We got on very well. And I said, "You know, Martin, if and when you ever want to do something in New York, just let me know."

MS. GONCHAROV: Because he was showing in Chicago, I guess.

MR. McKEE: He was in Chicago with Donald Young [Gallery]. He had shown with what's his name, the dealer who deals in—Max Protetch [Gallery, New York, NY], who had a gallery in Washington [D.C.] once and when Martin was living in Washington. And then he went with Don. I said, "Look, if you ever want a show in New York, come and see me." And he said, "I will." Well, I can't remember how long after, but he came home for some party—maybe Katherine Porter. And he saw the Gabe [Gabriel] Kohn sculpture in the corner of the room. And it's very nice. Of course Gabe Kohn in a way is a precursor of Martin in the use of laminated wood and all that sort of thing.

MS. GONCHAROV: In fact that piece, that small rounded piece with balls in it, that could be Martin.

MR. McKEE: Yes...yes. And so Martin saw it, and he said, "That's a Gabe Kohn." I said, "Yes, it is." I was very pleased he recognized it. He said, "Oh, he's a great sculptor." And we talked about Gabe Kohn and his technique and work and this and that and the other. It was just a very easy way of talking about art and being with each other. And not long after that he came to see me, and he said, "You know, I think I'd like to be with the gallery. And I think I'd like to have a show with you." And so a couple of years—that was 1985. And then two years later he did the show, the first show of *Decoys*. It wasn't this gallery. It was the gallery in the Fuller Building. And Vera bought the swamp piece. What is it called? [Title, date?] I've forgotten.

MS. GONCHAROV: I've forgotten the name of it, too. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: And I think that was the first time I ever met Vera.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, she hadn't bought from you before?

MR. McKEE: I don't think so.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, she never came to Marlborough? Ah, interesting.

MR. McKEE: No. Not to see me at least. I think that was the first introduction was that piece.

MS. GONCHAROV: She absolutely adored Martin's work.

MR. McKEE: Martin, oh, yes. Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: And she would've bought more except they were always sold before she could get here. And she wouldn't buy from [inaudible], ever.

MR. McKEE: But didn't she get another one?

MS. GONCHAROV: No, I don't think so.

MR. McKEE: No, just one.

MS. GONCHAROV: Just the one. Just this one.

MR. McKEE: I know I nearly lost a great friendship because— I tried to let a group of very important collectors buy out that show, that first show. Each one got one. And when we had the second show, I had such a list: Aggie Gund, and all these people, who had wanted pieces out of the first show. I told them the next show, they would get their choice. And these weren't just run-of-the-mill collectors, but important collectors. And the Met wanted one. I mean it was just an impossible situation. But I lost the friendship for a number of years of Hunk Anderson because I wouldn't sell him one. I sold him one out of the first show. And when I told him that I couldn't sell him one out of the second show, he went through the roof. And said, "You'd better remember who your friends are." And it hurt deeply then because I'd done so much for him in way of guiding amazing things to him that had come my way. And then when he wouldn't respect your need to spread the work around— I mean it wasn't as if there was enough work for everybody to have three or four. But that's what some of them wanted, you know. And when I told Ed Broida that, he understood. He said, "You're right. It should be in the Met, it should be in this." But we didn't talk for eight years or so. Lost a client. They wanted to teach you lesson. Some collectors are like that, you know. They get very spoiled and— I mean somebody like Vera would never do that at all. She'd be happy for Martin. And then of course that's how Martin came to the gallery.

Vija came to the gallery in an interesting way. She was, you know, a big star in Los Angeles at the time when I first met her in 1979. I'd first seen her work in London for this show at the Felicity Samuel Gallery on Saville Row in 1974. And *Night Sky's* [1974], beautiful drawings. And they were too expensive for me; I couldn't afford one. And so I bought for a hundred dollars a drawing of one of Felicity's artists. I could tell she wanted to sell something. And so I bought it. But that was my first sight of Vija's work. And in 1979, Renée and I were taking a holiday in Los Angeles. And we were seeing a lot of Dick [Richard] Diebenkorn and his wife Phyllis. And I think Vija came down with Patty Fore [ph?] and the Diebenkorns down to the place we'd rented on the beach. And we got on well. And she was having a show at the Newport Harbor Museum [Newport Beach, CA]. The Newport Harbor, which was quite a large show, to date her early work and all her drawings up until that moment. Incredibly beautiful show. And I said, "You know, God, I'd love to do a show for you in New York." And we liked each other and I invited her to come up to Guston's show at the San Francisco Museum [of Modern Art], which was his retrospective. He died within a few weeks after that. But she met Guston, and she came up, and she met Guston at that opening, which was a great thrill for her.

Then I remember going out with her. We went to hear some jazz. And in the interval I said to her, "We should do it." And she's a famously indecisive person—famously. And I said, "Let's do it. We've got to do it." And she gives you this scrutiny, you know, this look. And I said, "Yes, we've got to do it. Let's make a decision now. Otherwise we'll never do it." So she said, "You think it'll work?" I said, "Yes, it'll work." She said, "Okay. Okay!" And I said, "Okay, that's great. Wonderful." And now it's 30 years later. And we've had some wonderful times, wonderful trips, wonderful shows. It's always thrilling to see what she does. And she's very smart, wonderful company. And very elusive in the studio. It's very hard to see work. But in the end it all works out. So I think we'll probably do a show in November-December this year.

MS. GONCHAROV: What are you going to open with this year? [Banging sounds in background.]

MR. McKEE: I like surprising people now and again with a few things.

MS. GONCHAROV: Because I can't think of any photographers you've shown.

MR. McKEE: Never. We showed an Annette Lemieux once. And she gave us a show, which was predominantly photography, which I wasn't all that happy about. She mixed it up. But you know with Annette—Annette is an artist I liked very much in the eighties. I'd see her work around. And I saw a marvelous show. Oh, she worked—she did a piece that was based on a Guston once. And I met her, and I liked her. Very smart woman. And then I saw her show in St. Louis [First Street Forum] [loud background noises], and it was a marvelous exhibition of very political art, dealing with Germany and the Holocaust. Propaganda, Nazi propaganda. All sorts of things. It was a very powerful exhibition. And I came back, I remember, and I said to Renée, "You know I think we should show Annette Lemieux. This exhibition was fantastic." And it said collection, collection of the artist. And I knew that Josh Baer [Gallery, New York, NY] had closed, so she wasn't with anybody. And he closed his gallery to start

Baer Fax, I guess. But we went to the studio. We approached her, and she said, "Yes, I'd like to do that."

But it never clicked because her head was in a different spot. Our heads weren't in synch with hers, what she was doing. And it was sort of, it was all about barriers and some negativity had crept into the work. And it wasn't anything like what I thought we were going to be involved with. And a lot of the work, a bit more, belonged to her. I think she must have owed money to the dealers. And they ended up with all this work that I'd admired in St. Louis. Which was fine. That's what she had to do. Artists sometimes have to do tough things. But it never really clicked. And although the shows looked good, and the photographic one was very beautiful in a way, it didn't click with our audience. And although I still respected her and her abilities, it just seemed we weren't the right gallery for her. Maybe there was too much multi-disciplinary activities in her work for my audience. We never clicked. So we parted company amicably. We just said, perhaps it's better if you find another gallery. I always thought then she should be with something like Kent [Gallery, New York, NY] or Pace [Gallery, New York, NY], someone like that.

MS. GONCHAROV: You know, another artist I'm very interested in is Susana Solano.

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: I remember her when she represented Spain at the Biennale [Venice, Italy].

MR. McKEE: Yes, wonderful.

MS. GONCHAROV: It must have been like fifteen years ago or something.

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: Really wonderful.

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: How's the response to her work been?

MR. McKEE: Difficult. Because it's always been difficult with Susana because you can't put her work outdoors.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh? I did not know that.

MR. McKEE: Yes. And many years ago when we were going to Spain—I think it was, I can't remember why we were there. And we saw a wonderful exhibition at the Andes [ph?] Gallery. He died shortly afterwards. He was a great dealer in Madrid. And Susana was having a show there in an underground garage, a great big garage that he'd taken over and placed all her work. And she worked in forged steel then, and all her work was forged by her. Not the later cages and more fabricated works that became typical of her. And the work in those days sort of, I guess, came in a way out of [Eduardo] Chillida and his way of making, bending iron in whatever way he wanted it to go. The Spanish have a gift for that, you know. [Juan] Muñoz was good at that. And so Susana's work really captured us because we were interested in Chillida. I'd always liked Chillida's work. And we bought maybe three or four pieces of Susana—we didn't know her—out of that exhibition. And then I always used to wonder, well, is it something that will travel to America? Because Chillida had never been a success in America. Did Vera ever own anything by him?

MS. GONCHAROV: Not what I remember. She could have and sold them. It's the kind of thing she would have.

MR. McKEE: Yes, I know. But he was never successfully shown in America. Bertha Schaeffer used to show him. Do you remember Bertha Schaeffer Gallery [New York, NY]? She had a gallery in the Fuller Building, the most unlikely place for an artist of his capacity. And it never worked. Nobody—you know you would have thought Marlborough would have, when it was in its glory days with [Henry] Moore and Smith and [Jacques] Lipchitz and [Henri] Laurens would have understood Chillida and taken him on, but they never did. And I couldn't afford to because those works are solid iron.

MS. GONCHAROV: Cost a fortune to ship.

MR. McKEE: Cost a fortune to ship. Without any real feeling that Americans were sympathetic to it. It was very refined in its simplicity, but not simple in the way that Minimalism took over here, you know, like [Donald] Judd, [Sol] LeWitt. A different sort of simplicity. Anyway, Susana sort of came, is a sort of spiritual heir to Chillida. And I wasn't sure how it would go over here. But we did three shows, and none of them clicked. You couldn't get the curators interested in doing anything. Nobody at the Modern [Museum of Modern Art] wanted to do anything. They gave it all the lip service and respect imaginable: "Oh, she's so good, this, that"—They never bought. They never wanted to put her in shows or anything like that. And you couldn't get any of the other museums to do it. And I could never understand because I thought that show in Venice was stunning.

MS. GONCHAROV: It was. Absolutely.

MR. McKEE: And I could never understand why nobody had ever picked up on her.

MS. GONCHAROV: Surprises me, too.

MR. McKEE: But you'd be amazed how many collectors said: Would she do a commission for our sculpture garden, our garden? We'd like her to do. She would never do it.

MS. GONCHAROV: And people don't have the room for them.

MR. McKEE: And they're too big for inside. Ed Broida bought half a dozen pieces. And fortunately that made her feel at least that there was some attention in America, and that we weren't just barking up a wall, you know. And when he died, the Museum of Modern Art did take three of the works, which they showed in the exhibition that they put on of his collection. And they looked fantastic. And now they speak of her in sort of very respectful tones at the museum, so I think they're proud to have them. And I think Ann Tenkin will be more sympathetic than John Elderfield or the previous people towards her. I'm hoping. But, you know, I was hoping to do a show once down in Texas where you'd think there'd be a—and maybe combine it with a show in Mexico. But I've never been able to put it together.

You know sometimes you can't understand why you can't make certain things happen and why other things do happen. You can't fathom it out ever in this business. You don't know why some artists are popular and some you can't— It's like that with Harvey Quaytman. I think Harvey Quaytman is a very important artist. But he was a difficult person, and that person somehow has affecting how people relate to him. Too many people remember awkward times with Harvey. And then there are others, artists and curators, who adored that eccentricity.

MS. GONCHAROV: How was he eccentric?

MR. McKEE: He was a curmudgeon, you know. He would irritate people intentionally. I loved him. I knew when he was putting himself in trouble with people. It's almost like— He once said, "The only good thing about art is being in the studio, having your best friends down for dinner with a good bottle of wine." He said, "That's all that really matters. And having a great day in the studio." He couldn't—he didn't really care about the other things. And it always frustrated me because I could never get him in his lifetime the show that he deserved of all his work. I mean it would be so beautiful. People would be stunned. I mean a thousand times more interesting than, say, a [Robert] Mangold show—forgive me if you love Mangold. I like Mangold, but he's a bit dry, too dry for me. Harvey is a romantic. He's dangerous. He's—it's not for nothing that people like Brice Marden and Bob [Robert] Ryan and others, they always come to see every Quaytman show. And I can tell from the way they look at it, that they all get something from a Quaytman. They look at it intensely. They go right into it and look, and they're getting something. And they all liked Harvey. But then there are those who were irritated, you know. But I've never found the right curator, the right museum. And now, funnily enough, the Phaidon Press [London] wants to do a book on him. So maybe he'll get his rewards in the end, recognition. Because that's what infuriates me. You know I sell a beautiful painting for \$45,000, and then I see some bit of crap going for two million or a million. I don't understand it, never will, this business.

MS. GONCHAROV: And you've been in it a long time. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: Well, your collectors are very serious, and they're not investors.

MR. McKEE: No, they're very serious. And they're very loyal also. So in these tricky times, they do come and they do buy because they feel the pleasure of it. That's the secret. It's not about whether it's worth what you're selling it for. It's how much pleasure you get in the whole experience. That's why I said, you know, earlier, it's a trinity of experiences: It's the artist gets his pleasure, the dealer gets his, and the collector gets his. And they have to be mutually respectful and appreciative of each other. And if that happens— I mean imagine being locked into somebody like [Alberto] Murgabi, who's just grabbing whatever [Jean-Michel] Basquiat or whatever [Andy] Warhol or whatever [Jeff] Koons or whatever the hell they get involved in. And just amassing it by the thousands just to sell for a profit. And then who knows what they get up to, to support prices and to establish prices. You can't tell anymore what's going on. But it never used to happen before like it happens now.

MS. GONCHAROV: No.

MR. McKEE: It's big business now.

MS. GONCHAROV: Well, yes.

MR. McKEE: And some of the artists play along with it. And we know which ones.

MS. GONCHAROV: Don't you think it's going to change a bit?

MR. McKEE: No, no. There's too much money in it now.

MS. GONCHAROV: There was a lot of money in the last boom.

MR. McKEE: Oh, nothing like now!

MS. GONCHAROV: That's true, I suppose.

MR. McKEE: I mean—

MS. GONCHAROV: It seemed like it at the time.

MR. McKEE: Which last boom are you talking about?

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, the eighties.

MR. McKEE: Oh, the eighties, it's nothing compared to now.

MS. GONCHAROV: It seemed very excessive then.

MR. McKEE: It did. But not like now. The only—the big difference between the eighties and now, which gives it a little hope maybe, is that it was so dominated by youth. There were young advisors and young curators, young collectors, all making astronomical, you know, the collectors making astronomical amounts of money and bonuses and everything. And they were running the whole show, it seems to me. And if that element is running scared and pulls out of the market, or they lose their—it might affect it to some degree. But it'll never come back to the way it was. It can't. Because there's too much demand. I mean in the days when Marlborough had all this inventory, it was a little art world worldwide. I mean you'd have a couple of collectors in Australia, a couple of collectors in South Africa, and a couple of collectors in Hong Kong. Now there are masses of them everywhere: Singapore, Korea, Japan, all looking for art. Russia. And it may last for a while. But it's people that discover that it's a great way to live and enjoy life, the art. I mean you just need to see them in the—well, you do—in the art fairs. They'd rather be there than going to a gallery and looking at a show.

MS. GONCHAROV: That's a fair activity.

MR. McKEE: And fairs are wonderful. But so are galleries, and so is the relationship you can have with the dealer and the artist, which was possible before. But that's declined in a way. I mean maybe it's just me getting me older and seeing it differently. We'll I'm glad I was around when I was. [They laugh.]

MS. GONCHAROV: You had a good time.

MR. McKEE: I had a great time, yes. So what else is there?

MS. GONCHAROV: Well, this tape's about done. I was gong to ask you about [Philip] Guston.

MR. McKEE: Guston?

MS. GONCHAROV: Just a second. I know you're probably getting really tired.

[END OF DISC 2.]

MS. GONCHAROV: Okay. Take two. Let's talk about William Tucker.

MR. McKEE: I think the experience of handling Bill Tucker is probably as rewarding as any I've ever had because it satisfies all my interests of art in a creative way, intellectual way, personal way. The work is rewarding because it moves in such a felt way, reflecting his deep interest in the history of sculpture. And yet he always seems to be able to find a new way of—a new space for himself within that history. On top of which there's a personal relationship that is infinitely rewarding and enriching that you find very, very rarely. Where the artist is really more concerned about what he creates and does than what effect it may have on the scene; as long as he can work, and accomplish his goals, he's utterly content. He's a little like Daisy Youngblood in that respect. In fact, it's interesting to know that they have struck up a relationship between themselves without any intervention from me. It's like there's a common understanding of the sort of individuals they are. They like each other, and there must be something to that that's important.

It's always moving seeing a new type of sculpture come into being because there's so much of himself in it. When you see the first armature going down, and then you see the finished thing maybe six months or eight

months later, it's an astonishing transformation of material. And you never really understand fully what it is you're looking at. But you never get tired of looking at it. Anyways, that's all I want to say about Bill. He's the most marvelous of artists to work with, and the most valuable of friends and artists to have in a gallery. It's just wonderful. And there was a reward that—with the publication of this book that I never, ever expected. And yet it's a very beautiful book to see.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, who published that? I haven't see that.

MR. McKEE: Lund Humphries. [Joy Sleeman. *The Sculpture of William Tucker*. London, 2007]. And it sort of came out of nowhere. And yet it's a very profound record of what he's done in his career. Of course it's far too serious for what goes as sculpture today.

MS. GONCHAROV: He's admired by young sculptors, absolutely.

MR. McKEE: Oh, yes. But curators just ignore him.

MS. GONCHAROV: I guess working in bronze is too traditional.

MR. McKEE: And most collectors ignore him because so few—I don't know. I guess I'm getting old-fashioned.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, my, it's a marvelous book.

MR. McKEE: Yes—yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: What other artists would you like to talk about that you show? I'm trying to think.

MR. McKEE: You mean Philip Guston?

MS. GONCHAROV: Yes, I'd love to hear about Philip Guston, what he was like. You had a long, long relationship with him. I know there are many stories, but maybe you can talk about some things—

MR. McKEE: It's a book. It's really a book. [They laugh.]

MS. GONCHAROV: What did you think when you first saw the Klans pictures?

MR. McKEE: Well, I think I said earlier that I had great sympathy because, you know, my first experiences in art were in Old Master painting. And for me it sort of was an updating of that experience brought into the present, you know. One could be looking at [Giovanni Battista] Tiepolo, the Punchinellos or—it was grand composition in a sense that had been lost in American art. Also, the imagination had gone, the invention and the imagination had gone out of art with abstraction and— I'm talking here of figurative invention and imagination. Figurative imagination. It's not like Pop art which is what you see is what you get. And the, you know, the common objects just devised in abstract ways or ways to make a painting interesting.

But this was a whole world that he had invented for himself of forms and of content. It was a way—the comic idea goes back to his early interest in comics, when comics understood that to make a point and to make a statement often was done best in humor and in comic form. You would reach more people and have more impact with a telling phrase and a telling activity of a cartoon character, than you might doing it in a sort of realistic way of just a conventional American realism of the twenties or thirties. And, well, we know today with the page, the comics page of the newspapers, that sometimes you cut them out because you see a very profound truth in the smallest of comic strips.

MS. GONCHAROV: You know Vera collected comics.

MR. McKEE: Oh, yes? Yes. They're a very serious and very sophisticated way of communication. And Guston understood that. And with the heavy message that he was trying to convey politically, which really fundamentally was a warning to mankind that it had better shape up or else it was going the same way as other eras. And the cartoon was a highly effective way of mocking everything that he disliked, reminding people of what could happen. That wasn't understood at the beginning because everybody expected—I suppose they expected more of Guston. They wanted to see that refined touch and amazing gift for handling paint. Just to continue and be ever more beautiful. You know the famous comment of [Willem] de Kooning who once said that if Philip had continued painting the paintings he did in the mid-fifties, he'd be the most famous of us all. But he was never satisfied with reaching a position where he felt he understood what he was doing. He always had that need to move on. And it deepened. Some people saw it as a lack of confidence or of indecisiveness. But it was never that way when he painted. He could be that way in private. But then a lot of artists can be that way. They're very insecure in personal situations. But a good artist isn't insecure when he's in the studio. The good ones always know exactly what it's about. But, God, they get into messes when it comes to personal situations and relationships. They can put themselves in more pokes than a pig can.

MS. GONCHAROV: Yes. [Laughs.] He had difficulties.

MR. McKEE: Huh?

MS. GONCHAROV: I said he was quite a character.

MR. McKEE: Yes. And all of them were.

MS. GONCHAROV: But you saw the cartoons right away. You appreciated them right away? Because I know he got so criticized.

MR. McKEE: Yes. To me they were just beautiful, deeply paintings. I mean when you look at them now, they look classical. When you saw them up at the Met this last year, in the atrium, they don't look strange at all.

MS. GONCHAROV: No.

MR. McKEE: They just look—they put a smile on your face. They're very powerful. They're beautiful.

MS. GONCHAROV: Those are the first things that really held that atrium at MoMA. They really—

MR. McKEE: Yes, I thought so. In fact several people at the Modern told me that as well. And I think we can thank Ann Temkin for that idea because Ann had always, when she was at Philadelphia, many years ago, wanted Guston to be in the Philadelphia [Museum of Art] collection, but she was never able to persuade the trustees to support that. And so she really found a home for herself at the Modern where they have that large group of great, great Gustons.

MS. GONCHAROV: Where did they get them? Were they donated?

MR. McKEE: From Broida.

MS. GONCHAROV: Broida gave them, okay.

MR. McKEE: I just wish they'd find a way of making some statement with them on a permanent basis instead of always rolling them out as if they don't know what to do with them. I mean they don't have that problem with Pollock and [Jasper] Johns and Warhol.

MS. GONCHAROV: Guston is still strange.

MR. McKEE: But he's still—but he isn't strange to thousands of artists—

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, no, of course not. I don't think he is. But I mean I think there's a general—

MR. McKEE: —and collectors around the world. I mean it's—

MS. GONCHAROV: He's an artist's artist.

MR. McKEE: I know. It's amazing how many—they wouldn't know how many people come here and ask to see Guston because they can't see them in the museums. Except the Met. The Met always shows theirs—to their credit.

MS. GONCHAROV: And then they had that small show, too.

MR. McKEE: Yes. Big show.

MS. GONCHAROV: I mean are they going to do anymore? I mean I could see them doing a huge show.

MR. McKEE: Who?

MS. GONCHAROV: The Met.

MR. McKEE: Well, the Met did the big show four years ago, five years ago.

MS. GONCHAROV: It didn't seem as big as it should have been. Sorry, I think of it as a small show. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: It was crammed into a much too small space.

MS. GONCHAROV: Much too small space, yes.

MR. McKEE: They should have given it that whole Tisch area instead limiting it to two frontal bays and a bit that

connects. But you should have seen where they wanted to put it originally—in that little gallery on the ground floor, where they sometimes show, anyway, I'm not getting into that

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, the one way in the back?

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, my God, that's tiny.

MR. McKEE: Yes. Yes, it was disappointing that they didn't fight for a bigger space. Therefore it looked cramped, and they had to take out some of the work. But a lot of people saw that show. It was much appreciated.

MS. GONCHAROV: Very interesting that the Morgan [Morgan Library & Museum, New York, NY] would do a show.

MR. McKEE: Well, that was beautiful.

MS. GONCHAROV: That was amazing. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: I mean that was—

MS. GONCHAROV: How did that happen?

MR. McKEE: Well, they were doing this very significant show with the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung Collection in Munich [Germany], which has a great collection of Old Masters and drawings. And they were doing an exchange exhibition, Morgan holdings and Munich holdings. It's a component of the Pinakothek in Munich. And the director of it, Michael Semff, who's busy working on the show with the Morgan and happened to meet the new curator of the Morgan Modern and Contemporary Drawings department. And she said, "What are you doing in the fall?" And he said, "We're doing a marvelous exhibition of drawings by Philip Guston. And it's going to be traveling through Europe." And she had the presence of mind to say, "Well, could it close in New York? Because it seems to me that it satisfies our desire to move into the twentieth century because Guston is almost a perfect bridge between the past and the present. So that it wouldn't feel strange for us to do a show like that."

Whereas maybe a show of, I don't know, Ellsworth Kelly drawings or something might be more extreme, which it would look fine anyway. But this seemed perfect, and they went along with it. And to improve matters, they were only going to have it in one room and the anteroom before you get into the room. And then the new director, Bill [William M.] Griswold, said, "I think we should do it in both so that one is abstract and transitional. And then the other room will be all the later work." So it was a perfect exhibition for them because it bridged those two interests.

MS. GONCHAROV: That's fantastic. Are there any other retrospectives coming up for Guston?

MR. McKEE: There's a show in Rome.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, there!

MR. McKEE: At the Museo Bilotti, Carlo Bilotti, which is where the [Giorgio] de Chirico's are, which is the former Orangerie of the Borghese Museum that housed the Borghese Gardens.

MS. GONCHAROV: When is that?

MR. McKEE: That's in May. And they will show 35 or so of the oils on paper that Guston did in Rome in 1971 when he was at the American Academy.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, he was a fellow at the Academy?

MR. McKEE: Yes. And he did 70 works there. They're going to show half of them. And that will be a very beautiful exhibition. But there's been a lot of Guston activity in the last ten years or so. The museum in Rio de Janeiro wants to recreate the Morgan Library show, but I sort of feel, well, it would be more interesting for them to see a painting show. So why a drawings show down there? They don't know who Guston is. Maybe you start with drawings and then do paintings.

MS. GONCHAROV: It's easier transportation.

MR. McKEE: Yes. Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: It's probably more practical than that. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: Yes, right. But it's too short notice. I mean these things take a couple of years to put together. And they want to do it next summer. They forget that you're doing other things. But Guston, yes. The wonderful thing about Guston was having returned to Woodstock [NY] and ignoring the rest of the art world and just painting what he wanted to see. And letting his imagination run it all. So that he gave free rein to it, and it became ever more interesting. And then ultimately it becomes deeply personal and almost autobiographical at the end. But it even transcends that limitation and becomes universal and he becomes almost everyman and facing the problems of life and death and the world. And through his own experiences and near tragedies of losing his wife, all of this sort of brought out a drama and a richness to his experience that fed that creative need. And he could translate it into pictures in the most amazing way. He didn't just sort of slump into a funk and ignore what was going on around him. It just sort of propelled him to ever more ambitious ideas. Painterly ideas and daring.

And that work is so contemporary in its feeling and so fresh and powerful, that it makes all, to my mind, all contemporary painting today, whether it's Johns or [Georg] Baselitz or Doyle [ph?], whoever it is, when you put a Guston next to it, it seems stagnant and sort of dry, and devoid of meaning, devoid of message. And really fundamentally bankrupt of genuine content. He's the most amazing master of the last 40 years, in my opinion. And it just gets even more apparent. Because every time you show—I'll put up a new painting or a painting in a summer show this week. And more people will be astounded by him than anything you can imagine. Because it all seems alive. And it all comes from the right place, from a mind and a heart and an intelligence, you know. And a gift.

MS. GONCHAROV: So you said you knew Alice Neel. You never showed her, though.

MR. McKEE: No, no. Oh, my God! Alice is—no, no. Alice wasn't—Alice's work isn't really what I show.

MS. GONCHAROV: No, it's true. It's true. I was surprised when you talked about her.

MR. McKEE: I liked Alice because one of my best friends was the next-door neighbor in the apartment building when he grew up, and she was a very kind neighbor. And because he wanted to be an artist and Alice was an artist. And she had two sons. You know he felt entirely at home in their home. So when I came to New York in '67 from San Francisco—I'd met this man in San Francisco—he said, "You've got to come and meet Alice." He was always talking about Alice. So I'd go there for dinner. And Alice was a wonderfully entertaining and amusing, kind person. And then after dinner she would get on the piano and play like a concert pianist. She was a very gifted pianist. And she accompanied—she would have people singing arias or, you know, the *Messiah* [George Frederick Handel, 1741] or *St. Matthew's Passion* [Johann Sebastian Bach, 1720s]. Richard [last name?], I think, was the tenor in the choir at maybe St. John the Divine. I don't know where he was but somewhere up there. And she would accompany him, and then you'd join in. Very entertaining person. Cruel.

MS. GONCHAROV: Well, I thought of her when you were talking about Guston because you said from the heart.

MR. McKEE: Yes, totally.

MS. GONCHAROV: Totally.

MR. McKEE: Very blunt, direct.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, I interviewed her once. [Laughs.] I'll tell you the story after we turn off the tape. [Laughs.]

MR. McKEE: I mean she could be cruel. But she maybe had every right to be. But not everybody who's had a hard time is resentful, you know. She resented it and quite rightly actually. But her work wasn't—she was very gifted. I mean much more gifted than a lot of portrait and Pop artists who deal with imagery and that. But I think that she frightened people. I think they didn't want to get involved with her because she was so intimidating. But a very courageous person. God, she had a hard life.

MS. GONCHAROV: Any other artists you want to talk about?

MR. McKEE: Well, probably I'll think about it afterwards.

MS. GONCHAROV: Any advice for young people starting in the business?

MR. McKEE: In the business or as artists?

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, either one. The business mostly.

MR. McKEE: [Laughs.] Now business, you know, having done it on our own where the first commission you made

is the roots of it all. I can't help but feel that's the way to go. To start small and let it grow. Otherwise you get locked into something false, I think. It's got to grow organically. It's got to grow through your own faith and beliefs in people and in artists. And just do it step by step. And that way a sort of maturity comes and a respect grows from what you do. A satisfaction with how you exist in it occurs. You don't really give a damn what anybody else thinks because you're secure in what you've done. I don't care if critics or collectors don't pay you any attention. It doesn't matter. Because enough give you the attention that matters. It doesn't really matter what anybody else thinks. And I think that comes with starting— I wouldn't want to just have millions or huge bucks and just have a big gallery in Chelsea [New York, NY] and all. Team up with a partner with money and all. It's never your own statement.

MS. GONCHAROV: And you never wanted to go to Chelsea?

MR. McKEE: No, I would never. I mean that was a function of cash and space. But so often I get the feeling in Chelsea that the spaces are anonymous, and they're like cruise ships, where the captain doesn't really know what's going on in the ship. You know it's just a service for the public to go and see something. I like a gallery to have a more intimate experience. And you know where if you want to sit and talk with a dealer, you can, who's not going to kick you out. I mean I remember a long time ago now we went once to [Daniel-Henri] Kahnweiler and we were with Eleanor Saidenberg, who was Picasso's dealer in New York. And we were in the gallery, and we saw her there. And she said, "Would you like to come in and meet Mr. Kahnweiler?" And I said, "Oh, yes." Now he must have been damned old by then. But he was sitting behind a desk and his ever sort of onion-shaped head, bald head, and I can't remember what was said. But it was papers and books and paintings lying around and things on the wall. And you had the feeling that there was somebody in that gallery who had made it, you know? And that's what I like galleries to feel like. But they feel almost like fashion shops in Chelsea like on Madison Avenue. When you go in, there's no people. There are no people in there. But there's a young lady in the corner behind a desk. And everything's on display. But there's no warmth. I don't know what it is about Chelsea. It doesn't feel right.

MS. GONCHAROV: No, it never has. And I think most people think that, too.

MR. McKEE: I mean—

MS. GONCHAROV: I hate going to Chelsea, where I loved SoHo.

MR. McKEE: Well, SoHo had its unique charm. I wish it was still all there.

MS. GONCHAROV: Me, too. But all the spaces look alike. They're all designed by [Richard] Gluckman. And they all have concrete floors.

MR. McKEE: Well, this is Gluckman.

MS. GONCHAROV: Oh, early then, because this is not what you think there.

MR. McKEE: But this is before Gluckman in Chelsea.

MS. GONCHAROV: Exactly.

MR. McKEE: Mind you Mary's [Mary Boone] is Gluckman. But Mary's Gluckman is like Chelsea Gluckman.

MS. GONCHAROV: Exactly. They still have the gorgeous wood floors. It's very elegant.

MR. McKEE: Yes.

MS. GONCHAROV: No concrete.

MR. McKEE: Sometimes I wish I'd had it, mind you. You can't have everything what you want, though, that's the problem. You've got to make— You know that's the secret to everything. You've got to make decisions. You've got to—you can't write this way or that with anything, with artists, with the way the gallery, you've got to make a decision how it should be. And I get the feeling a lot of times that people don't know how to make decisions. And decisions comes with a lot of experience. And even early on you can have that confidence to make the decision and live with it. And that shapes how you exist. Okay. That's it.

MS. GONCHAROV: That's it. Okay. [Laughs.] Nothing else, right?

MR. McKEE: No, nothing.

MS. GONCHAROV: Okay, okay.

MR. McKEE: And now I'll have a drink of water.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

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