



Smithsonian
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**Oral history interview with Eleanor Moty, 2014
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Eleanor Moty on November 18–20, 2014. The interview took place at the home and studio of Eleanor Moty in Tucson, AZ, and was conducted by Sharon Church for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Eleanor Moty has reviewed the transcript. Her corrections and emendations appear below in brackets with initials. This transcript has been lightly edited by for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

SHARON CHURCH: This is Sharon Church interviewing Eleanor Moty at the artist's home and studio in Tucson, AZ. This is the first disk and I am recording on November 18, 2014. This is card number one.

[In progress] Okay. So Eleanor, I was asking, what do you call yourself?

ELEANOR MOTY: Artist metalsmith.

SHARON CHURCH: An artist metalsmith and I asked if you think of yourself primarily as a teacher, or an artist, or both.

ELEANOR MOTY: When I taught, I was artist-teacher or teacher-artist. And now that I'm not teaching, I'm an artist.

SHARON CHURCH: You're an artist. So I was also asking when and where you were born.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] I was born in 1945 in Illinois, a small rural community near Glen Ellyn, which is about 30 miles west of Chicago. I was raised on a farm.

SHARON CHURCH: Were you born in the house?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, in a hospital.

SHARON CHURCH: You were born in a hospital, okay. And you have two older brothers?

ELEANOR MOTY: Two older brothers, 10 and 12 years older, and then an older sister Joyce, who is just under two years older than I.

SHARON CHURCH: And I was asking about who your parents were and where they were from.

ELEANOR MOTY: They were from Eastern Europe and they immigrated to the United States in 1929. They were from a small village called Roznatov in Poland.

SHARON CHURCH: How do you spell that?

ELEANOR MOTY: R-O-Z-N-I-A-T-O-W. R-O-Z-N-I-A-T-O-W.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, and you say that—

ELEANOR MOTY: Roznatov.

SHARON CHURCH: Roznatov.

ELEANOR MOTY: So they came to America, where they married in early—

SHARON CHURCH: It was an arranged marriage.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was an arranged marriage. My father had spent a bit of time already in America. His older brother Casper was here and had sponsored my dad. And then, my dad went back to Europe to marry and he married a woman from the same village, my mother, who was considerably younger than him. So it was an arranged marriage. They married in March of '29 and then almost immediately got on the ship to come over. And my mother [brought with her –EM] a featherbed and two pillows. That was all they had because they—

SHARON CHURCH: That's amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: —really did live in a really small peasant community. And of course, [the items were made with –EM] you know, feathers from the geese that they raised.

SHARON CHURCH: You just showed me some things that your mother had made that were from geese that you had on the farm.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, exactly because, she raised poultry and she raised geese, in particular, for the down. So she would strip the feathers and then, through the winter, pull the down, which is—

SHARON CHURCH: Amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: —the fluffy part right at the body. And she would strip the down hours at a time throughout the winter and put it into a big pillow case. And then, we would go to Chicago, to the ethnic area, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian area, and they imported the fine fabric, the ticking, for making pillows and comforters. And it was, like, 400-some threads to the inch, very, very fine, soft, not like that blue and white canvassy stuff that you see, no.

[Cross talk.]

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right, what we think of as ticking, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, this was just the softest. It's like your best sheets these days. And it's a very, it's very soft and it's a very tight weave so the feathers don't go through. And then she—

SHARON CHURCH: So you would go with this?

ELEANOR MOTY: I would go with her and she'd buy the yardage. And it came very wide, of course, for featherbeds. And then, she would sew up the pockets, for the featherbed and then, we would go into the bathroom, close the door, and [place the sewn ticking in the tub –EM.] And then, she would grab from the pillow case with her down, this fistful of down, and shove it down into the pockets and fill each pocket, and then, snug it closed. And then we would go outside and shake the hell out of it to distribute the down in the pockets.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: These were the kinds of things that I grew up with, that seem second nature to me because I didn't know otherwise.

So many of the things that we did were from her experience in the old country. And I showed you the little whisk broom that she made from the wings of the geese. You had the end of the wing as the right or left-hand whisk broom. It comes to a fine point and it's for getting into little crevices. And it's great for removing cobwebs. She would also make, and I still have mine, pastry brushes from the smaller feathers. She would wrap them together and tie them with twine. And then, you could brush the egg mix onto your pies and breads and so on. So, you know, I never thought how odd this was when I was growing up with it because it's what we did. She made sauerkraut. She made sausages. We butchered our own cattle. You know, all those were my every-day experience.

Now, on the other hand, I should go back to how we ended up on the farm because in 1929, the stock market crashed and my mother was the only person of the two who could get a job. It was in a garment factory. And she sort of talked her way in because here you are, using industrial sewing machines and she had never seen one before. She didn't have electricity in Europe, in her peasant village. So the foreman quickly learned that, she didn't really know how to use the machine. Most of the people working in this factory were European, mostly German. So she didn't know the language. She only knew Polish and Ukrainian, so it was a very tough time.

But people were patient with her and the foreman was as well. And he started her on shmatas, little aprons and rags. And then, because she was so adept at picking up information and she was really a good craftsman, she moved on to fine dresses. It was piece work, so you were paid by the item. She made enough money to support the two of them. They lived in the ethnic community of, Polish-Ukrainian in Chicago and they had friends who, had been there a while in America and said you know, there's a farm way out in the country and they're looking for a hired hand, someone to work on the farm. So they went out and got the job. And basically, that's what they did. They were hired hands on a farm.

My brothers were born in 1933 and '35. And as my parents worked and saved enough money, they were able to buy their own farm and it was the second farm that they had moved to, as I recall. It was another dairy farm and they bought that farm. That's the farm that I grew up on. So initially, it was cows and grain, of course. It was about 30 miles west of Chicago, so it was near Glen Ellyn, which was, a thriving little town that was like the bedroom community of Chicago. Lots of executives for their companies [lived –EM] there.

And I went to a parochial school. Three classrooms with all the grades separated out two or three at a time, and taught by, typically, nuns who were, either just out of school or elderly. And later, I thought, you know, I think they figured, how bad could it be? These rural kids aren't going to be going anywhere. So we were like the proving ground for the young ones or the, you know, catch-as-catch-can—

SHARON CHURCH: The dumping ground for the elder.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So you know, we got the basics but it was very much different than the kids that I ended up with in high school, who had gone to Glen Ellyn schools, and knew each other, since kindergarten, and had a really good public education.

SHARON CHURCH: So did you—was religion an important part of that early education?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, because it was a parochial school, it was, but I never felt it as, my calling, even though the nuns took all the girls to the convent, at some point, to try to convince us to join the convent.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, wow. So do you think that that kind of early discipline and rigor that I associate with Catholic schools—maybe I'm wrong—but do you think that had influence on who you were? You sound a lot like your mother, frankly.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think the one thing that I do remember about the Catholic upbringing or, you know, the education in this little tiny Saint Isidore, which is the patron saint of farmers, school is that the principal—well, the art classes were so pathetic. They were really minimal. The nun would take the Whitman sampler box, with the little stamp, and she would count out the little blocks. And then, she would give us a piece of graph paper. And she'd say, "Okay, pick up your red crayon and count three blocks down from the front of the room and two blocks from the door, and color that block red." And basically, she had us replicating—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] Santa Claus, oh no.

ELEANOR MOTY: The Whitman Sampler figures. It was atrocious and they would give us busywork, like tracing 150 dimes onto metallic paper and then cutting little circles out. Do you know the divots it left in your thumb?

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: So you got used to pain early on.

ELEANOR MOTY: And guess what we made from that?

SHARON CHURCH: I can't even.

ELEANOR MOTY: Rosaries.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: Rosaries to hang on the wall, so you'd glue two of these together on [laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Right, dimes together with a string? That's your early jewelry training.

ELEANOR MOTY: I guess it was. It was, even I, as a child, knew this was pathetic. But somehow—

SHARON CHURCH: I have to ask, is there an original Eleanor Moty hanging in Saint Isidore's 30 miles west of Chicago, because I'm going to have to go there and find it. Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Laughs.] All right, so I do remember however, the principal approaching my mother when she came to pick up Joyce and me at the end of a day. And she said, "Your daughters really have art ability." And she said, "I hope that you will find a way to allow them to pursue it." And I was just a young kid at the time but I [later –EM] thought—

SHARON CHURCH: Interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: —this is a very perceptive person. To this day, I still am astonished by that because how she could figure that out from the art projects we were doing, I don't know. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: But Joyce also became an artist.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, yes, Joyce was far better than I. I mean, she really was creative.

SHARON CHURCH: No, I don't know. But that's interesting. So this nun picked up on it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Amazing.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, well, it happens.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I thought that was pretty perceptive of her. So that was probably—I think the art influence that I felt from early on came from our mother because being on a farm, we didn't have hired hands, so all the work was all of us. And when I was really little, and it was wintertime and too cold for me [or Joyce to be –EM] in the barn at milking time. She would give us projects to keep us busy in the house. She let us crochet, and do simple sewing, by hand thread, at five years old.

SHARON CHURCH: So she had confidence in you. That was a—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, that we worked ourselves, you know, we worked on the sewing machine really young. I loved ironing handkerchiefs. So she would just give me all these little busy [projects –EM] but somehow, I liked the organization of these kinds of little projects.

SHARON CHURCH: I don't think you've strayed too far. So you were talking about stuffing the batting. Is that the right word? You know, those—

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, you know, the pockets for the—

SHARON CHURCH: For the—you, and she would fill the bathtub with the down.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, no, she would put the cloth in the bathtub. And then, she had this contained volume of fine down and then, she would reach in.

SHARON CHURCH: That she had done herself.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and then she would reach in and then, with her fist closing around the down, she would push it down the pockets because if you just put the down in the room, it's just going to fly all over the place.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, it's so light.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's weightless. So it was a matter of containing everything and keeping the drafts out and everything that would move this material.

SHARON CHURCH: So not only was it kind of a pull yourself up by your bootstraps environment but as a very young child—

ELEANOR MOTY: We had responsibilities.

SHARON CHURCH: You did have huge responsibility.

ELEANOR MOTY: On a farm, everybody works. I mean, it's just the way it is. Whether it's picking the eggs or putting water in the troughs, cleaning the house, you worked from a very early age because you have to. There's so much to be done. It's not just housework but it is mowing the

grass and taking care of animals.

SHARON CHURCH: So I imagine that art was not a part of your upbringing—

ELEANOR MOTY: Not at all.

SHARON CHURCH: —given how busy your parents were just making a living.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, there was no experience with that at all.

SHARON CHURCH: But the nun knew it and it was somehow leaking out of you. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, and it was high school where my first introduction to art came because we had two really very good art teachers, two women, Ruth Ely and Fran Langguth, who taught at Glenbard West High School, where I had the good fortune to be in school with Joyce ahead of me.

SHARON CHURCH: She was two years older, so she's ahead of you. When did you switch out of Saint—

ELEANOR MOTY: Isidore? Eighth grade.

SHARON CHURCH: —Isidore? Okay, so that's a normal switch. So you went to junior high.

ELEANOR MOTY: Freshman year, no, no junior high.

SHARON CHURCH: Senior high.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, I went all the way through, one to eight, no kindergarten, one to eight at Saint Isidore. And then, the nuns really gave me grief for not going to a Catholic high school. "You will never amount to anything," they said.

SHARON CHURCH: Well why did you go to the public school?

ELEANOR MOTY: Because I wanted to, because I really felt the education was better. Both my brothers had gone to that high school.

SHARON CHURCH: So you were aware enough to make that decision and did your parents trust you?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, Joyce was already there.

SHARON CHURCH: Right, and your brothers.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, and you didn't have to pay tuition. Big difference. You had to pay tuition—

SHARON CHURCH: So it was a good thing.

ELEANOR MOTY: —at the Catholic school, and my parents didn't have the money for that. And the nuns really didn't understand what it was to be on a farm or grow up on a farm. They were city girls and they used to just brutalize us verbally for not coming to the choir to sing on a saint's day that was a Saturday or in the middle of the week. Well, gee, you know, there was no public transportation. We couldn't drive. The parents were [busy on the farm –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: And you had chores.

ELEANOR MOTY: You couldn't just leave to sing in the choir that day and they didn't understand any of that. And of course, you're not supposed to talk back or, you can't speak up. So it was really rude, you know, when I think back to it. It was, so naïve of them and unthinking not to know who their audience was and who they were dealing with. All those things, Sharon, they really ingrain in your brain. I mean, I haven't thought of that for decades but it's part of what makes you more sensitive.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure. I'm thinking of the discipline, the rigor, the self-reliance, and all of these things I see in your work today. So it all makes sense that you have this kind of, I wouldn't say difficult but demanding upbringing.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], you had to be self-sufficient, certainly on a farm, because you didn't always have the money to have repairmen come in to do things, so the family, my brothers, my dad, did all the electrical and all the repairs. And consequently, I became very familiar with tools and machinery from early on, which was to my advantage, obviously. Because we didn't have many friends, I mean, all the farms were separated. There was no public transportation. So Joyce and I were our own best friends and we had to make our own entertainment and fun. And we always had pets and animals, which, who wouldn't be happy with that. Little kids love animals. We always had lots of cats and dogs and, chickens and geese and the whole gamut of critters of all kinds. So I think that that environment where you had to be a problem solver and you had to, be content in kind of solitude because you were—you had a lot of alone time. You weren't constantly stimulated with lessons. I mean, there were no music lessons. There were no swimming lessons. There was no library. There were no concerts, movies, theaters, none of that.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you have radio?

ELEANOR MOTY: We had radio. We [had –EM] television, I think, we got [a TV in –EM] the mid-'50s and, of course, back then, television was a few hours a day. There wasn't much, but that was pretty exciting, getting a black and white TV. But prior to that, yes, we had radio. You know, there wasn't a lot of outside stimulation, though.

SHARON CHURCH: Right, no, I'm getting that. So you made for yourself. You did for yourself. I think that those are good—those may have inspired you to become an artist.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, without question, it's, you know, so much of who I was and the other thing was the visual aspect of growing up on a farm and always seeing the horizon line. I came to realize how different that was, especially when I lived in Philadelphia during grad school because you do not see the horizon line. The horizon line is the building next to you. And looking out onto the field, let's say you're sitting in the dining room having breakfast and you look across the land. You see the patterns that the plantings make and the seasonal changes of the growth of the new grass or the new corn, you know, it's really short. And it's in this pattern, this crosscheck pattern. Then, as it gets taller, there were the sweeping lines of the wind taking it back and forth, and then the green changing from a gray-green to a bright green and a gray-green. And then, it goes into the gold browns, like corn, for instance.

SHARON CHURCH: These are colors that you use now in your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: I do, and also, the patterns and textures, finally when the corn is harvested and now you've got the stubble, this brown stubble.

SHARON CHURCH: And what about the snow?

ELEANOR MOTY: And then the snow and the stubble comes up through the snows, so you got little dots and dashes coming up through white blankets. And then, the drifting snow, and it just immerses the entire landscape. So all of that imagery is ingrained in me and I remember thinking about it and really being conscious of it as a child and a young person and teen, and so on. So that forevermore, whenever I'm traveling or wherever I am, I'm conscious of the landscape.

SHARON CHURCH: That's so interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: Here in Arizona, the horizon line is so erratic. Back in the plains of Illinois, it was absolutely flat. Here, it's an erratic horizon line and the depth, we are surrounded by four mountain ranges. The sun is out almost every day, so you've got shadow lines. However, when it rains, the mountains really emerge. They look flat when you've just got sun on them, but then, when you've got clouds coming over and rain, you see the depths and levels.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh. Right now, you're correct. That does look flat, when I look at it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and the darkness on top is, that's six and eight thousand feet, so those are trees. That's really green when you're up there. It's pine trees up there.

SHARON CHURCH: What is the name of that mountain range? What are the four mountain ranges that surround you?

ELEANOR MOTY: The Catalinas, those are the Catalinas, the Rincons, the Tucson Mountains, and the [Santa Ritas –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: What are the Rincon—how do you spell the Rincons?

ELEANOR MOTY: R-I-N-C-O-N. Rincons are there, Catalinas.

[...–EM]

SHARON CHURCH: So it's a different landscape here.

ELEANOR MOTY: —different being out here. I appreciate the fact that the sun is shining all the time because it just [lifts –EM] your spirits, you know, when you don't have this depressing wet cold, as in the Midwest. It's, like, why am I feeling so punky today and I realize oh, it's cold and wet grey and brown that's the other thing. There's always something green and always something blooming. And in the Midwest, in the winter things turn gray and brown, and then the snow got dirty, and it was really depressing.

SHARON CHURCH: And yet, when I look at your work, I see, I can understand your youth in that environment. Do you think you're here in Arizona as a kind of response to how—in response to that environment that you grew up in?

ELEANOR MOTY: No. I'm here in Arizona because of my relationship with Michael [Croft], truthfully. I mean, I don't think that I would have moved to Arizona. I hadn't thought about it, initially. But I always appreciate wherever I've settled. And being in Arizona has not changed my work because I still deal with ice.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, you do.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh my God, ice was so much a part of my life for so much of my life. So that whole business of ice and the stones that I use and, it's ingrained.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, it is. Okay. Looking back at our questionnaire, I have to ask you what your first encounter with making jewelry was, but it seems like it was those rosaries. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, yeah, I guess. I hadn't thought that, Sharon, but otherwise, when I was in high school, I was making Christmas gifts.

SHARON CHURCH: What were the names of your teachers, by the way?

ELEANOR MOTY: Ruth Ely, E-L-Y, and Fran Langguth, L-A-N-G-G-U-T-H.

[...-EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: Mrs. Langguth took Joyce and me to Northern Illinois University to see the art program where she had studied. And that was pretty cool because—

SHARON CHURCH: So she must have recognized that the both of you were very talented.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, both of these women did. They were very nurturing and very supportive. Well, Joyce and I hadn't thought about, oh, there's an art program, in the university?

SHARON CHURCH: Or that would even be a possibility.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, exactly. So I remember going through the program and, just seeing the studios and it was fascinating. And Fran also had a shop where she sold greenware, ceramic greenware, and she hired Joyce and me to clean the greenware. Take the edges off and then glaze them for the shop. Then she designed—you're going to love this—

SHARON CHURCH: This is great.

ELEANOR MOTY: —she designed little stencils, stencil patterns, like flowers and animals and so on. They were called *Flaps by Fran*, and she hired me to cut the stencils. And it was certainly, a 4/5ths cut around, like a leaf with a stencil knife. Then she sold them in little packets, and I got \$0.25 to \$0.50 a packet for cutting the *Flaps by Fran*.

SHARON CHURCH: But to this day, you are so accurate about everything.

ELEANOR MOTY: I was fast. I really made some spending money on *Flaps by Fran*. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: That's wonderful. So at this point, you're not traveling anywhere.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, but I have to tell you my first jewelry, Sharon.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, okay, first jewelry, yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because I was making Christmas gifts, you know. I didn't have any money. We didn't get allowances and *Flaps by Fran* could only give me so much money.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is great.

ELEANOR MOTY: So I began making stained glass pins.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, right. I read that, yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: I would cut the little shapes and put [them –EM] onto masking tape. And then, I would take a piece of iron wire and wrap it around and snug it up. And then, I used a tube of liquid aluminum and squished it in, like squeegeed into the little spaces and around the outside, let it cure. And oh, yes, I also had to glue on the ready-made pin back, you know, the little commercial pin backs?

SHARON CHURCH: Sounds fantastic. Do you have any of these?

ELEANOR MOTY: I might. I have to look.

SHARON CHURCH: Please.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, gosh, Sharon, you'll be the only person seeing them in 50 years.

SHARON CHURCH: No, I think we need to photograph them.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, I—once it was cured, dry, I would peel the tape off and then, the last job was the patina with India ink, rub it in, so it looked like a stained glass window.

SHARON CHURCH: Where did you sell these?

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, I'm trying to remember. I think other students and teachers bought them from me and I think they were \$5 to \$10.

SHARON CHURCH: That's a great source of income.

ELEANOR MOTY: I sold a lot of them.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you give up *Flats by Fran*?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, eventually. I think that they sort of ran the course.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: She must have been unhappy. Oh, God, so am I correct in assuming that you were pretty busy in that community and you didn't travel a whole lot?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, no, uh-un. [Negative.] There was no traveling.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you go do Chicago?

ELEANOR MOTY: I did, when I was in high school. That was my, well, prior to that as a child, we'd go to Chicago to the ethnic neighborhoods to visit relatives, and also to deliver eggs and poultry, you know, to people who were—

SHARON CHURCH: And down.

ELEANOR MOTY: Never into the Loop.

SHARON CHURCH: No, the, I'm thinking your down comforters.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, the down? No, we didn't sell those. Those were for family.

SHARON CHURCH: Those were for the family, yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM] and I still have them and she made pillows for her great-grandchildren and I continue that tradition when the little ones are born, since my mother's long gone. I take feathers out of one of my comforters and make the baby pillows for the kids.

SHARON CHURCH: That so wonderful, so you continue—

ELEANOR MOTY: And they treasure them, [yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: —this craft and tradition.

ELEANOR MOTY: And they treasure them. And over the years, when the little covers wear [out –EM], I say, "As long as I'm alive, just give me the pieces and I'll repair them for you and I'll make new covers."

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's wonderful.

ELEANOR MOTY: So as the kids went from little tiny, you know, teddy bear patterns and into high school, I changed the covers.

SHARON CHURCH: You were constantly changing.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Was your mother excited that you and Joyce—

ELEANOR MOTY: Went to art school?

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, that was quite interesting because, you know, Joyce and I really knew by high school that we were going to go on in art. Oh, our—we should go back to our experience in going to Chicago. That really came in high school and my first visit to the Art Institute was in high school. And we then, with our friends, we could take the train into the city.

SHARON CHURCH: So it was freedom, independence, and art.

ELEANOR MOTY: Especially when we could drive. That was great.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, boy.

ELEANOR MOTY: So we would take the train into the Loop and uh, mainly, you know, with our girlfriends to shop and see the Christmas decorations at Marshall Field's—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, always good.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and Carson Pirie Scott with that beautiful Louis Sullivan wall which, at that time, I didn't know about. But eventually—

SHARON CHURCH: You loved it anyway.

ELEANOR MOTY: I loved it anyway and always remembered it and, of course, studied it in art history. But in our decision to study art, my mother always said, "I can't give you any money, but you really must get a good education. And that's the most important gift, to encourage you to get an advanced education." Because, she hadn't been educated and she learned by necessity and she read. She was just intuitively bright, really smart.

SHARON CHURCH: You mentioned that her education stopped at sixth grade. When did your parents separate?

ELEANOR MOTY: When I was in high school.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, so you were already feeling independent and going into Chicago.

ELEANOR MOTY: And she was very independent as a European woman.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: My father was a very dogmatic, controlling male and she was not going to buckle under.

SHARON CHURCH: She wanted to be free.

ELEANOR MOTY: She wanted to have her own say and she did. I mean, she was a real dynamo. So she was very encouraging about our going into art and my oldest brother just bristled at that. He thought that was ridiculous, that we should—

SHARON CHURCH: What were your brothers' names?

ELEANOR MOTY: Eugene is the oldest and Bob, Robert, Gene and Bob.

SHARON CHURCH: Thank you. He's 12 years older, Eugene?

ELEANOR MOTY: So he was really giving my mother grief about letting us go into art. He thought we should do something more practical, Home Ec., or be secretaries. And she wouldn't have it. She just said, they're going to do what they want to do. And she was always like that.

SHARON CHURCH: So she was very strong for you?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: So there we went, Joyce ahead of me to the University of Illinois, in-state tuition, and also just happened to be an excellent school. I'm not sure I remember why Joyce ended up at University of Illinois instead of Northern, which was nearer, but perhaps she had friends or, you know, that part is beyond me. But I know why I ended up there, because Joyce was there.

SHARON CHURCH: But now you said Fran Langguth took you on a—

ELEANOR MOTY: To Northern Illinois. She gave us a tour of the art department in the summer.

SHARON CHURCH: So that must have been a potent trip.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mind boggling, I mean, it was, here are these doors open to you.

SHARON CHURCH: So you were able to see.

ELEANOR MOTY: What a studio is like and the kinds of coursework you could take. She took us to the ceramic studios. She took us through, I think, the jewelry studio. I don't remember but, the paint, printmaking, all of them because, in high school, you have one room. Everything's done in one room. So the fact that you went from building to building and all this stuff was there, it was pretty amazing.

SHARON CHURCH: So—but you decided to go to the University of Illinois.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Because Joyce was there.

SHARON CHURCH: Because Joyce was there and that's in Champaign-Urbana.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] And I went down there for Little Sisters Weekend to visit Joyce and I thought I was going to go into art education because, of course, that's what Fran Langguth did.

SHARON CHURCH: That's what everybody did.

ELEANOR MOTY: And, Ruth Ely, and they were good mentors to us. Well, Joyce's friends in the dorm were showing us the jewelry that they had made in their jewelry class and I went, "There's a class in jewelry?"

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: I did the same thing. But you knew. Isn't that strange?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I really wanted to do something, you know. I liked the whole idea of hand tools and the physicality of it.

SHARON CHURCH: You mentioned that you liked the tools on the farm.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So were you predisposed to thinking about tools?

ELEANOR MOTY: Not so much. I just wasn't intimidated by [tools and machines –EM]. And I kind of liked the uniqueness of [metal work which was –EM] less anonymous than painting.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: A smaller community.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you like the detail and the precision?

ELEANOR MOTY: I did. I liked the processes. I really did.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, I think you're still in love with the process.

ELEANOR MOTY: I am. I just couldn't move away from that. So I thought wow, this is so good. So Joyce went on my behalf to meet Professor Robert Von Neumann and said, I have this younger sister who—

SHARON CHURCH: Let's spell that, Professor—

ELEANOR MOTY: Robert and it's capital V-O-N, capital N-E-U-M-A-N-N. So Joyce went to see him and said "I have a younger sister who wants to major in jewelry." And he said, "Oh, no, no, no, tell her to stay in art education, and she can take classes on the side." So I started and in my freshman year, I soon realized, oh my God, I'm not going to get jewelry until I'm a junior. I'm going to have all these tedious art education classes in the meantime. So I went back to Von Neumann and he gave me the same story. And he said, "No, no, no, no, there's no future in jewelry. Stay in art education."

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So I continued another semester and I went back to him. And I said, "I can't do this. I really want to be a major in jewelry." And he said "Oh, okay. In that case, if it's your decision, that's fine." He says, "I just didn't want you to ruin your life and be responsible for it."

SHARON CHURCH: Encouragement through negativity.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And you see, he was no longer doing jewelry. He was doing ceramic sculpture, even though he was very famous in the 50s.

SHARON CHURCH: I still use his book.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, and his book was the only book that we used, too. Phillip Morton's book was available but we didn't have a studio library and I really hadn't uncovered any of that yet in the art library. It came later. So I took jewelry [classes –EM] out of sequence, but you know, I had such a good art program there. The freshman classes were taught by full professors, not T.A.s. And it was the weeding out, so that anybody could get into art and then they would say, "I don't think this is for you," or, that's how it worked. And I had really, really good freshman professors. So I had 2 and 3-D design. I had drawing, of course, and architectural drawing.

SHARON CHURCH: Were you taking beginning classes at, and you were older?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, I was really young. I mean, I started university just turning 18 in the fall.

SHARON CHURCH: The reason I'm asking is that you were an art education major for a while.

ELEANOR MOTY: Not really, only a year.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, only a year, okay, so.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, it didn't take me long. It took me one semester [to realize –EM] "This isn't going to work."

SHARON CHURCH: "I don't want this." So when did you become a jewelry major, in that sophomore year?

ELEANOR MOTY: Sophomore year.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, good.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's when I started taking. I had to get all the basics out, you know, those two semesters of drawing and design. And, of course, all the academics. What was really an issue is that, at that time, you had to go into this giant place to register. You had to go from table to table to register and your first thing was getting your art classes because you had labs, three-hour blocks, morning and afternoon. So you had five days a week. You had three hours in the morning, three hours in the afternoon, and you had Saturday morning classes: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. You had Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. So try to fit academics in at 8:00 in the morning, at noon, and at 5:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. So the only things left were terrible.

[They laugh.]

Like, accelerated geology? That is not a good fit for me.

SHARON CHURCH: But look at your work with stones.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, but man, did I have to work. I failed. [Those were –EM] my first failing grades, geology. I had to take it over. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Well, something stuck.

ELEANOR MOTY: But only because of the field trips and I'd pick up rocks. I wasn't listening too much. The theory—

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, but it still contributed to your development.

ELEANOR MOTY: It did. It did, and it was a real challenge because my time was so dedicated to the studio that, you know, we have a field trip to go see Clayton Bailey doing clay at Whitewater and I'd say "Yeah, count me in." And I missed my midterm. Not a good thing. The professors don't like that. So, I mean, these were T.A.s, of course, in the academics, but anyhow, I got through but it was a struggle.

But the studio classes were phenomenal and I had such good professors. Don Pilcher in ceramics came just out of Chouinard in L.A. Real fired up young guy to take over, and teach the advanced clay. And Don Frith, an older gentleman, was also teaching clay. The two of them were really good. I didn't work with Don Frith. I worked with Don Pilcher and we had such a good group of students. It was the Vietnam War and that was really an important time in art. Because of the draft, the men wanted to stay out of the war [and –EM] they were determined to get jobs straight out of school. So you could imagine how dynamic the competition was. Everybody was really pushing one another in a really good sense to do their best.

SHARON CHURCH: Interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I learned that it wasn't just in my program at U of I. Later on, I learned that all the schools across the nation had that same experience. And the movers and shakers came out of those programs: [Artists –EM] critics, curators, teachers, directors, those were the people of that time. And it quickly pushed, [them –EM] into prominence and importance.

SHARON CHURCH: That's an interesting observation.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was really something and I think back on that. I kind of allied myself with the clay people. Joyce was in graphic design initially and then she went to San Francisco and worked in graphic design for a year or two. [When –EM] I visited her, I was so revved about the craft program at U of I and she said, "You know, I think I'll come back to school." So she came back to U of I to enter the craft program in clay. And it was so ironic because when I entered, I was Joyce's little sister and so welcomed because she was so talented and intelligent. And then, when she came back and I was a craft major, and she's following me, everybody was, welcoming her. So we were like the dynamic duo. And we, as a group of artists, started a guild to sell our work and give a percentage of the proceeds to establish a visiting artists fund in the crafts because the art department didn't sponsor anyone in crafts to come to speak. They've sponsored the real arts, you know, the painting and sculpture. And uh, I think the person, first person we brought in was Kenny Bates, Kenneth Bates [an enamelist –EM] from Cleveland.

And to my understanding, I think Billie has said—Billie Theide—has said that the program still exists and it's really important. Chouinard is why it happened because Pilcher said that Chouinard had established this [when he was a student –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: Chouinard is a school in California?

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], in LA.

[. . . –EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: So he said, "We had a program and the public waits for a sale. The line goes around the block because people come to this sale."

SHARON CHURCH: Isn't that great? Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it got to be that way, to some extent, at Illinois, where people came to buy. We would test everything. Mostly, it was ceramics. We would see that the handles were right. It didn't have sharp edges—perfection and care all the way along, so we really gained a reputation with that. So I have, you know, Von Neumann mainly teaching the beginning techniques because he wasn't doing jewelry anymore. So most of the time, he didn't have advanced students. He had—

SHARON CHURCH: But his book is full of beginning technique—

ELEANOR MOTY: But he didn't teach that.

SHARON CHURCH: —so that makes sense to me.

ELEANOR MOTY: He didn't teach it anymore. He only taught the basics of jewelry in the first class.

SHARON CHURCH: He's good at that, yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: I was now into the second and third semester and I wanted to learn some more advanced stuff, I'd say well how about enameling? And he [says –EM], "Well, the enamels are in the cabinet down there and you just take the powder and you put it into the mortar. And then you put a little water in. You take the pestle and you grind it and this white water will come off. And you rinse it off and then you pack it on," and he didn't tell me anything about fluxes for reds or anything else. So I would fire it and everything that said, red or whatever came our khaki. And I thought, "Well, there was something wrong here. These are all mislabeled."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: So it wasn't until, I think it was 1967 that I went to Arrowmont as an assistant. And that was through my weaving teacher in Home Ec., Betty Street. She was the assistant director and she said, "I would really like you to come with me this summer to be an assistant at Arrowmont." And I thought, well okay. Joyce and I typically were working as waitresses at a country club in the summer to make our expenses. But I think somehow I managed to leave for six weeks or so and do Arrowmont. And I had no choice, but I was made the assistant to Helen Worrell, who was Kenneth Bates's student years back. So she was an older lady and a very skilled enamellist. And boy, did I learn enamels from her. And she worked me like a dog. I made the entire panel of enamel samples.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, I can believe it.

ELEANOR MOTY: With, like, 12 firings out of each one. They still exist, probably. But anyhow, I really learned proper enameling from her. And I also learned macramé because I think it was Dona Meilach who came in and had just [published –EM] her book on macramé.

SHARON CHURCH: I just want to correct this or in my own mind. Betty Street took you to Arrowmont.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, because she was the assistant director there, so I rode with her.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, assistant director, okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, from Illinois to Gatlinburg.

SHARON CHURCH: And then how did you do enameling?

ELEANOR MOTY: I was the assistant to Helen, so that was a class that I was enrolled in.

SHARON CHURCH: That makes sense, okay, so—and that's how you did 12 firings for hundreds of samples, right?

ELEANOR MOTY: That was on the side, but then I also made things. And I remember, Helen was one of those people who used ready-mades, like little ashtrays and bowls and trays and things like that. And you know, everyone did kind of a little Dutch pattern where you take tulips and round the edge of the bowl. And I came back with this plate with the pattern going off the edges. And she said, "But the pattern's going off the edges." And I said, "Yes, it is."

SHARON CHURCH: Do you like that?

ELEANOR MOTY: I'll show these pieces to you because I have them here.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's so great.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then I took one of my printmaking plates, you know, etched, and I cut it in half in kind of a landscapy crag so I could fit it into the kiln. And I did them in two panels with enamels. Well, she went ballistic. She told the director that I was ruining the kilns but I was really going off the charts with the kinds of projects that I was doing.

SHARON CHURCH: What do you think gave you that freedom to break the rules?

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't know. I think that sense of independence that you had growing up and having to problem solve and come up with ideas, perhaps. You know, I didn't have that much instruction. I was sort of self-motivated.

SHARON CHURCH: And somehow you had learned that that was something to rely on.

ELEANOR MOTY: It worked for me, especially, when it came to Von Neumann saying "You're on your own, kid. There are books. Go look," you know, like whatever it was. I had to research it.

SHARON CHURCH: People had been saying that to you all your life.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, if you want it, go get it. It'll mean more to you. If you have to work for it, it's much better.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, good.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then—

SHARON CHURCH: So I was shocked to learn that you did photo-etching, photo electroforming and there was another one.

ELEANOR MOTY: Electroforming.

SHARON CHURCH: Electroforming.

ELEANOR MOTY: As an undergrad.

SHARON CHURCH: As an undergrad?

ELEANOR MOTY: That was pretty interesting because I was the studio assistant, to Von Neumann. And so I was in the studio a lot and—

SHARON CHURCH: Did you become that in your junior year?

ELEANOR MOTY: Probably. See, I spent five years at U of I because I had failed two classes, whoa.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Purposefully.

ELEANOR MOTY: So I had to make them up and that meant an extra semester. And then, it just made sense to just stay and work, which was the best thing that could have happened to me. At the time, it was all hard. And I remember my mother getting my report card and she's saying, "Eleanor, does an F—wait a minute, does an F mean failure?" And I said—

SHARON CHURCH: She wasn't used to that.

ELEANOR MOTY: No. Well, she didn't have an education, so it was, like, what do these letters mean? But she saw the bottom of a list, you know, and she said, "Is that a failure?" And I said "Yeah, mom, but don't worry about it. I'll make it up. It's okay." And that was the end of the conversation. It was not a problem. She trusted me.

SHARON CHURCH: That's so great.

ELEANOR MOTY: She just always had this support. She just—she just thought, "You're on your own. You're doing it well? Fine, good. I'll be your support system," and she always was.

SHARON CHURCH: It's so terrific.

ELEANOR MOTY: There was a student from engineering who came into the studio, the beginning class, and he wanted to use photo-etching, which he knew from engineering, printed circuitry.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he was explaining it and I thought, well that's really interesting. So he brought in the Kodak chemicals and the booklet. And he was trying to do this under the fluorescent lights, you know, the exposure. And I thought, wow, that's really amazing. I would love to do something like that. So I was kind of playing with it and experimenting. And Von Neumann at the same time was really interested in pursuing electroforming, on his scale for sculpture. And Stanley's [Lechtzin –EM] workshop and his *Craft Horizons* article had been published, you know, where he had Olaf [Skoogfers –EM] and a whole bunch of, important metalsmiths [came –EM] together, probably in the '60s. So he said, "I would like you to come with me to this lab where my colleague friend is setting us up to do some samples." So we walk into the lab and it's the photo-etching lab in engineering. I couldn't believe my good luck.

SHARON CHURCH: Now what was the name of this student? Do you remember?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, I don't know the student, no, no, no. Just—just in passing.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, but it was because a fellow student brought this in and—

ELEANOR MOTY: Made me aware.

SHARON CHURCH: —and brought you over there and then you—

ELEANOR MOTY: No, he didn't bring me over there. It was Von Neumann who wanted to do [electroforming –EM] that happened to be set up in that very lab. So we go over to do the electroforming and there's a battery charger and a rheostat and a little beaker of copper sulfate and some copper anodes. So we're kind of over here with this chemist. And over there, I'm looking at the photo-etching setup, with the spray etchers and the xenon pulsed arc vacuum table. I kind of wheedle away from the electroforming and I talk to the gentleman who is the technician there, an older man, Jim Cummings. And I said, "I'm very interested in this and I've been experimenting with it."

Well, he started laughing when I told him what I had been doing and how. He says, "Well, that is not going to work." And he said, "Why don't you just come in here and work with me? I'll show you how to do it." And I thought, wow, really? And he said "Sure, no problem. Just, come in whenever you can. I'm here every day." So now, I'm doing both things simultaneously because Von Neumann, [left –EM] it up to me to do the research on both of them. I remember, he gave me, I think it was a bird claw, and a leaf or something like that, that he wanted to do a little test with, so we electroformed them and we both thought, wow, yeah, great.

And the chemist said, you like that surface? We worked years to get rid of that surface and it was, you know, just knobby, and textured, and grody. But anyhow, by the fact that both were complex processes, the only way I could keep up with it was to blend them and work them simultaneously

and combine them. So with Jim Cummings, I was able to make the half-tone transparencies.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then I etched copper and copper alloys, brass, bronze. I etched nickel silver, I think titanium also, at some point. I'm not sure because maybe titanium wasn't on the board then. But any of the metals that he was using for electron microscope parts and, you know, he'd make all these, really incredibly finessed units and parts for electron microscopes, and fine work, and circuitry. And then, I would bring in my own sheets of copper, thicker.

SHARON CHURCH: So it was mostly ferric chloride etching?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mostly—yes. If I wanted to do silver, I had to do that on my own with nitric. And then, I think, no actually, I think that perhaps he introduced me to ferric nitrate, which is a cleaner etch than nitric acid. But anything that was copper substrate I could do there with a spray etcher, which was total efficiency. It was really good. And because, at this point, I had access to all his great equipment, I had no limitations. But the irony, Sharon, was that I had worked so hard to bring my jewelry into the third dimension because that was difficult for me. I mean, starting with flat sheets and forming it, it didn't come naturally. And I was always really surprised and impressed by the industrial design students in the jewelry class who could. I mean, they thought in the third dimension and I wasn't there yet, so I really had to push myself and struggle [with –EM] technique and bring volume into my work. And now, I'm working with photo-etching, which is a contact printing process, which has to be flat. So it's kind of ironic that this is the switch back.

SHARON CHURCH: But you went on to develop etching and photo exposures onto dimensional—

ELEANOR MOTY: In the dimension, and that was in grad school.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, but it's interesting that that was sort of a carrot, you know, then, at the beginning.

ELEANOR MOTY: The other thing that was very significant was that *Craft Horizons* did a cover feature on patinas. And I thought, whoa, is this fabulous. So I'm doing the photo-etching, so I began mixing patinas to color, almost like photo tinting. And I did a pendant where I colored the clothes. It was my brothers and my sister and I, and I colored our clothes with patinas, you know, like an orange shirt, a blue shirt, rust color. It was really great, you know, very selectively with a Q-tip or a brush applying the patina on copper. And I used patina for paint.

SHARON CHURCH: Did that last or did it eventually—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: So it was interesting. Every time I would find a process, I'd [think–EM], "Oh, I like that. I'm going to do that." So I always made my projects and learning combine. I'd say, okay, you're going to do a hidden hinge and a box catch, and you do this setting and that. So it was a combination of learning processes.

SHARON CHURCH: Is that something that you wanted to do out of this sense of efficiency—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: —or was it encouraged?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, it was—

SHARON CHURCH: No, it was you out of efficiency.

ELEANOR MOTY: —purely self-motivated because there's only so much time and I spent so much time doing samples and tests and research, which you—

SHARON CHURCH: For other people.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and also for myself, which you don't see the end result yet. I mean, it's just, like, that didn't work. Six and a half hours gone. And I'm still doing academics because I'm at a major university, so it was a lot of work. I mean, it was just this constant, go from one class to the other. It was kind of interesting because I took printmaking and your hands—you know, so I was thinking about this the other day. We were so naïve about hazards. Now we know that the skin is the largest organ and you take in toxins through your skin. We would put our hands in the printmaking [tray –EM] and rub them through turpentine, aye, yi, yi. So my hands, my fingernails were all black from the ground. Then, I would go to ceramics and throw pots to clean my hands.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Well, that was efficient of you.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was very efficient. But you know, the photo-etching thing and the patinas, and then I was using copper and because I was making so many etchings in copper, I would overlay with other colors of metal so that I'd get these really nice patina colors just by oxidation and liver of sulfur. So I do parts of silver and I don't think I was using gold very much at all as an undergrad, maybe for casting only. But I do copper, brass, bronze, silver on my copper pieces and patina them. And I just did tons of photo etched tie tacks, which I sold, and pins, which I sold. And, you know, it really made a difference in having a little spending money to then invest in tools, hand tools and tools for my studio, and also materials. Another of the professors who really had an important impact, well, oh, Pilcher, I have to mention significant.

SHARON CHURCH: Spell Pilcher.

ELEANOR MOTY: P-I-L-C-H-E-R.

SHARON CHURCH: And first name?

ELEANOR MOTY: Don.

SHARON CHURCH: Don Pilcher, he was teaching ceramics?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and boy, he was a demanding dynamo. And he taught by example because he worked constantly and he did beautiful porcelain.

SHARON CHURCH: Did he work in the studio there?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, I think he had a side room, yeah. He had his private studio in there.

SHARON CHURCH: So he taught by example, yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he, I remember when he fired his first kiln of his pieces, and he always did gorgeous glazes. And we're all gathered around to see it because, we had seen the process all the way through. We're watching him and he's working silently. And he's not saying anything to us. And he takes the pot and he turns it over. And we're going "Oh, that's so beautiful." And he takes a hammer and smashes it to smithereens, one after another. And we're saying, "No, those are beautiful. We'll take it. Don't throw them away. We'll take them."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he wouldn't speak. He just kept [smashing –EM] crushing them. I think he kept, maybe, two pieces out of the entire load. And he never said a word but, you know, the lesson that I learned I've always remembered: Never let something leave your hands unless it's your best work.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] So you got that in undergraduate school.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, and boy, I just thought wow, he didn't have to say a word, but I knew what the lesson was. No, it's not a giveaway.

SHARON CHURCH: No, that's good.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, so that was very important. Doyle Moore was another.

[... –EM]

[END OF TRACK.]

ELEANOR MOTY: He had been one of Joyce's graphic design professors, and I [took –EM] his calligraphy course. Doyle was really the Renaissance man. He had established the Folk Club at the University of Illinois, and he had a folk band or a folk group called the "Philo Glee and Mandolin Society," and I have it written down so you can see that. And, he performed and it was the PG&E. He played the autoharp and they sang folk songs and they were amazing. I went to some of his performances and it was just like a revelation and, you know, years later Michael and his friends, who had been at Carbondale as grads, they knew Doyle Moore and the "Philo Glee and Mandolin Society."

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's so great.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, one day, Doyle came in to teach our class, and he gave us a lesson in *ikebana*. And, I had never heard the term.

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I didn't know there was such a thing as Japanese floral arranging and it was fascinating. He was also a master in the tea ceremony. So, when I say "Renaissance man," he was the Renaissance man.

SHARON CHURCH: So what did you take from that?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think, just, you know, the sensitivity [and realization –EM] that there is more to learn—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —than you know about. There is stuff out there that you have yet to encounter. You know, just the idea that you would take flowers and make an artful arrangement. Because, I've seen bouquets of flowers and yes, florists do this, this and this. But, ikebana is so different, because it is a combination of a rock and a piece of bark and a piece of moss.

SHARON CHURCH: Right, the rules.

ELEANOR MOTY: So different, and so allied to my aesthetic.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, I'm thinking about the hummingbird nests that I just saw in your studio. And, even though you're an abstract artist, I could see a connection.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: You are looking.

ELEANOR MOTY: They are just so beautiful.

SHARON CHURCH: Composing.

ELEANOR MOTY: And, here is this little critter that's putting all these little bits and pieces of things together in such an artful way. It's like, oh, my God. Even to the point where it's little bits of crap making a texture around the top edge of the nest. It's like, oh, my God, this is so amazing.

So, Doyle—I had a friendship with him throughout his life. He died only last year. And, here was a man who designed type, typefaces in graphic design. He made paper and marbled paper and he bound—made books, bound books. He was a fabulous cook and baker. When he was doing his bookbinding, he'd have me make sterling silver folding bones and [scoring –EM] bones for him.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, nice.

ELEANOR MOTY: Later, because he was a tea master through all of that time, he took up ceramics to learn to make the tea bowls and accoutrements for the tea ceremony. There were sheep raised on his ranch in Kansas. He spun the wool and knitted sweaters and scarves from the wool from his sheep.

SHARON CHURCH: Why do you think we don't do that anymore? Do you know of people like that now? You're a little bit like that, but we tend to be compartmentalized.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't know, I think there are still some. We just—you know I would just have to think about it. But, I've known some fascinating people in that way. Doyle also had a cooking class, a radio call-in cooking program.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you admire that? I think about you—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, I do admire that. Especially, you didn't hear of men doing some of the things that he did. He decided he wanted to do cake decorating and learn how to make sugar roses. I mean, anything that interested him, he would just pick up.

SHARON CHURCH: And he was capable.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, man. He was just so much fun to be around because stories were just so rich and continual.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, being here in your home, you made a beautiful breakfast, you have a beautiful home, you have plants, you know about the birds, the hawk, you have many things in your studio that you look at and admire and understand. So, this—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, we have our own little world here. It's true.

SHARON CHURCH: And, you're a lot of what makes that complete.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and I also admire that in other people. You know, I love seeing other people's environments. And, I'm always like, "Whoa. Mine is always so funky by comparison." Theirs is really integrated and everything is consistent. I mean mine is so all over the place. Michael is good at purging. You know, he can separate things a lot. He does have his automaton mechanical toy collection but, otherwise, he's not a collector. I am. I've got artifacts which I can show you in drawers that to me are fascinating. The things I bought in Japan—I just love them and enjoy looking at them. And, oh, the spirit that goes into so many of those things.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. The spirit that goes into things.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, the thought process in things like when you find something hand embroidered at a thrift shop and you're like, "Oh, my God, someone put some loving care into this." My mother crocheted much of her life, until her eyesight didn't allow her to do it. So, I still have a bedspread, tablecloths, little doilies, and runners that she made—

SHARON CHURCH: Wow, great.

ELEANOR MOTY: That are just magnificent because each stitch is just perfect. You know, my crocheting when I was little was like big, little, big, little, big, big, big, little, little—

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: But you were little—

ELEANOR MOTY: And dirty fingers.

SHARON CHURCH: Somehow you had to get better and she must have sensed that.

ELEANOR MOTY: She was very dogmatic about making it right in sewing. She sewed our clothes, and Joyce and I learned sewing from her. And I remember, she used to make me rip out seams again and again to make them perfect. Finally, one day, I bought a pattern and fabric and I locked myself in the sewing room to make it myself. And, she kept knocking on the door, "Do you want help?" "No."

[They laugh.]

I just wanted to make this piece start-to-finish without her making me to rip the seams out. So, I really worked to make it as perfect as I could.

SHARON CHURCH: Perfectionist.

ELEANOR MOTY: I think I always told my students that people say hand-crafted, hand-made, you know, you really want something to be so well done that there is no question. The making of it is

not really crucial; it's the end result. It shouldn't have crude seams, it shouldn't have solder blobs sticking out, the filing should be perfect, the edges right. That's really important, otherwise, it's going to come back and bite you. Like when, forty years later, the piece shows up and you still want to be proud of it.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think people know that your work is made by hand?

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, I never thought about that, Sharon. I don't know.

SHARON CHURCH: It is so flawless.

ELEANOR MOTY: Not really, but thank you. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: And, you know all the problems, but, if you are looking at an Eleanor Moty piece, to leap ahead, it is flawless.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: And, that is important to you.

ELEANOR MOTY: It is, [yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: And, I understand what you are talking about. It's almost as if people want to see the marks of making so they can identify—

ELEANOR MOTY: That's such an interesting thought because Mary Hu always said that she could easily command the prices for her pieces because there was no question that it was hand-made because it looked difficult. She said, people see her work and they say, "Oh, my God, that must have taken you hours to do." because it is so ornate and compact.

SHARON CHURCH: But, people must be able to relate to it.

ELEANOR MOTY: They can—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because it is fiber.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Whereas, we eliminate the marks of all the work—

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And all the workmanship—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's true. So, I don't know, perhaps the casual viewer doesn't know that it's hand-made and I don't think it—I don't think they think about, "How would one do this?"

SHARON CHURCH: That's right, because you can't.

ELEANOR MOTY: Being in a museum with someone who has no experience with this at all, and, we'll be going through the Repoussé Silver Collection and I will explain to them how it's made—

SHARON CHURCH: How it's done.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and they are fascinated. They say, "I couldn't have even imagined this is the process." And, they so appreciate it, because they look at it in a totally different way from then on—having a sense of the work that went into it.

SHARON CHURCH: So we need to constantly educate and raise people's consciousness. Interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't know. I think as long as they like the end imagery, it doesn't matter to me whether or not they know it is hand-made. Having recently been in Europe, and having a show at the Munsteiner Atelier, a number of people at the opening asked me how many people work for me, because—

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —that's the norm in Europe. You don't do it yourself. And, they were astonished that I do every aspect, right down to the photography, myself.

SHARON CHURCH: Just like living on the farm—

ELEANOR MOTY: That's true.

SHARON CHURCH: You do everything.

ELEANOR MOTY: I learned—I'm so used to doing every aspect of every design myself, that when I reached the point—this was when I was teaching already—that I wanted to make some of my stones faceted.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Instead of just flat slabs, the early pieces. We had the lapidary [equipment –EM] in the studio and I started. I got the book out and da-da-da-da-da, you know, doing the steps, and I thought, "Six and a half hours later, my shoulders are aching and my results are pathetic." And, I thought, "No, give it up. Hire someone to do this." It was really hard to get into that mindset. "You don't have to do everything, you can send out and have some things done." And that's freeing.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know?

SHARON CHURCH: In terms of time and in terms of focus—

ELEANOR MOTY: And, also in terms of skill, perfection, a good result, rather than a cruddy result.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, now, it took you five years to get through the University of Illinois and then, I believe, Stanley Lechtzin offered you a scholarship?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, I—well, it was actually a fellowship. I was applying to grad schools and I applied to UW Madison because Von Neumann—and, oh, Fred Woell. We didn't talk about Fred

Woell in the undergraduate experience.

SHARON CHURCH: When did you meet him?

ELEANOR MOTY: Undergrad.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, I did not know that. You've been such good friends for so long.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, he had his undergrad degree from Von Neumann, his grad degree from Viertelhaler at UW Madison, and then—and, he was also in art education—got a degree in art education. So, he was teaching at a rural school, grade school through high school, in Wisconsin, for several years, two or three years, anyhow. And, he now came back to Champaign-Urbana to work as Frank Gallo's sculpture assistant.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Since he was still doing jewelry, Von Neumann said, "Sure, you know, come use the studio. No problem. Just use it in your own time and you can work in our studio." So, I'm working in this studio and this really shy, quiet guy is hanging around, and I'm thinking, "Who is he? He's not a student; he's older." So, we got to talking and that was my first introduction to Fred Woell. We both worked in the studio endless hours. I would make hot chocolate, and it was always lumpy hot chocolate because it was powdered milk, cocoa, and water.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: He still talks about that.

SHARON CHURCH: That is so great.

ELEANOR MOTY: But, we would have time to chat and he was such a good influence because he was involved in the showing, and he would encourage me to enter exhibitions, so that was really my first introduction to that.

SHARON CHURCH: But, as friends?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. [Affirmative.] He wasn't my teacher. He was just kind of a mentor. And, giving me good advice and then he would also give me very frank critiques. Von Neumann wasn't much for that, especially after the beginning class, you were really on your own. So, Fred Woell would say, "That is really a piece of crap."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: And, I'd say, "What's wrong with it?" And, he'd say, "Well, you know, you really haven't thought about how you put these together"—it was really so precipitous that it would happen that way because—

SHARON CHURCH: Would you critique his work? Or, just he critiqued yours?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, there was nothing—I didn't know enough to critique his work and his work at the time was still the cast silver. Then he went to New York to deliver a Gallo Show to New York, and took some of his jewelry, his cast jewelry, along, and they were just not interested. They said,

"Only gold sells. Make it in gold and we can sell it for you." He was so ticked off with that, that he came back to the studio and began making anti-jewelry. And, the first piece was this block of wood, and he broke a piece of mirror in the center of it, and then stapled, and then he torched it and put some varnish on it and hit it with the torch and burned it. I called it "The Tortured Piece of Wood." And, I'm watching this thing happen and I said, "Fred, what are you doing?" And, he said, "Well, I am so ticked off that the only thing that has anything to do with value is the intrinsic value of the material. I am going to make anti-jewelry."

And, that was the first piece and it still had the cool little copper hinge mechanism for the cord to go through. So, that was a turning point for him and a learning experience for me, too.

SHARON CHURCH: What—now, I think of Fred as being political and social and I think of you as being formal and critical. So, Fred is also critical but in a different way.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, he's much more loose in that regard. It's not the most crucial part of how his pieces go together. But, he really expanded my horizons beyond what I got from Von Neumann. Von Neumann did not show slides and there weren't many books in the studio. And, I discovered *Craft Horizons* on my own in the library one-day and, I'm going "Whoa." I'm going through all these back issues and I'm seeing jewelry and people and ceramics. I came to him and I said, "Professor Von Neumann, do you know about this great magazine? Have you ever seen this?" And he kind of goes, "Yes, I know about it." Of course, as I continue to do my art historical research, there he is featured again and again in *Craft Horizons*. That's how I would put my information together, just totally serendipitously and on my own.

Fred Woell came in with a little more information for me. So, he encouraged me to enter a show. I think the first show was one that Brent Kington juried, and I was rejected. I—well, I shouldn't say rejected, but my work did not get into the show. Those are the shows that you spent \$20 or something to enter. It wasn't a lot, but it was kind of disappointing, but I didn't know what to expect. So, years later, I learned from Brent that he thought that my photo-etching was just found printing blocks.

SHARON CHURCH: He didn't know you had done it?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, how would he?

SHARON CHURCH: That's that question again—

ELEANOR MOTY: Because I hadn't had any exposure—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —articles or publicity. So, he just assumed, "Well, this isn't very creative. You know, she's using found blocks, she's cutting them up and soldering parts onto it." So, that was pretty understandable. And then, I think that I was accepted into a show Olaf [Skoogfors] had juried. And, the catalogues, if there was a catalogue at that time, [they –EM] were like six pages and they were almost mimeographs and the photographs were the award winners and they were in black and white.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, there wasn't much. So, you really didn't get much visual feedback. But, what was fascinating was to come upon actual exhibitions.

SHARON CHURCH: We're on.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mentioned that we used to do field trips to see artists, and Illinois State hosted field trips. One that I remember in particular was Phil Fike and Don Reitz, doing workshops. So, Phil was doing his Niello workshop and there was usually an exhibition connected to it, which was fabulous—to see an actual exhibition of work. Because, there was little opportunity for that prior, while I was an undergraduate. So, those things were very important. Also, the kind of connection you had with other schools and other students when you went to those workshops—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, very important.

ELEANOR MOTY: And, the other thing that was mind blowing was that you were so welcomed by the faculty. I mean, Phil Fike, Don Reitz, are treating you like an equal. They are welcoming you, they remember your name the next time they see you, and here you are this young undergraduate. You met other students. Years later, I learned that Michael had been at the same conference. He was a grad student at the time.

SHARON CHURCH: Really?

ELEANOR MOTY: I didn't know that at the time. Garret DeRuiter was there. So, those were memorable experiences. They were very enriching and exciting.

SHARON CHURCH: I'm going to pause right now.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is Sharon Church, and I am interviewing Eleanor Moty at the artist's home and studio in Tucson, AZ on November 18, 2014. And this is [SD] card number two.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: Eleanor, you graduated from the University of Illinois after five years. So, do you want to tell us how you finished up and then went on to study with Stanley Lechtzin at Tyler School of Art?

ELEANOR MOTY: Um, I finished in four and a half and spent an extra semester.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: And that was really like a research emergent semester because I wasn't running off to various classes and other commitments. It was so good. You know, ironic how all of that worked out, and I applied to the University of Wisconsin Madison because Fred Woell and Robert Von Neumann encouraged me to do that, both of them having studied there. But I really was more interested in Tyler because of Stanley Lechtzin's research in electroforming.

So, I applied there, as well, and Von Neumann and Fred said, "Oh. Yes. You'll get a teaching assistantship at Wisconsin." I really needed financial aid. Going out of state was going to be beyond my budget. So, I got my card back from Wisconsin, and it said, "Dear Ms./Mr./Mrs., you have/have not been accepted" like, you know, kind of, anonymous. And it was circled that I had been accepted. But I was not awarded a teaching assistantship.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And I thought, "Whoa. So, if I have to find a way of taking loans to pay my own way, I really would rather go to Tyler." And I was a little bit concerned that Von Neumann might be disappointed. And, of course, he said, "Oh, my God, go where you want to go. Don't feel dictated by my thoughts." So, I thought, "Well, okay." And then Lechtzin calls me, which seemed—I mean, it blew me away that he would call me and say, "We have your application. I'm amazed at your work. I'm really interested in working with you, and I want you to come here. I understand you've also applied to Wisconsin."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I said, "Yes. I did, but I didn't get the teaching assistantship." So, he says, "Well, if that's the case, I really want you to come here," and he says, "I'll do my best to get you financial aid because I noticed that you hadn't applied for anything in the forms." So, I thought, "My God." I'm going from this anonymous big university. I was going to go to another even more anonymous University of Wisconsin where you have/have not been accepted—this mimeographed postcard.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And here, I have the major professor calling me to say he will do his best to get me financial aid.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you know him or—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm [Negative.]

SHARON CHURCH: This was your—

ELEANOR MOTY: We'd never met.

SHARON CHURCH: —introduction.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. So, that was it. You know, I was going to Tyler without question. I learned years later that Fred Fenster and Art Vierthaler had [not –EM] been on the review committee for the graduate applicants.

SHARON CHURCH: Fred Fenster and Arthur—

ELEANOR MOTY: Vierthaler.

SHARON CHURCH: Vierthaler were—

ELEANOR MOTY: The professors of metals, and they were not reviewing any of the portfolios. So, they never saw my portfolio. I was being reviewed by what—painters, printmakers, whatever else, and so, naturally, they're not going to be real impressed by the work to give me a T.A. In any case, I end up at Tyler, and what was really ironic was that Joyce was applying. My sister, Joyce, was applying to grad schools, and she was going to University of Washington, Seattle to work with Fred Bauer and Howard Kottler—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh. Excellent. Fred Bauer and Howard Kottler. Great.

[Cross talk.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And Joyce had studied with Fred Bauer at Haystack.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, that's how she met him, and he had just left Michigan to go to Seattle and said, "You should come work with me." So, on the same day, Joyce is in one car. I am in the other. My mother is waving—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh.

ELEANOR MOTY: —goodbye, and we go down our long driveway. And I go east, and she goes west. I mean, we literally go opposite directions—

SHARON CHURCH: That's amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: She's waving goodbye, and we're driving off to our new experience in grad school. It was crazy. So, I ended up, of course, going to Tyler. I lived the first semester with a ceramist named Kit Yin Snyder, [whom –EM] Joyce had met at Haystack.

SHARON CHURCH: That's neat.

ELEANOR MOTY: Kit's husband was a Medievalist Art Historian at Bryn Mawr, and Kit taught ceramics at Swarthmore. Husband, Jim, is going off to Italy in the fall semester on a research grant. So, Kit said, "Come live with me and my little daughter because it would really be helpful. You could help babysit Kimmie"—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —"when I'm teaching and so on." And I said, "Okay." I meet Kit through Joyce, and I live with her in Bryn Mawr.

[...–EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: I was torn because I wasn't near Tyler. It was a considerable drive from Bryn Mawr to Elkins Park, but at the same time, it was my salvation because Tyler was so—such a pressure cooker and so much—it was a very demanding program.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And I really had an escape in spending time with Kit because she's an artist and really interesting, from China. Through her, I met so many artists—Marvin Lipofsky, Hui Ka Kwong, et cetera. You know, it goes on because she would bring in people to [do workshops–EM].

[...–EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] So, I did the commute, and Tyler—our studio was in the butler's pantry of the mansion. It was pretty minimal, and undergrads and grads, alike, shared the space and the benches. So, when undergrad classes were taught, you had to surrender your bench.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, each of us had to have an at-home studio.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I worked out of Kit's basement where her ceramics [studio –EM] was. The difficulty was that you didn't see what your peers were doing.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: There was no studio time.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: The only time that we, as grads, had unlimited access to the studio was Sunday when the undergrads could not come in to work. Otherwise, you were constantly pitching out your toolbox and moving to the shelves or countertops or leaving—you know, going home, and I came into the program with people who had studied with Skoogfors, who had studied with Stanley, who had come in from Al Pine from California, and they had a lot more technical experience than I had. So, I was really double timing to learn process and technique by sitting in on the undergrad classes because this information was not being taught in the grad seminar. The grad seminar was theoretical and discussions. So, I really spent a lot of time at Tyler—all day long every day and then went home in the evenings to work in my studio.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And Lechtzin was very, very much interested in the research that I was doing in both electroforming and especially photo-etching. So, he wanted me to develop a means of putting the images on curved surfaces and getting in to dimensionality again. I had mentioned how frustrating and ironic it was that I worked so hard to bring dimension into my beginning work.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, I'm doing contact printing on flat pieces by necessity with photo-etching. And now, Stanley is saying, "You have to bring dimension. Find some way to do that." And I thought, "He's right. I really do." So, projection printing seemed to be a better option than etching and stretching. You know, that would be limited. That would be die forming and we didn't have a hydraulic press then. We had masonite die forming which was really going to alter and rip and stretch and so on. So, I had to backtrack. You see when I left Illinois, I devised simple means of doing photo-etching because I was leaving Jim Cummins' engineering lab.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I found different resists that had a broader spectral range that the light source could be fluorescent black lights versus pulsed xenon which is like \$6,000 or, you know, well beyond my means.

SHARON CHURCH: How did you find those lights?

ELEANOR MOTY: At the time, I think that Jim Cummins and I discussed this, and I went to the company that made this DynaChem chemical—I think it was in Chicago and talked to them. It's interesting, I didn't have any compunction about going in as an individual, you know, like a young student to talk to them because they were curious about what I was going to do.

SHARON CHURCH: But those lights are what you brought to a million colleges and universities.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: And you made photo-etching possible.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because it was affordable.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because no one could, unless they had a print-making program with photo processes, nobody had access to—

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —several thousand dollars' worth of equipment. So, yes. That is a fact, and that's what opened those doors to teach workshops because it was a viable process now.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And I switched over from Kodak to this other brand. And then, at the same time, now that I'm going back to projection printing, Kodak had a very broad range of chemicals. So, I made trips to Rochester and talked to the technicians there and found one narrow aspect of their processes that I could work with in projection printing. I also went to a company in New Jersey that [had –EM] water-base resist.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: But it didn't hold up for doing projection printing. So, all of this was going on.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: You remember, I was saying earlier that it was very difficult to keep up with the research and actually create work.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you're in grad school now, and your thesis show is going to be a show of your work. So, the pressure was on. It was real—

SHARON CHURCH: Tense.

ELEANOR MOTY: —very, very busy time—very tense, very stressful. Um, Stanley gave us, in seminar, an assignment every month, and everybody would go off to their own little spaces in their studios and come together a month later and present whatever the solution was. And I remember, you know, because we're all working in our own spaces, I looked at the work on that day, the first seminar the projects came in, and I was blown away. I thought, "Oh, my God."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —"mine is so minor, simple, basic compared to [Albert] Paley." And [Albert] Paley was one of my classmates. Maury Golan from Israel.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Carol Phillips, Stephanie Swigget, from California. Caroline Utter from California, who later married Toza Radakovich.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, really?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Many years later.

[...-EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, you know, I'm coming into—I mean, you know, these people had studied, as I said, with Olaf, with Stanley. Paley studied with Stanley and [Carolyn -EM] with Al Pine. So, they were all very skilled, and compete against Albert Paley, who's in his third year—second or third year of grad school—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —oh, that'll set your pace.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I really had to up the ante, and I really delved in and really challenged myself from that moment on. I thought, "Wow, the fact that I wasn't thrown out of the program right now [laughs.]" So, it was a very challenging time and a very competitive time, but I learned a lot.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Doing the simultaneous research was time consuming, but it paid off. I made some significant pieces by the projection printing.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: One was the *Landscape Handbag*, which was the most successful of the pieces, and unfortunately stolen from a show in New Mexico at the university, and then, another was the *Dodge City School Box*, which is in the collection at the University of Georgia. And the other is a commemorative box in the collection of Tyler. The other thing that came into the factor at Tyler was that you were encouraged to do technological research—you know, sintering, metal—powdered metallurgy. It was quite stunning. Here's the stuff that I hadn't even known about, and now it's being introduced. Stanley is introducing Europeans [with] lots of slides. I had never seen the European work.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, I'm learning about artists that had been off the radar because the Europeans were not in *Craft Horizons* or all the books I had access to.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And there weren't the volumes that we have now.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: The idea that jewelry should be a statement—big was good—and the importance of the fibula and the pinning mechanism being incorporated into the piece. I was aware of the fibula by having been around Fike, but this was really a push at Tyler.

SHARON CHURCH: I think of that as coming out of Tyler.

ELEANOR MOTY: Paley picked up on it, immediately.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, Paley—you know, direct line from Fike to Paley really picking up on the fibula. So, it's not just the back of a piece but it's integrated into a piece which was pretty significant and amazing. And also, those big things—and then, Arline [Fisch] with her body jewelry as well, which was happening at that time.

SHARON CHURCH: But in terms of that mechanism, when I looked at your video, I was impressed with how you got that to click. I'm a jeweler, too, and I think she likes that click, too—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —because you demonstrate that on every piece.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: And not everybody does incorporate their pin stems in this way. Yet, it's a real positive way of claiming your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, the attitude that I have is that there's a piece in the round. It's like sculpture. It's not just a front and a back where you ignore the back. Now, when the person isn't wearing the piece, they're handling it.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: They see it, and there were times when I even put messages inside pieces that were closed in and never seen again, but the person who owns it sees the back and how it works. So, I think that the integration of the aesthetic is really part of what's special about the work, and I hate to say this, but, we were talking earlier, in passing, about the shows that—for instance, SNAG is putting on where people can bring their work out and sell it.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I've been to that, and I've been to, other venues like that where, exciting new people are showing their work. And I'll look at—you know, take the piece, and I'll say, "Whew, that's really beautiful. I may have to own that." And then I turn it over.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And I am absolutely astonished to see a ready-made craft shop pin stem wired on or glued on. I'm just. It boggles the mind that they wouldn't have the same kind of care and attention to detail to put a real—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —even if it's just a joint catch and stem but not wiring on a little piece of garbage. And with that, I cannot buy the piece. I absolutely cannot encourage that. I'm just stunned the people get that far with that kind of an attitude.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Well, I think that that's something that you do very well, and I think it was inculcated at Tyler. Would you agree with that?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Absolutely. You know, those kinds of details were crucial, and Lechtzin did

them in his own work.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he was still obviously doing his own work at that time. And then, certainly Paley—I mean, Paley was impressive—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: —in uh, the ideas and the imagery that he came up with. He was a very interesting [laughs] craftsman and colleague you know, fellow student. It was during the time that I was at Tyler, too, that Stanley became interested in the cast resin and the cast acrylic.

SHARON CHURCH: Was that at that time with those large neck pieces?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you—because I was so surprised to find out that you had done the photo-etching and the photo fabrication—the electroforming—whatever—as an undergrad, do you think that one of the reasons he wanted you to come to Tyler was to bring that expertise?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, without question. I mean, he said that.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: "I really have interest in what you're doing. I want to see it. I want to work with it." And, he did. He did pick up on it and use some photo imagery with cast resin. Etching the plate and casting resin into it—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and pushing dye into the colors—those pieces. He just felt that I was a good fit for what his intentions were at Tyler with—

SHARON CHURCH: It seemed—

ELEANOR MOTY: —doing research—

SHARON CHURCH: —it seemed a perfect fit.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and I loved being in the east. When I had been an undergrad and people were going to see exhibitions in the east, we would say, "Please bring us a catalogue"—

[They laugh.]

—which is, you know, so wanting that experience. So now I'm in Philadelphia, the heart of the art history that I was studying.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: In grad school, suppliers are right there. We don't have to order supplies. You've got access to New York, Baltimore, Boston, D.C., and it is just a train ride away.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was so easy. I couldn't believe it, and I was, kind of, shocked at how people took it for granted, and were so blasé about all of it. You know, they didn't want to go to New York. It was too much trouble, and I'm going, "Oh, I can't believe it. The show is there. I want to see the show."

SHARON CHURCH: So, did your heroes shift a little big or did you acquire—who were you really looking at that time?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I was fascinated with Miye Matsukata.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I had already discovered Margaret De Patta because in my scouring the *Craft Horizons* magazines at the library—at the art library at Illinois, I had come across a feature about her work that was done soon after her death, and I was astonished to read the dates on the pieces because that one piece that you see in that copy that you made—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —1929. And I'm thinking, "How is that possible? This is a contemporary piece. This is done right now." And I loved everything about how she worked—having stones specially cut to her specifications, really doing explorations, having insets—Frances Sperison in San Francisco did the cutting for her. And she would often, I understand, make the pieces in Plexiglas and he would replicate them. And she would insert—uh, let's see, a tourmaline or a dark material so that it was [a focal point –EM]. It was just so far beyond the time of what anyone was doing.

SHARON CHURCH: So, didn't Margaret De Patta have a connection to Illinois?

ELEANOR MOTY: She was married to [Eugene Bielawski –EM]. He taught at—

SHARON CHURCH: IIT?

ELEANOR MOTY: IIT.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, in Illinois. Uh-huh [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So, she had—and I think she even studied with the Moholy-Nagy.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] She did.

SHARON CHURCH: In Chicago.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yep.

SHARON CHURCH: So, there was this other connection there.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I didn't know it.

SHARON CHURCH: Uh-huh [Affirmative.] But you did learn about her when you were at the

University of Illinois?

ELEANOR MOTY: Just by chance—

SHARON CHURCH: Yep.

ELEANOR MOTY: —by finding the magazine.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] You were on your own.

ELEANOR MOTY: I was on my own.

SHARON CHURCH: So Miye Matsukata, you discovered—

ELEANOR MOTY: Through—

SHARON CHURCH: —when you were at Tyler?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes because Stanley and Olaf and she had just that—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's right. They had that show in Tokyo or something.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yep, and I was just fascinated by her work. I just thought it was so beautiful and the way that she pulled together essentially found objects—beach tumbled glass and high karat gold and Japanese coins, and oh, my gosh, I just thought it was beautiful.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] So, these two women both influenced you.

ELEANOR MOTY: And also, somehow along the way, as, I think, an undergraduate, I came across ads in, perhaps it was in *New Yorker Magazine* of Ron Pearson's work and Mary Ann Scherr. And I thought, "Whoa, very cool." Ron's clean line forging was gorgeous—timeless and gorgeous. And I can't remember what it was that Mary Ann was doing at that time. But it was obviously something I hadn't ever seen before. So, I remembered those two early on.

SHARON CHURCH: What you're reminding me of, is that the jewelry—art jewelry world was so young.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: You had no real mentors. You were forging new ground.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes, –EM] and you see the Danish movement was so strong, Sharon. Stanley's early work had that clean line influence.

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, the research that came in the '60s was a real departure. Fike doing the Niello. John Paul Miller doing—

SHARON CHURCH: Granulation.

ELEANOR MOTY: —granulation.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: People doing casting and mold making and all of those things—that was a resurgence of research into early techniques, and then, into the '70s, working with Lechtzin, you're using new technology—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and pushing the boundaries and exploring further. And then, later in the '70s, you get the Pijanowskis coming in with Japanese techniques—

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —traditional Japanese techniques, which I found really fascinating. *Mokume-gane* and all the inlays that they did. And of course, it greatly influenced the students at Southern Illinois—*Mokume-gane* and all of the research that they had done there. And then, all of smithing, people started picking up on that.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, damascene and Damascus. So, it was a very fertile time, but what was also interesting was that the pieces got kind of, careless. It was—remember when I talked about how I would set up problems for myself to learn a lot of techniques and the same piece? Well, a lot of people are doing that, now, and you had everything including the kitchen sink in one piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you just, kind of, went blah. It was like having too much dessert

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It was so embellished that it was overdone, and I was feeling that in my own work. And I was certainly seeing it in other people's work. I remember SNAG had a show at Seattle—the conference at Seattle and the show at the Henry Gallery. Howard Kottler, whom I had gotten to know through Joyce, went through the show. And he saw me, and he said, "Well, Eleanor, I see you all have the technique down. Now, what are you going to do with it?" That was the feeling I had going through that show. It was just like gobbledygook. That was a real turning point for me.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: That made me back away from all those chemicals and surfaces and electroforming and photo-etching, and that's when I paired down into going back to stones, which was my fascination from having seen Margaret De Patta. We should probably stop, yeah?

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Good place.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: Here we are ready to record. I'm back with Eleanor Moty in her home in Tucson,

AZ, and it's the afternoon of November 18, 2014. Um, Eleanor is talking about her graduate education, and I am interested in how she developed her form language. Is that a good place to start?

ELEANOR MOTY: As I said, the program at Tyler was like—I felt like a kid in a candy store because so much was handed to us. Yet, Stanley expected us to take responsibility for seeking out our own research projects, and for me, it was a natural because it was a continuum of what I had been doing in photo-etching but now projection printing. For some of the other grads, they were not terribly thrilled about that because it was not their bent. However, just the city itself offered so much. There were a limited number of books available at this time in the late '60s, early '70s, not the libraries that we have now, especially the international influences—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and aesthetic, but Stanley was very generous in having slides of studios around the world and also of work of Europeans. So, there were a few books coming out of Europe, and Stanley, of course, had them. They're in the library for us. Uh, I believe we had a studio library, and little by little, books began coming out. Oppi's first book, *Metal Techniques for the Craftsman*—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —was out, and Oppi and Saara Untracht came to Philly to visit Olaf and Stanley. So, I met them in the studio, and from that, I believe it was, that Oppi invited me to send images for his next book, *Jewelry Concepts and Technology*, wasn't it and send photographs of my photo-etching process and, of course, my work, as well. *Objects USA* had been published, but interestingly, Albert Paley was passed over, and I was passed over. I think a lot of it had to do with what part of the country you lived in how you were acknowledged and noticed.

However, the exhibition was on display in Washington, D.C., and I remember going to see the exhibition, which was mind boggling. It was so fantastic because it was all the areas of crafts, and I remember, in particular, the work that stood out for me was Jack Prip's pewter volumes—his vessels. And Fred Fenster was at the show, too. He was visiting because he and Stanley were in school together at Cranbrook, and they were friends. Fred was just blown away because he had a slight interest—starting an interest in pewter. And these things by Prip really, really were important to him. And then, the other work that blew me away was Arline's body sculpture.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, those big scapulars and the bra. Those pieces were just oh my God, amazing. So, you know, having access to exhibitions was fabulous. Philadelphia Council of Professional Craftsmen was in existence, and I met Helen [Drutt] in that way. Kit was very—Kit Yin Snyder was very much involved with that. So, Kit and I would go to the exhibitions, um, the meetings, and I really met the who's who of the Philadelphia craftsmen.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Wharton Esherick and Louise Todd and, the Winokurs, of course, I knew from Tyler and Rudy Staffel I knew from Tyler. One other interesting point, which is not necessarily in connection with this but of significant note is that as an undergraduate student, I had only one female professor. That was Betty Street in textiles. I had no women professors in any of my academics or other classes—other art classes. At Tyler, I don't believe I had any female professors,

at all, either in art history or in, certainly, not in studio, and, that was a time when women were not hired. It was—you know, "women were going to get married and have kids, and then, they'd disappear." So, that was that time period, and that was what I was up against, eventually, when I was out ready to teach, as well.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, um, you're one of the first women in the field to break through all of that, but you also were in a place—I'm talking about the form language, now—where there weren't a lot of examples for you. You—

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, there was Arline.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: There was Alma Eikerman. There was Mary Ann Scherr. There was Ramona Solberg. There was Ruth Pennington. Those were five people right there who led the way, I should say, for the women coming in.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, what did they, um—what were they exemplary at doing? Were they finding their own way? Did they encourage you to find your own way?

ELEANOR MOTY: I didn't have connections with them. I'm just saying they were women teaching in University programs.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. So, where did you get your ideas from?

ELEANOR MOTY: My ideas from my work?

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Typically, I like working with materials, and I've talked about the landscape. There's always been that kind of imagery, just always at the back of my mind, always in my consciousness. So, even the way that I design—for some reason, I design like rainfall coming in at an angle. You know, there's strength in one corner, always—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —like a rainstorm—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah

ELEANOR MOTY: —coming in from one edge. And whether it's textures or materials—and it really—my work really is a combination of materials with pulling the imagery together. So, I always have an array of odd things that I can put together like a collage for a mosaic.

SHARON CHURCH: Do—is process a part of your—

ELEANOR MOTY: Not necessarily, other than it's always fabricated. I really didn't enjoy casting, and I've done it only for rings, really. And I never enjoyed teaching casting, either. I didn't like the indirect process of—

SHARON CHURCH: Direct processes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. I did not like carving wax.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I really like working absolutely with the materials. Of course, I shouldn't say that because I did all that work in electroforming, which was very indirect.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, you made your matrix out of wax or parts or metal or fabrication, and I often—I seldom made pieces that were totally electroform. They usually had some sort of a substrate that was metal.

SHARON CHURCH: And fabricated metal.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Occasionally cast because, I was giving myself problems at Tyler to learn mold making and forging and casting and replicating things. I just followed along with what the undergrads were doing and then, would set that process up for me. And then, of course, Stanley would give us assignments such as an interlocking wedding set.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: That was a challenge, but interesting. And in doing that, I learned about dental molds and not Jeltrate but the acrylic molds that don't shrink because you have the shrinkage problem doing two separate things and then, locking them together—

SHARON CHURCH: Interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: —you know, making the wedding band—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and the engagement—

SHARON CHURCH: No. I actually am familiar with that—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: —problem.

ELEANOR MOTY: That was a hard one. You know, we had to often donate pieces to the collection at Tyler when we had multiples or something like that, and my ring [set –EM] was stolen. It was the only one stolen out of that showcase.

SHARON CHURCH: You're kidding.

ELEANOR MOTY: Uh-uh. [Negative.] I didn't know that until—I don't know—quite a few years later. Stanley said someone came, wanted to have—commission a ring set, and he had the case open so they could, kind of, look at what was there. I guess he was distracted and moved away and out of the room. And after they left, he realized that my ring set was gone [laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Must've fit.

ELEANOR MOTY: I guess so.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: Somebody liked it.

SHARON CHURCH: Good for you or not. I don't know.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't know.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: I've lost a lot of things to theft.

SHARON CHURCH: When—well, that means you make desirable work.

ELEANOR MOTY: I know, but someone said, "Oh my God, that's such a nice compliment."

SHARON CHURCH: Oh no.

ELEANOR MOTY: I said, "It's not a nice compliment at all."

SHARON CHURCH: Oh God. Well, [laughs] when you were at Tyler, did you begin to teach?

ELEANOR MOTY: I taught in my last year—my third year.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, because Maury Golan was going back to Israel. He was teaching at Moore [College of Art]. And I guess he and Stanley got their heads together and decided hey, offer this job to Eleanor. And Stanley called me into the office. And he said, "You know, there's this job at Moore. And I said, "Oh my God. I've got another year of grad school and my show to prepare for."

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: "I don't think I can do that." And he said, "Oh no. It'll be great. Just go down town and take the interview." And the next thing I know, I'm teaching at Moore. So, it was by default. I mean, it was just, kind of, tossed into my lap.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it was very interesting. The one thing about being a solo faculty is that you can make mistakes, and nobody's looking over your shoulder. You learn a lot in that first year of teaching, anyhow, and it was that for me. It was a learning process. The commute—you know, I was living in Elkins Park. So, the commute was like whoa tedious and especially at the beginning of fall when it was extremely hot—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and it was not an air conditioned studio, with a southern exposure. So, I was like oh, but I had really terrific students.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, my God. Liz Stewart was one of my undergrad students. They were all undergrads, but I was astonished at how great the students were. And Marne Ryan was one of my students.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And um, years later, she came to visit me in Madison. And she said, "You know, I was a student in fashion at Moore, and I was told that I wasn't the right look for fashion." And she said, "Yeah. It was pretty demoralizing to be told that by the women, no less."

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: And she said, "I remember coming to meet you, and I showed you my portfolio. And your comment was, 'Well, you are really very ambitious, and I would love to have you in my classes.'" And she said, "That was the first positive comment I had gotten as a student." And she said, "It turned me around, and I became a jewelry student." And she was memorable. Her work was fantastic.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, she's still actively pursuing her work on the west coast.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: I remember—I came in, after a weekend, and she was standing in the hallway looking down the hallway waiting for me. And I said, "Marne, what's wrong?" And she said, "Oh, I need your help." She was a nanny for someone in Philadelphia. And she was admiring a tie clip or a tie pin that the man owned. It was a bulldog with ruby eyes. And it was a gift from someone special to him. It was an antique. She asked him if it would be okay if she took a mold of it. And he said, "Sure." Well, unfortunately—I mean, this—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I didn't know in advance, you know. I'm dealing with the aftermath of this. And she said, "I molded that thing this weekend." And she did it with vulcanizing. And under pressure this very delicate chased, repousse bulldog became a Great Dane.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh.

ELEANOR MOTY: And the ruby eyes, kind of, popped out. And it was just totally—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: —changed. So, she said, "What can I do with this?" So, good chasing and repousse skills, I, you know, pulled it out, and we pushed it back into shape and put the rubies back in—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh my God.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and put the back back on. And I said—we saved it so that he never knew. But it was like, oh my gosh.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh jeez.

ELEANOR MOTY: And, you know, in teaching over the years, I have learned so many things that I never would have encountered in my own work because it's so much problem solving.

SHARON CHURCH: Because the students bring their problems to you.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, the hundreds of hundreds of students you have and you're it. You have to help them out of this situation. It's a real learning experience all the way along in teaching.

SHARON CHURCH: I have a question. How did you form your teaching philosophy? And you're really talking about that. Do you think you can describe your teaching philosophy?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think that it really was based upon how I was taught because I didn't get those art education classes with theory and all that stuff that, you're supposed to learn. I think that all of us who went into university teaching were artists, first and foremost. We weren't trained to be teachers. So, it was hit and miss as to how successful we were, I think.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think that that one year in art education helped you? No?

ELEANOR MOTY: I didn't get into any of those classes.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative.] I bailed before I got into the classes because I talked to my friends. So, I knew what the classes were going to be like, and I thought, "Oh, not for me." So—

SHARON CHURCH: Well, you seemed to have been able to intuit good teaching.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think that I took from what my experiences were, and in some ways, especially when I started at Wisconsin—that worked against me because I worked so hard to get the information under my belt that I thought, "I am just going to give it to these kids just like it was in grad school for me." And that didn't work. You know, they didn't want to learn that. They were tired of being in school since they were five years old, nonstop, 20-some years already. And they—not all students were going to be successful. It took me a bit to recognize that.

SHARON CHURCH: But once you did, did you shift your teaching?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. I sure did.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you, kind of, learned in the classroom?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, absolutely. You know, that first year I taught at Moore, I learned I'm never going to teach smithing.

[They laugh.]

I introduced smithing in the first semester, and I remember it was a very hot day. It was the start of the year, and I drove home on Schuylkill. I didn't have air conditioning in my car. And it was just like blistering hot. I'm dripping sweat—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and by the time I got home, my hands were so swollen from holding—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —that metal for 18 students all afternoon. And I remember just getting into a tepid tub and just, icing my hands in bowls of ice.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh my God.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I thought, "This is dreadful. I'm not cut out for that." Smithing didn't appeal to me. I wasn't good at it. So, I was so glad to eventually be teaching with someone who was good at it—Fred Fenster—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and we could split off the disciplines. But yes, I think that all along, um, my teaching was based upon my own experiences and observation. I was much happier once I realized that I had to put it on the students—you know, the responsibility back on students rather than taking such concern over each and every one.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Some succeed and some don't. It's just part of the way things work.

SHARON CHURCH: Way it is, yeah. So, you taught at Moore in your last year—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: —at Tyler.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I also did my first on-the-road workshop at that time.

SHARON CHURCH: Where did you go?

ELEANOR MOTY: I taught at Texas Tech, Lubbock.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Electroforming, and I happened to get mono while I was teaching at Moore. You know, you're eating in the cafeteria. You're amongst all these little [Laughs] germ-infested students, and I got mono. So, I was just recovering when I was off to Texas Tech to do this workshop, and it was on electroforming. I remember during the lunch break, I had to just disappear and go into the office and lie on the floor and rest—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh my God.

ELEANOR MOTY: —for an hour. I was just whipped. It was very tough, but the other thing that was happening at this time was that SNAG was organized in 1970.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Or, you know, the first conference took place in 1970 in St. Paul. And Stanley really encouraged the grads to enter the show and to go to the conference and to become

members. He really—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —really was involved—he and Olaf, both, as being founding members. So, I was a presenter at the first conference. Stanley was a presenter. Heikki was a presenter. Albert was a presenter, and I did photo etching.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Heikki did his processes—anticlastic raising and Stanley, I think, electroforming—probably fibula for Albert.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And that was pretty exciting. Helen Drutt was my roommate.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, how wonderful. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. It was great, and, of course, she fell in love with Harry Bober who was the keynote speaker.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And forever more, she has spoken about Harry Bober.

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: He was remarkable. It was really a dynamic session. The show—Stanley was one of the jurors for the show.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: The show was fabulous. I mean, we saw talent that was so phenomenal. I remember Richard Mawdsley—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —and Chris Sublett. And I remember Helen Shirk's beautiful [holloware –EM] form. Those three—those three people really struck me, and I met Mawdsley at the conference. And I'm looking at the work. You know, it was all these great, little tubing and ornate and piano player and—curly-whirly, and I'm looking and I'm going, "Wow. This stuff is amazing. I'd love to meet this person." And Richard said, "Well, I'm that person." [Laughs.] He was—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no [laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —not who I was expecting. I thought it was going to be some hippy, crazy guy.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it was sweet, quiet Richard—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —very shy. And, you know, that was absolutely delightful. And, of course, Harper was in that show. It really was the who's who of that generation. There were real battles between Brent and Stanley and Olaf, and the behind-the-scenes people—the board and the organizers. And, They come out just frazzled. That whole event was really cool. I met Fred Fenster, and he invited us to [Madison –EM]. Helen and Jeannie Goldberger, an undergrad—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —was with us. And we went—rode with him from Minneapolis to Madison to see the studio, which was pretty neat because they had just moved into the new studio in 1969, '70 about that time. Then, Helen, Jeannie, and I made our way to O'Hare to take our flight back to Philadelphia. And I remember we had a night flight. Helen was asking the gate agent for—

SHARON CHURCH: Helen? Drutt?

ELEANOR MOTY: Drutt.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Helen is asking the gate agent for a window seat, and he said, "Well, I'm sorry, ma'am. I don't know that I can get you one." She says, "But I love to look at the view." And he says, "But, ma'am, it's dark." And she says, "I have excellent night vision."

[They laugh.]

I've never forgotten that.

SHARON CHURCH: That's so great.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, we go back to Philadelphia, and I get to the studio the next morning and I learn—Stanley's telling us that the studio had been burglarized that weekend while we were gone. Not all the grads went but, you know, a few of us did—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and everything of any importance was stolen—the hand tools, the one-of-a-kinds, the torches, the oxy-acetylene, the casting machine, mold making, equipment—

SHARON CHURCH: You're kidding.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is huge.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was huge because—

SHARON CHURCH: How could they get that stuff out with nobody noticing?

ELEANOR MOTY: They—it was an inside job, we learned later.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure—had to be.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] And the unfortunate thing was the deadline for the Silversmith Guild competition—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —was coming right up. And as things work in a university, you can't just go to ACE Hardware and replace everything.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You have to wait for all the investigation to happen and the budget to be cleared to buy everything new, and Stanley wasn't too concerned because everything was very old and, you know, really dilapidated. So, he said, "Don't worry about it. We will have brand new equipment that will be far better." And I said, "But what do we do in the meantime?"

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, he brought in his own equipment from his own studio for—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh. That was lovely.

ELEANOR MOTY: —people to at least get through the end of semester. And years later, the irony is that he had a phone call from a woman whose husband had died. She had all this equipment to sell—wondered if anybody—if Tyler was interested in it. And he said, "Well, no. Not really but maybe a student. But, who was your husband?" And she said the name. And he said, "I know that person." And guess what? It was all the equipment that had been stolen.

SHARON CHURCH: Unbelievable.

ELEANOR MOTY: And this was a guy who was, you know, taking night classes. And he would come in with a tablecloth full of silverware and candlesticks.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It was like this guy is stealing this stuff.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: And Stanley said, "So, what happened?" And she says, "Well, evidently the oxygen tank was leaking, and he went into the studio and lit his cigarette."

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, what a God-awful end.

[...-EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: We'll call it retributive justice.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, God.

ELEANOR MOTY: How awful.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you somehow had your show. It must've been extraordinary.

ELEANOR MOTY: My thesis show was with Takashi Wada who was a student from Japan, and, I think, Caroline Utter maybe and Caroline Swiggett and Marcia [Harrod]—or a clay person. I think it was Takashi, Marcia, a clay person, and I, and it was at the Philadelphia—it was at the convention center.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, nice.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, kind of an odd place. Stanley, to this day, insists it was Art Alliance, but it was at the convention center because it was this very anonymous, big space. And it was okay. I remember that I wasn't wearing my own work that night. I was wearing a pin that Fred Woell had sent me in congratulations. It was just a cast pin—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I remember Olaf coming up to me at the opening and saying, "Only you would wear someone else's—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —work to your own opening." But it went well. And I taught two years at Moore. And then, Al Pine contacted me.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you taught at Moore for the year after you graduated?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, uh, Al Pine was going on sabbatical. And he contacted me asking if I would be interested in teaching at Long Beach for a year and asked me to apply, which I did. And then—let's see. Stanley had hired first—I think it was first Chris Sublett and then Chris didn't stay long, and then Elliott Pujol—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —to teach metals with him. Neither one of them stayed very long, and then, Stanley said, "Well, perhaps you would like to apply for this job." And at the same time, I learned from Fred Woell that there was an opening at Wisconsin, Madison. Art Viethaler was going to take a leave of absence. So, Fred said, "Why don't you apply here?"

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I did, and I chose to take the Wisconsin job. It was, the one that I thought offered me the greatest opportunities and, even though it was just a leave—just a temporary thing, I thought, "I'll take a chance." I liked the Midwest, and I liked what I knew about Wisconsin—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and Fred [Fenster. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I took a years' leave of absence because I didn't know—

SHARON CHURCH: From where?

ELEANOR MOTY: Moore.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, you were like, full time at Moore.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. I was the chair of the department. I was the one-person department, and I was my own chair.

SHARON CHURCH: So, if we can back up. When you took the job at Moore, I thought you were just teaching one course?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative]. I was it.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow. So, what did—were you teaching there 18 hours a week?

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: And going to school?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] And doing workshops and finishing my research.

SHARON CHURCH: Unbelievable.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: And so, you—then you—

ELEANOR MOTY: I had the whole program. I—Maury just turned it over to me, and I introduced electroforming there, too. Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: And then, you—okay. So, that's—and then, you taught at Moore one year after you graduated. And then, you took a leave of absence.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] To try out Wisconsin—

SHARON CHURCH: And you took the job at Wisconsin.

ELEANOR MOTY: —which was only a year—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —again, a replacement year.

SHARON CHURCH: You were replacing Arthur—

ELEANOR MOTY: Art Vierthaler. Yeah, and the Pine thing—the Long Beach thing would have been a replacement for a year. Now, the position at Tyler, you know, that wasn't so. It would have been a continuing position.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. So, you're Art Vierthaler's replacement—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: —for—and temporary.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I was teaching drawing and—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: —two beginning—no—yeah, I think two beginning metal classes. No—drawing and one beginning metal class and the grad seminar.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Jump in with two feet.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, and so, that was in 1972.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I was in my—I don't think I was even 25, yet. Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Holy moly, and were there other women on the faculty?

ELEANOR MOTY: One among almost 40—35, I think.

SHARON CHURCH: Yowza.

ELEANOR MOTY: And she was of the previous generation, actually, like you know, if you go in tens? She was 20 years older than I, and boy had she had a rough time—

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because most of the faculty, or many of the faculty, had come out of the Second World War and the GI Bill. So, they were considerably older, and some of them were really wonderful. And some were really sexist.

SHARON CHURCH: So, in 1972, you moved to Wisconsin. Your one year—

ELEANOR MOTY: 1970.

SHARON CHURCH: 1970.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Let me think. I'm going to look this up.

SHARON CHURCH: And you have that right here, 1970. But then, what did you do in '71? I'm sorry to be so picky.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I did a second year because Art was going to take a second year off. So, I stayed a second year, again, teaching drawing and grads and beginning metal. And I'm really being put through the ringer in the department. I liked the university. And I liked Fred. I mean, Fred was most unusual in giving me full autonomy.

SHARON CHURCH: So, Fred was there?

ELEANOR MOTY: Fenster.

SHARON CHURCH: Fred Fenster.

ELEANOR MOTY: Fred Fenster.

SHARON CHURCH: Was he there when you got there in 1970?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, absolutely. Oh, yeah. He went there, I think, in '60—'62—

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: —'60 or '62. So, he had been there awhile—

SHARON CHURCH: Yep.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and he had been duking it out with Art Vierthaler who is really dogmatic and really rough.

SHARON CHURCH: Tough. Mm-hmm Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, and Art was not one to share. And Fred was determined never to put a colleague through what he had gone through with Art. So, he did not dictate anything about what I did. He really gave me full reign. We were partners, which was pretty unusual even amongst other programs. You know, usually there was one that was the senior and let it be known that they were the senior.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Fred never put that on me. So, we really shared the program and the responsibilities. What was so good was that we each had something special to offer, and we, kind of, divided the jobs in that way. He did the smithing and the raising and the forging, and I did all the advanced peripheral kinds of techniques: chasing and repousse and electroforming and photo-etching and just lots of odds and ends—mechanisms and all those kinds of things.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: We both taught beginning classes, and we taught them differently. But we covered the same material because we have the same intent and the same commitment. You know, we expected the students to know XYZ.

SHARON CHURCH: Certain things. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: We both went about it, perhaps, in different ways. But they all got the basics in the same semester. So, that was quite wonderful. And I taught the second year, and in the second year, a new position opened in the department.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Sculpture also had a visiting lecturer. That's what I was called, a visiting lecturer, because I had no benefits or anything else—just a salary, but interestingly, I was hired in at a third less than the men.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Women just—that was the norm—you know, because "you didn't have the responsibility of a family" and all the rest of it. In any case, you didn't have any way of contesting

that because, that was not open information at the time. Salaries weren't posted.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You don't know that. It wasn't until much later that I learned how far below floor my incoming salary had been.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: In any case, the position—it looked as though it was going to go to sculpture. It did not look good for metal, and sculpture—their reasoning was that, "Yes. Yes. You and Fred have really built a program in two years, and we want that in sculpture. So, that's why we're going to get this position." So, a position opened at Boston University Program in Artisanry, and I had—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —been up there, I think, to do a workshop.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I applied for that position, and I was out there interviewing. I get a call from Fred—

SHARON CHURCH: Fred Woell?

ELEANOR MOTY: Fenster.

SHARON CHURCH: Fenster. Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: "Don't do anything yet. I think we might be able to open another position here. Let's try." So, I went back to Wisconsin, and I decided what have I got to lose. I'm going to go see the dean, and what was really different at Wisconsin, and it still is, the art department is in the school of education.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It's not in fine arts.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, you know, you're in there with all the education programs.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, we were really an odd duck department. We were, sort of, the orphan children in the School of Ed. In any case, I went to see the dean, and I explained my dismay over the one position going to sculpture because they want to be as good as we had made our program. And I said, "It seems unfair." You know, Fred and I worked very hard to bring this around." And I told him I had just interviewed at Boston University. And I thought I would there was good chance of being offered the position there. And if that's the case, I will be leaving. So, evidently, the dean listened, and I had the position. There was a second position that he made, and it was now designated for metals. But I had to apply for it like anybody else. You know, so, Helen Shirk applied for it, [Laughs] and, of course, you know, Helen is magnificent.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: She's really fabulous. So, this was tough competition, and I remember that Arline called me and said, "Okay. I hear that, you—" Well, see, Arline was going to be teaching that following year as an artist resident at PIA [Program in Artisanry, Boston University –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And she said, "Well, this will be so exciting. If you take the job here, we'll be teaching together." And she said, "Are you going to take the job here because we also want Helen at San Diego State and if you take the job here, then we won't have Helen because she'll go to Wisconsin. So, could you let me know what you're thinking?" And I said, "Well, let me think about that Arline, and I'll get back to you." So, that's—that was a turn of events. I just decided that no, I was going to stay at Wisconsin.

SHARON CHURCH: This was major because those are the key women in the field.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, Helen went to San Diego.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, that was the flip around there.

SHARON CHURCH: And you went to Wisconsin.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] I stayed at Wisconsin and now I was on tenure track—

SHARON CHURCH: And Arline went to the Program in Artisanry—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. She—

SHARON CHURCH: —on leave.

ELEANOR MOTY: —for one year.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, she went back [to San Diego State –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, I can't remember when Fred Woell stepped into the position—

SHARON CHURCH: Right after that.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. So, now, I was on tenure track because I spent two years not on tenure track. Those years were in limbo, and they didn't count. So now, I was on tenure track, which was a different direction, and—

SHARON CHURCH: And that began in 1972?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I was assistant professor there, and, of course, in the meantime, after one year leave of absence from Moore, I had to surrender the position because I couldn't ask for a second years leave. And it was—Kurt Matzdorf's [nephew –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Richard Posniak.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Richard took over the position and the program there. So, that was, you know, essentially breaking my ties with [Moore College of Art –EM].

[...–EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: So now, I am fully set in Wisconsin, and as I said, I was really a tough teacher. And women were not supposed to be tough.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative.] You were criticized if you were. So, if the students complained to the other faculty, I heard about it. You know, "You were not a strong faculty, you were a bitch." You know, you were supposed to be soft and oozy and pleasant and sweet.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it was, you know, that whole business of the separate attitudes. And I decided to take a leave of absence. It was just really stressing me out. It was so bad. So, I took a leave of absence, and in that time, I just, kind of, regrouped my thoughts.

SHARON CHURCH: When did you take a leave of absence?

ELEANOR MOTY: It was probably around '74—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: '74, '75, I think, and I think it was perhaps in that time that I found my way to California because I did a whole series of workshops in California. Marcia Lewis had been teaching at Whitewater—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: When I was at Wisconsin, and then, she left Whitewater to go to Long Beach City College. Then Kelly Morris came into Whitewater—and then eventually, Linda Threadgill. Linda had been my student in a photo-etching workshop and then went to Tyler for grad school.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I was going to be on leave, and we hired Linda [Threadgill] to be my leave replacement. So, that might have been about that same time. In any case, Marcia, now at Long Beach, set up a series of workshops for me there in California. So, I was at San Diego State. I was at

Long Beach and I—she introduced me to Lynda Watson—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —a friend of hers. And Lynda was teaching at Cabrillo. So, the three of us spent a day in San Francisco and Oakland, and that's when I saw the De Patta Show at the Oakland Museum. Wow, was that a fantastic experience because now, in real life, I am seeing the pieces that I had been admiring and dreaming over for years.

SHARON CHURCH: I want to go back to that moment when Howard Kottler stopped you coming out of an important show.

ELEANOR MOTY: The Henry Gallery. Let's see. This is—this is later, though.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, but you had already been thinking, "I need to change."

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Yeah. It was all happening at the same time. Right—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. This is four years.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because this was the '70s, and there was so much research being done with process that people were putting every process they knew into one piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was very, very busy stuff. So, the SNAG conference in Seattle had a show at the Henry Gallery, and when I came out of it, I was just, kind of, like, "Oh, gosh." The only—there was one piece I really thought was refreshing, and it was handmade paper with diamonds—three diamonds, and it was sandwiched between Plexiglass. And I thought, "Oh, that is so clean and so minimal. I really love this." So, I met up with Howard Kottler who was clay professor there, and he said, "Well, Eleanor, you all obviously have the technique down. Now, what are you going to do with it?" And it struck me because that's exactly what I was thinking. It's like, "Oh my God. Is this overdone."

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, it made me think about really changing the direction of my work because I was not doing well with the chemicals that I was exposed to, and I mean, that really is another topic that we have to address. But I determined that I was going to move away from doing all the processes—the technological process—and go back to the basics and just the essence of the work. I had always had in my mind Margaret De Patta's wonderful, unique stones and the research and explorations she had done with Francis Sperisen, a lapidary artist in San Francisco, and seeing the show there at the Oakland Museum in 1975 or '76—

SHARON CHURCH: How do you spell Frances Sperisen?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think it's C-E-S.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, but I'm scribbling—

ELEANOR MOTY: Sperisen, S-P—Oh, F-R-A-N-C-E-S.

SHARON CHURCH: I've got that.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, Sperisen is S-P-E-R-I-S-E-N. I met him years later via Florence Resnikoff, which was really—no, I. Sperisen. That's correct. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yep.

SHARON CHURCH: And Florence Resnikoff, right?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. She knew him personally, and I think she also knew Margaret De Patta. So, she took me to meet him, which was pretty exciting. You know, it was—getting the—I think it's — Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I think there might be one F. We'll have to look that one up because she was a living treasure of California. So, we can easily find her on the web, but, you know, that whole aspect of seeing the De Patta stones, seeing the pieces, it made me, sort of, backtrack. And I also haven't spoken about my first introduction with stones because Von Neumann used to get—you know, here you are in the hinterlands of Illinois.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, he would order consignments of stones.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it was hilarious because you'd get these cabochons bubble-packed, you know, like vacuum-sealed on a cardboard with plastic sheet that was vacuumed on it. That's how you were looking at the [laughs] cabochons—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: —through this skin of plastic.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: And they were cheap in every sense.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Laughs.] Inexpensive—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —but also not very good.

SHARON CHURCH: Yep.

ELEANOR MOTY: But he said at one time, "You know, you live near Elmhurst, Illinois, and there's a wonderful lapidary museum in Elmhurst—the Lizzadro Lapidary Museum. You should find it." So, yes. One summer when I was home, I drove over there, and [Laughs] it was amazing. It was like going to the Smithsonian—the Natural Science Museum because it had rocks and minerals cut and

raw.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It was a learning experience. It was much better than my geology [Laughs] class.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I just thought it was remarkable, and I truly fell in love with the crystals. And then, when I got to the gift shop, I found a slab of picture jasper a beautiful piece. It was in golden colors, and the landscape in it was just beautiful. So, it already had ovals drawn on it, like someone was—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, going to cut it.

ELEANOR MOTY: —going to cut it and into cabochons.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I thought, "Oh, my God. What a fate for this beautiful stone." So, I bought it, and I electroformed a rim for it—[with –EM] hookings. And I did a macramé cord—linen cord—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —necklace on it. It's about two inches by three inches—two and a half by three—this big massive stone. And it's a picture. It is so beautiful. So, that was my first real artful thing to do with it, and then, Joyce found a hunk of I want to say amber. It might have been amber—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —or it might have been an agate, but it was like the heel of your hand and that kind of shape—thick where the thumb is and then thinner. So, it was this big mass. Actually, I'm thinking now that someone commissioned her to make a piece with it. A lady came in and asked her to make a pendant, and she did this magnificent pendant [with –EM] kind of a box shape on the top. And the stone fit into it. The metal was molded underneath it and some texture. It was gorgeous, and I think she had a cord, as well. [Laughs.] And I remember Von Neumann's comment was, "Oh, my God. Where did you get that piece of mastodon snot?"

[They laugh.]

But the piece really was beautiful. And the woman said [when she wore it –EM] people came across the room to look at this piece. In any case, back to my experience with the stones. I also found a lapidary shop in Chicago on Michigan Avenue, and I went there numerous times when I was an undergrad to buy stones.

SHARON CHURCH: Uh-huh [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I found slabs and crystal end cuts. There was one in particular that was really a beautiful piece of rutilated quartz. I was familiar with rutilated quartz from the magazine articles. Now, I'm at Tyler. And I'm working on a neck piece that's incorporating this big slab, again about two by three inches with a chased collar and then Plexiglas and a hinged back. And I had to work on it in segments. I always had that stone in a box on my bench. So, I'd have to fit and place and fit and

place.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: And do you remember that I said that on Sundays, only the grads could work.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, there was a nice young undergrad man who really, really, really wanted to work in studio while I was there on a Sunday, and I took pity and whoever else was there. We said, "Sure. You can work in here." So, I—out of the corner of my eye, I see him walking behind me flipping a hammer in the air and catching it.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I see this happening [Laughs.] And the hammer got away from him. And it came swinging and twirling down onto—

SHARON CHURCH: No.

ELEANOR MOTY: —my bench. But not on my bench, on the stone in the box that's so carefully placed and protected in that nice little box. And you just heard this chink of breaking glass, which was my stone. And I looked up. And my piece—the one that I am working on that is fitting exactly to that stone, the stone—

SHARON CHURCH: Gone.

ELEANOR MOTY: —is gone. And I just—I said, "No." And he said—and he was horrified. He didn't know what happened.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I said, "That was my stone." [Laughs.] And there was nothing I could do. I mean, it wasn't his fault.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It wasn't purposeful.

SHARON CHURCH: It was fate.

ELEANOR MOTY: Anyhow, I put the parts away because I was probably 80 percent done with the chasing and the fitting. And I thought, "Well, that's scrap metal for something else." But the following summer, I went back to that shop in Chicago. Unbelievable—I found the end cut of the same specimen, and because it was the end of it and not a flat slab, it was, kind of, craggy—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and irregular. So, I bought it, and then I polished the high points and left the conchoidal fractures. The back of it was smooth, [and I polished it –EM] on the flat lap. And I went back to my piece and built the frame. And it was far superior.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, good.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] You couldn't have told me on that [laughs] Sunday—

SHARON CHURCH: No.

ELEANOR MOTY: —that that happened but—

SHARON CHURCH: That's good.

ELEANOR MOTY: But yes, the end piece was far superior than the one I started with.

SHARON CHURCH: That's the way. That's the way to do it. Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, stones, you know, have been a very big part of my work from that time on, and that was like the late '70s that I began. Going back to the stones, so the first piece that I went back to was a smoky quartz crystal that—of course, this is the late '70s when the Hunt brothers have brought out—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —the silver. So, the prices have skyrocketed—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and of course, that's the time that I leave copper photo-etching and electroforming and returned to precious metal. Wouldn't you know?

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: I made a piece of silver with gold and this beautiful smoky quartz with patterned —roll print pattern behind it.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I actually made two pieces, and they both were entered in an invitational show —national invitational at Whitewater. Kelly Morris was teaching at the time, and 1979, I came out to Tucson to teach as Michael's sabbatical replacement for the spring semester. I get a call from Kelly, and he tells me that the entire show has been stolen from Whitewater over the weekend.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, my God.

ELEANOR MOTY: And—

SHARON CHURCH: Lot of theft in your life.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, very interesting, too. [Laughs.] Not simple, very complicated. So, they determined that it was probably for a meltdown—because that was being done at the time. Remember how people were taking their—

SHARON CHURCH: Silver was so expensive.

ELEANOR MOTY: —gorgeous pieces and just taking them in for meltdown and the age-old craftsmen—the European craftsmen at Reed & Barton were just horrified to see their life's labor being melted and they couldn't afford to buy it. In any case, almost all the work was stolen. I won't

name the person whose work wasn't stolen because that's a little embarrassing, [laughs] but my pieces were gone—the brand new one that I had just made with this turn of direction.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: They never—you know, the FBI was on it, and they never knew [who the thieves were –EM]. They figured that it was probably melted before it left the parking lot.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Affirmative.] Mm-hmm. They figured, you know, they just had a furnace with them and—gone.

SHARON CHURCH: That was it. Amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. It was amazing. It was a lot of work. You know, it was a lot of people and a lot of work.

SHARON CHURCH: And it was seminal to what you're doing now.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. It was that turning point piece, just as Landscape Handbag that also was lost was a turning point piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was like the culmination of projection printing and the Landscape and all of those things and leather printing on the bag—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and the inside stitched and trapunto and beadwork and—

SHARON CHURCH: Gone?

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. When you've—when you lose those pieces, you feel it. Not like a production piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you have photographs of this work?

ELEANOR MOTY: I do. Of course.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you take photographs of everything you make?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: That has proven to be a good thing, given how these pieces seem to disappear.

ELEANOR MOTY: But it also tells you that I'm not into high production, because —

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —people who make a living from this and really produce, they don't take

photographs of their work.

SHARON CHURCH: They can't.

ELEANOR MOTY: They can't.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know?

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I decided to make another piece in the same vein as that one that I lost, and actually, it had a double terminated—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —smoky quartz—double terminated smoky quartz and because it had a really beautiful double—oh, this is the neck piece with the—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. I love that piece.

ELEANOR MOTY: —rutilated quartz.

SHARON CHURCH: And this is—

ELEANOR MOTY: Two perfect ends. This is the replacement.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, you're kidding?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative.]

SHARON CHURCH: But this is the one that you described making in one of your DVDs.

ELEANOR MOTY: Perhaps.

SHARON CHURCH: I just watched it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, I did—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because I put the tabs on it. Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, this has a perfect termination. This is very rare in the mineral world to have double termination crystal.

SHARON CHURCH: This is so great.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, the whole piece is fabricated to tuck it in and hold it, and then—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —these gold wires that are tabbed from the back to hold it in place.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, wait. That's not the piece that—

ELEANOR MOTY: Was stolen?

SHARON CHURCH: This was stolen. Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: No. That was not stolen. The piece that's stolen is not pictured in here. This is the second one.

SHARON CHURCH: Replacement. But this one is the one where they—

ELEANOR MOTY: I broke the stone.

SHARON CHURCH: —quartz crystal was—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. Thank you.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: And what catalogue is that?

ELEANOR MOTY: This is the catalogue from the Master Metalsmith exhibition that I had in 2012 at the Metal Museum in Memphis.

SHARON CHURCH: Great. Thank you.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, it really—it covers my work quite a way back, even to undergraduate.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. That's a great catalogue.

ELEANOR MOTY: This really was a retrospective. It doesn't go back to the ultimate undergraduate pieces, but a lot of those pieces are pictured in the second Von Neumann *Design and Creation of Jewelry*. I have—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Oh, good.

ELEANOR MOTY: —a lot of images in that book, and so does my sister, Joyce because she did jewelry as well.

SHARON CHURCH: You were talking about returning to—along with the change that was maybe spurred on by Howard Kottler's comments, was your desire to become healthier—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: —the chemicals were not good. Can you talk a bit about that?

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, when I—when I was a student, I mentioned this a little bit earlier, we didn't know about OSHA and health hazards in the arts. That wasn't a term known to us.

SHARON CHURCH: [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And OSHA I don't think existed. So, that we didn't use proper safety methods and procedures. So, we didn't wear safety glasses, and we certainly didn't wear gloves or respirators or have ventilation.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: A few studios had vent hoods and ventilation. Soldering was done out in the open. Casting was done you know, when I think about it, it's just horrible. We had our hands in turpentine in printmaking. I remember one time a scientist coming into the jewelry studio, and he got really agitated. And he says, "I smell bitter almond. What are you doing with cyanide in this place?"

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he was even more horrified when he saw that the cyanide beaker was very near the acid pickle.

SHARON CHURCH: Pickle. Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And, you know, he said, "Do you not understand"—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —"the danger of this?" And of course, we didn't because we [laughs] didn't know any of that. You just did everything—

SHARON CHURCH: Well, we weren't chemists.

ELEANOR MOTY: —by rote. No, and you just followed the instruction—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —that came with that [plating –EM] book, which didn't tell you, "Do not get this near acid."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, the fact that we knew always to add acid to water was pretty amazing when you were mixing chemicals, but all of the years that I worked in the studio, in general, and then picked up on these polymer resins—bad. And I had experimented with fiberglass—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: —in just a closed room.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: No ventilation.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I remember I'd just get this really nauseous feeling and a bad headache. In teaching, I remember that I'd get really like flu symptoms in the winter time.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I just always assumed that it was the flu that was going around. I didn't think of more than that, and I'd leave the studio at the end of the day with a bad headache. Stress, I figured. You just, sort of, ignore it. You know, mainly, you ignore it. But I was also on the road doing a lot of workshops on photo-etching, especially. And because it's a light-sensitive material—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I was usually placed in a little closet or tool room with no ventilation and no windows. So, you're really inhaling and taking that stuff in. And my voice would get raw and raspy. And my throat would burn at the end of the day because I'm in there a lot—long hours. I believe it was at the Atlanta conference that Michael McCann did a lecture on health hazards in the arts.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: *Health Hazard in the Arts*—it was the first book—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —his and Monona Rossol.

SHARON CHURCH: Monona.

ELEANOR MOTY: Um, they were the first people who addressed health hazards in the arts, and I remember his saying that the skin is the largest organ. You take in chemicals through—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —the skin. You take it in through breathing and ingestion. So, you never want to eat in the studio—not having clean hands, and if you smoke, you are really ingesting the fumes and chemicals directly into your lungs and breathing—you know, not having a respirator or pulling the toxins out of the room and away from you not having clean air come over your shoulder and the vent pulling it out.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he said, "One of the first things you'll notice is memory loss." And I'm thinking, that rings a bell.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It's like oh, my gosh because I was finding that things would happen like someone would ask me for a letter of recommendation. You get so many of those, you know, and then, they would say, "Thank you for doing that letter of recommendation." And I'd say to myself, "Oh, my God. Did I do that letter of recommendation?"

And I'd go back through my files. And I had. And I have no recollection of it. I mean, this is pretty specific.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I thought that was very worrisome, and I learned that the neurological

damage is very common. So, loss of sensitivity in your digits and respiratory distress and chemical sensitivity and the memory loss that's the worst. So, I would quickly develop a sore throat, and I had remembered that when I would take a leave of absence and I'd be gone for a year, I wasn't sick. And I was just thinking back then I was thinking, "Oh, I guess I haven't been around the sick students and the flu and whatever."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: "So, I'm feeling pretty well." I hadn't yet put together that I was being poisoned in the building and in the studio.

SHARON CHURCH: Nor did we even know about sick buildings at that time.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, and you see, the building that we—

[END OF TRACK.]

ELEANOR MOTY: We had—the humanities building at the University of Wisconsin was built at the time of the riots [during –EM] the Vietnam War.

SHARON CHURCH: [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, it was like a fortress. Windows didn't open.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And the windows were little slits—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, I remember that.

ELEANOR MOTY: —under the cabinet and way up in the top of the ceiling so, you didn't get natural light from your windows either which was really odd because we were two blocks from the beautiful lake. There was very little care about ventilation. I remember that I began early on in my years teaching there immediately to complain about the fact that the vent hoods that we did have didn't work properly.

The guy who was the head of safety was on his way out. He was about to retire and he really didn't want to listen to a woman. He'd come in. He'd light a paper towel under the hood and the flame would go upward. He'd say, "Seems to be working fine to me." Of course, the other thing that was that the fans—the vent hood was way high.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's supposed to be low—

SHARON CHURCH: So everything—

ELEANOR MOTY: —to capture—

SHARON CHURCH: —would go right in front of you.

ELEANOR MOTY: —capture the fumes. So I was really up against it. I was fighting a losing battle in getting anything done, because when I would go to the facilities meeting and I was on the facilities

committee for the university, I would argue for proper ventilation in the humanities building in the art department and they would say, "Oh, yeah. We've got carpeting in our offices. It's so threadbare. It's tripping people that are walking through the doorway."

And I'm thinking, carpeting, health—so, it was just very difficult and I was getting very little support from my colleagues either. Because they were all men and they were all brew-ha-ha kind of guys who thought that I was being ridiculous. Like, "Oh, I smoke in my studio. It doesn't bother me." And, of course, those were the times when you went into the faculty meeting and you could barely see across the room for—

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: —all the cigar and cigarette smoke. That was just so common at that time. We're talking early '70s. I took leave as often as I could and we didn't have sabbaticals initially. So, I was really taking leave without pay. However, the University of Wisconsin has a phenomenal grant program for its staff and faculty.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I was very successful and, I had great support in that regard in getting grants —

SHARON CHURCH: Good.

ELEANOR MOTY: —that allowed me to take some teaching time off and pay my bills. So, that went on and on. I mean, it didn't change and then finally, it got to the point where I went to see an occupational physician. I learned there was such a thing and I went to an occupational physician. When they heard all the chemicals that I was working with and all the dust and fumes and we did not have ventilation in that building, [they were shocked –EM]. What happened is that there was a vent at the roof and the intake next to it.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, right, so everything was going out—

ELEANOR MOTY: So if ceramics was doing a raku firing—

SHARON CHURCH: —and then coming back in.

ELEANOR MOTY: —it was sucked right back in. And I remember it was being sucked into the grad studio especially. The students were getting really sick from the fumes and then sculpture was above us so that they were doing resin casting. That was really nasty because you could taste it—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —at the end of the day. And the physician said, "I would advise you to distance yourself from that environment or wear a respirator all the time because if you don't, you are going to have chronic health problems or worse."

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I was now really insisting that more of the safety people come through and the guy who had previously been there retired so, this new young man was far more [receptive –EM] and um, concerned. So, he would bring a team of people in to follow through with what I was

suggesting and running tests and so on and I remember I'm explaining my story to them and one of the women pulled me aside and said, "You really need to uh, file a claim for—to DLHR—Department of Labor and Human Relations." And I thought that was pretty interesting. She works for the university in the safety department and she's advising me to get this in writing.

So, in doing that, it brought in the investigators and uh, prior to that, you know, we had Tommy Thompson as our governor and he was funding the law school for all the carpets and decorations they thought they needed and we were just sort of at the bottom of the stack. And on top of that, what they discovered when they started investigating was that when Nixon was in office we had this energy crunch and we [had –EM] to take a third of the lights out in all of our offices and buildings to save energy and conserve. I remember the workmen coming in to take a fluorescent lights out of our studios. And I said, "What are you doing?" And they said, "Well, you know, we're doing this throughout the university," and [I –EM] said, "But you don't understand. We do not have daylight in this room and we are a lab and we have to good lighting over equipment or we could have accidents." I said, "This is a health issue. It's a safety issue." And so they called and put the bulbs back in, but Sharon, what we didn't know was that they had also turned down the motors on all the fans by a third capacity.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, what little ventilation that we had was working inefficiency. They opened the vents when DHLR came through, Department of Labor and Human Relations, the vents were so impacted with all the years, decades of dust from the wood shop, from—

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —from ceramics, all the areas in the art department, the air wasn't going through anyhow. It wasn't drawing.

SHARON CHURCH: I'm just going to stop you right there.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is Sharon Church and I am interviewing Eleanor Moty in her home and studio in Tucson, AZ. It is November 18, 2014 and this is the third [SD] card. Eleanor was describing what happened when the Department of Labor and Human Relations came to the University of Wisconsin and they took off the covering for the large filter outside of her studio. Eleanor?

ELEANOR MOTY: So, we obviously had a major problem for decades after that time because, you know, we're talking—what was it? The '80s.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, we're now into 1990-something.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because they were now going to come in and now determine that they had to redo the ventilation in the entire department and give dedicated ventilation to each studio area, I had no choice but to take a leave of absence and leave the department for that timeframe because what they were now doing was shuffling people around. And they decided they were going to group dirty areas and keep the cleaner areas like, painting [and drawing together –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, in essence, they were now going to move metals, you know—it was a strange building and humanities was below us for five floors and then, we were sixth and seventh so, metals was on six and they were now moving us up to seventh. So, all the really dirty areas, wood, clay, sculpture, metals would be on seven. And that meant relocating temporarily because obviously, seventh already had [painting and art education –EM] up there. So it was really a shuffling and moving—

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and I didn't think it would be to my advantage to now, perhaps, move into a [temporary –EM] warehouse which had no ventilation and teach.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I left for that year. I think it was for at least two years, maybe three that I couldn't be there because they were working on it for that long and I literally was on a leave of absence while they were now determining my case for Department of—Workers Comp and they put me through psychometric testing, you know, the test you have to determine whether or not your health has been compromised, especially your memory.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —by the chemicals. So, I flew back because I was here in Arizona just working in the studio and I flew back to Madison and did an entire day—two days' worth of testing [in one day to determine whether my memory was being compromised by chemicals rather than age or anything else –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, once the results came in, I had a phone call from the Workers Comp saying that my case had been cleared so, I was now on Workers Compensation for the time I couldn't be there. And they did revamp the studio. They totally redesigned it. I had some long distance input with Fred on dust collection and ventilation. And when I went back—they said, "Yes, it's done. You can come back now." So I went back and I was like the canary in the mine because women are more sensitive than men by necessity because the woman carries the fetus and she has to protect it and so it's sort of built into our systems that we are more chemically sensitive than men are. And I found so many things wrong. The ventilation hoods were too high. They had to be lowered. The lights um, were above all the duct work so, there was very diminished lighting in the studios. It was one thing after another. It was pretty bad and some of my colleagues—what was really interesting was that some of my male colleagues had had cancers of various types, bladder cancer is one, and that is a cancer that it can very often be related to toxic environment.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, my God.

ELEANOR MOTY: So one man had died and two others had been diagnosed and what the occupational physician in interviewing me and learning all of this said, "Do you people not talk to one another? How do you not know that all this is happening?" And I said, "Well, in fact, we don't talk about our health when we're in the art office." And I said, "Our building is not conducive to popping across the hall to visit someone," because it was sort of an open donut where the building, you know, one block square and the rooms were around the outside and the inside was just—

SHARON CHURCH: So, the studio's still in that building?

ELEANOR MOTY: —hallway and then an open space. It was like a floating square donut above a pyramid with humanities. It was a stupid building, Harry Weese, and it's a landmark building so, it was bad from the start. So, I am trying to get the engineers back in to address some of the issues that I find are a real problem. The fumes are not being vacated when you're soldering and I'm finding that my grad students are having health issues. Because I'm so aware and had read so much and studied so much, you know, I sort of would say, "You've been missing class for a few days. What's the problem?" And they'd say, "Oh, I had this chronic headache and, I can't figure it out and the doctors don't know—"

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, my God.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was like a light bulb over my head where I said, "You need to see an occupational physician. You are dealing with symptoms related to your workspace." And it was indeed that. I gave them my files of what we work with in the studio. This is what the symptoms are, because when you see a doctor, they don't ask you what your occupation is.

SHARON CHURCH: I know, yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: And even if they do, they don't know what that means. "Oh, how exciting, you're a jeweler. That must be really interesting." They haven't a clue, the typical physician, as to what it means to be—

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —a ceramic artist or a sculptor or anything else. You have to see an occupational physician. So, it was very interesting because the engineers would make a point to come in to investigate on the days that I wasn't teaching. And Fred didn't know it. He wasn't having any problems so, "I don't know what she's talking about." It was really a frustrating year. So, finally at the end of the year, somehow I got them in there on a day that I was teaching and I lit the torch, the big annealing torch and I put a big plate of copper in the annealing booth and I fired it up and I turned to them and I said, "Can you taste that now?" Because you literally could taste the copper—

SHARON CHURCH: The copper, right, right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —coming back in your face and they didn't say anything, but they looked at each other and they went up on the roof to investigate. They discovered that the fans for the ventilation motors had never been turned on. It'd been a whole year that they had signed off on this project—this two million dollar-plus project was done and no one had ever checked that. It was really crazy. I got the lights lowered. I addressed a lot of things and then finally, when I reached early retirement age—

SHARON CHURCH: You just took off.

ELEANOR MOTY: I just did. I just decided I'm not going to get my full pension, but I'm going to get out of here with my health because there was only so much that I could control. And when you're in a teaching environment, you can't say to that student, "You cannot use that in here," or your colleague, "This is not going to work for me." So, I knew that I had to make the decision to leave, which I did.

SHARON CHURCH: Honestly, Eleanor, I had heard rumors of that story, but I had not heard the

whole story. So, I'm glad that we've put it on these tapes because I think that you were brave.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was so difficult. I mean, the men especially dismissed me because, you know, "You're a woman, what do you know? And it doesn't bother me so, why should it bother you."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And so many people figured, "It's not going to happen to me. I'm young. I'm not going to worry about it. If it happens in 30 years, what's the deal?" Well, it does happen early because if you are sensitive in some way and—genetically, it can affect you very soon. And I always warned my female students, even the beginners, I would say, "If any of you are pregnant—"

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: "—or anticipate being pregnant this semester, would you please speak with me because I think that it's very unwise to be in this environment in your first trimester, especially."

SHARON CHURCH: I agree. I say the same thing.

ELEANOR MOTY: So few people do that and other women don't necessarily pay attention to this. Most of the women, my grads did appreciate it. And I always gave them a folio of information about health and safety—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —with the list of chemicals we typically use in the studio and I gave them a bibliography and so on. I had people calling me too. Even after I retired who had been students at one time and were having very serious health issues or cancer and they wanted to talk to me about, what was going on in the department at that time. But you know it was so sad that at that time the university wasn't really paying attention to uh, what health hazards there were in the arts. They thought, "Oh, you're in art."

SHARON CHURCH: It's not nice.

ELEANOR MOTY: "You're using pencils and paper."

SHARON CHURCH: I think that attitude is prevalent throughout the culture and I think that Wisconsin is a great program so, I think that your struggle and their ability to clean it up—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —is now exemplary.

ELEANOR MOTY: It wasn't perfect. But it was greatly improved. I mean, perfect would mean a new building. Starting over.

SHARON CHURCH: No, I remember the hole in the center.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: I was there about two years ago.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh yeah, that's right.

SHARON CHURCH: So, I'm thinking isn't it the same building? But it has—the fans are turned on now.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: However, I can tell you that Ken [our technical assistant –EM] who went to that program is very safety conscious—

ELEANOR MOTY: That's great.

SHARON CHURCH: —and that's something he inherited from you.

ELEANOR MOTY: Maybe, I don't know.

SHARON CHURCH: Well—

ELEANOR MOTY: Because he wasn't my student, but—

SHARON CHURCH: —it's in the building.

ELEANOR MOTY: I think that that new facility that they have for glass and sculpture now that off-site building, the industrial one, I suspect that they've done a better job with the ventilation there.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that this is not just something that people have chosen to deal with.

ELEANOR MOTY: I think that they know more now, though. And certainly engineers are beginning to learn more and this fellow who was the safety czar, the young man that I was working with at the end, I think he was really making an effort.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I think a lot of artists have also died—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: —and they've died because they did not know they were working with something that would kill them.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's true.

SHARON CHURCH: And so it's tragic. At the same, people have taken note.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, when I started thinking about all our colleagues and friends and other artists and it's been stomach cancer, brain cancer, pancreatic cancer, uh, all the organs, you know, which are affected by the chemicals in so many ways. It's like, "oh my goodness." So, in taking early retirement, it was my goal and my focus to concentrate on getting my health back and taking care of it.

SHARON CHURCH: It sounds like you have done whatever herculean task was set out for you. That you've taken it on and you've done it with discipline and rigor.

ELEANOR MOTY: I felt that was a major accomplishment to get that much done with the ventilation, considering what I came into and what I left.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Big difference.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, no, I think this is great.

ELEANOR MOTY: Making people aware and now, in our home studio I can control and eliminate things that are problematic for me, but I am chemically sensitive. There's no way around that. I mean, that doesn't leave you and for my memory, that's not improved. I just learn certain ways of compensating like, writing notes, you know writing things down.

SHARON CHURCH: And you've stopped, I hope. The damage is abated?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, I don't know. I think my memory's worse than ever, truthfully. My short-term, I can't find the right words, you know, but some of that comes with age.

SHARON CHURCH: Age.

ELEANOR MOTY: I figured out, you know, how to compensate. I just keep saying, "I'm glad I'm not teaching anymore because they would think I'm so dingy—"

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: They might like you for that.

ELEANOR MOTY: —or I can't find the right words or whatever. And I also tell young people be patient with those older professors

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: It isn't. Something else that I think we need to talk about that you brought up is I know you've taught a lot—at lot of workshop oriented schools—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: —however, you mentioned that you also took workshops.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So can talk about both?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, they were—the workshops that I have attended have been National Endowment sponsored workshops or grant sponsored workshops where a group of artists were invited. So the first one was one that Stanley Lechtzin did on electroforming and that was soon after I was out of grad school and away from Philadelphia, but he had two of them and he sort of had the who's who of the teaching world coming to do electroforming and those were pretty interesting. It wasn't new information to me, but it was in a new facility, a new building. You know, it wasn't the old butler's pantry any longer. That all ended even before I left Philadelphia. The next one was a TIG welding workshop, I believe Marsha Lewis had organized.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And that was great fun. I didn't come away from that and do TIG welding afterwards, although I saw the possibilities of it especially if you were doing hollow ware because you were welding the seam with its own material.

SHARON CHURCH: Isn't that the one where you puddle—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: —and then it's basically—

ELEANOR MOTY: The same—you don't fill—

SHARON CHURCH: —the same metal.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, you don't use a filler. So for hollow ware, you can understand that would be ideal. And it was a good group that was with me. Dave Pimemtel, [Hiroko Pijanowski, Lynda –EM] Watson. I have the names of the artists which we can go back over.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, good.

ELEANOR MOTY: But it was—and Mary Ann Scherr, I remember she came in on the first day wearing this wonderful white, raw silk pantsuit thinking we were going to be lecturing. We were straight away in the little workshop, in our little [welding booths –EM] with these—

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —curtains and she had, you know, she's so little and these cables were so heavy—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and she had them draped across her body—

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: just like bandoliers and her white suit was just black. And then Lynda Watson had to take her rings off because you can't have any metal on your hands. And Lynda wore rings at each digit of her fingers so, she had probably 20 rings to take off.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: She had to cut some off because they were really grown in place. [Laughs.] You know, from decades—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, my god.

ELEANOR MOTY: —from wearing rings all over her thumbs and fingers. So, that was really a fun session. Stanley was in that, John Marshall, I think. And then the next one was the Japanese techniques that Al Ching organized at Cal State Fullerton. He brought Satsuo Ando who was about 70 at the time from Japan and Mr. Ando did not speak English so there was a lovely woman, Japanese woman who was a nurse and she would come after work or before work to help with translations. Otherwise, we just learned by watching.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: Or he would sometimes take his dictionary and point to a word and the translation wasn't always correct. You know, so, we'd have a lot of laughs over it, not over—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —it's not what he means.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But that was a stellar group of people as well and we had two weeks of working through alloying and chisel carving and line inlay and raised inlay and high relief chasing. So, it was a very different way for us to learn because aside from Heikki all of us had been in programs where you're meant—you're supposed to be creative and come up with your own design, whereas, this was a program where you replicate the sample—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —the master sample, and that was a real challenge because there's no fudging there. If it's not correct, it shows that it's not correct—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —and it was a real immersion; two weeks. We just felt that we wanted to do well for this wonderful man who had come from Japan to teach us. So, we were double timing. We'd come in at 8:00 in the morning. Arline and Mary Hu and I shared an apartment and I think Arline had brought pots and pans or something because she drove. So, early in the morning, we would set up for breakfast and then throw the door open when the guys could come and have breakfast with us because it didn't make sense for everybody to have to get all the stuff together—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So we were kind of breakfast central for everyone to gather and then we'd quickly scoot over to the studio and we would begin working before Mr. Ando came and we would work well into the night. In fact, the apartment complex [manager –EM] said we were like phantom [guests –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: They never saw us, you know. The manager never saw us because we were never there in the light of day. And at the end of the two weeks, I mean, we worked straight through the weekend. We thought we were going to go to maybe to some of the sights in California, the art museums. Oh, we felt as though we had to be working—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —so, at the end there [was –EM] a dinner party and our interpreter, this lovely woman said, "You know, Mr. Ando was so concerned that you were all working so fast that he couldn't come up with enough projects for you."

[They laugh.]

And we were always worried when he was looking at his watch and we thought, "Oh, God, you

know, we're not working hard enough."

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he was looking at his watch saying, "Oh my God, it's Thursday and they're done with everything."

SHARON CHURCH: I know.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, that was quite ironic. But we really got a lot of information from that and I took copious notes. Al had put together a basic workbook because we made all of our tools and they're very, very specific little teeny, tiny tools, you know—they're a millimeter in diameter and they have five faces on them. So, we were with magnifiers all the time and we used no electric tools. Everything was hand done. Stoning, we never used a buffer, no flexible shaft. It was all hand done and at the end, we had these great projects to show. When I got back to Wisconsin, I had all of my notes transcribed and did the drawings and those notes are probably still circulating because they were very thorough with the patinas and everything. You know, the um, *Rokushō* patina and the chasing. I did specific notes and panels on each project.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you do these workshops primarily to augment your—

ELEANOR MOTY: Teaching.

SHARON CHURCH: —your knowledge and then, you could translate—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —and transfer—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, they were always for teaching—

SHARON CHURCH: —teach?

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. I think that is typically what a faculty does. You buy books. You go to conferences, you go to lectures to gather information to regurgitate to your students. And it's very interesting and you will find this too now that you're retired. Now, when I go to bookstores, I go, "Yeah, don't need it."

[They laugh.]

"I don't have to have this for my teaching class and I certainly don't need it for me."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I don't feel obliged in the same way to gather all of that—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —spend all that money.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Gather all that stuff for my teaching samples. It's very different now. I do it for myself, or if it's something that I don't have to put a lot of energy into it to check it off. Like, I don't have to keep that in the memory bank. It's not important to me.

SHARON CHURCH: That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's a really different attitude—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —I'll tell you.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, it's less stressful.

ELEANOR MOTY: But after we did that workshop, I corresponded with Mr. Ando, even though he didn't speak English. He would have a nephew or son-in-law—

SHARON CHURCH: Is that A-N-D-O?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] He would have someone translate my letters. So, we had this really nice correspondence happening and I kept him apprised of the fact that I was teaching the workshops because not everyone in the group—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —went on to disseminate the information. And, of course, the Pijanowski's they were doing it, you know. They really did have this information because they studied.

SHARON CHURCH: In Japan.

ELEANOR MOTY: —in depth in Japan, but I started going on the road teaching these workshops and I really enjoyed them. They were exhausting because invariably, I would get students who were wearing trifocals who couldn't see well enough to make these [precise –EM] tools. So, I would probably make 60 or 70 percent of the tools for my group by the end of it. And years later, I remember coming across some of the people in the workshop and they said, "You know, those tools are so precious to me. I don't use them for such and such technique anymore, but I use them for patterning or texturing" and so on.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because that's what was so versatile about it and to this day, I use chisel carving and the engraved lines and so on in my own work. And the engraving makes me remember also that when I was an undergrad, I had a real variety of classes. I mean, I had everything from industrial design, textiles, printmaking, painting. And in printmaking I met a French engraver who was visiting faculty and he taught me to use the burin, not that I did an art piece with it, but he just taught me how to use the burin because I wanted to learn that for jewelry and most importantly, he taught me to free hand sharpen it instead of with the jig.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I'm never tied to that jig and I always remembered this and I've always taught my students how to free hand dress and sharpen burins.

SHARON CHURCH: I think sharpening is a very difficult technique to learn and it is so important—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh yeah, you can hurt yourself if you don't it properly.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, it's hard to teach now because students don't want to spend the time. They want to buy their tools already sharpened.

ELEANOR MOTY: But you have to keep dressing them—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because they get dull and that's when you hurt yourself when they slip.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Those were the kinds of bits and information that I kept putting into my technical skills.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I always told the students that when you're beginning, when you're starting out, it's like baby talk. You're learning a language.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And initially, you have maybe one or two ways of expressing yourself and as you build your skills you become really eloquent and you can choose—you can pick and choose the technique you find most enjoyable or most expedient or you're not just tied to only one way of doing something.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you can express yourself in so many different ways with so many different techniques. So, the Japanese techniques, I never went back to do inlay, for instance, and I don't use chasing in my own work, but I became very skillful at the [high relief chasing –EM]. We all had to do a little mask, and it was pretty interesting to see at the end of a session whose mask was which because they were hilarious. They were so different, one from the next.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: And they were all supposed to look the same, we all had the same pattern.

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mr. Ando had a plate that had an orchid raised from it in high relief and I was so mesmerized by that, but I photographed it, angled, back, front, and Xeroxed it. And then, when I came home, I made it.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: I spent a solid two weeks and I made that orchid. And I'll have to show you the panels because I have all—

SHARON CHURCH: I would like to see.

ELEANOR MOTY: —of those in a kit because I used to go on the road and I had all of my samples with me.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I simplified the demonstration because usually, your workshop is only a weekend, very short. So, I—with making the tools, I had people do a high relief leaf.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I had done so many, I could make a tree out of leaves—

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —that I have from my demonstration. There were so many tips that he taught us. How to transfer your design onto metal you warmed your metal and then you skimmed hard wax over it. So you had a skin of wax.

SHARON CHURCH: A little layer. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And then you had an acetate tracing that was scratched out with a pin or needle and so it has a little groove and then you took tailor's chalk or chalkboard chalk and you [rubbed –EM] it on the file and dropped the dust onto that backside of the drawing you see, that scratched out pattern and you rub the chalk into the scratchings. Then you flipped chalk side down against the sticky wax and burnish it over with a hammer. And pull up your acetate and you had the chalk lines in wax.

SHARON CHURCH: On the metal.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Then you took the Kebori, which was like an engraving tool, and you lightly skimmed the pattern and all the lines with that engraving hand tool, the Kebori, and then you went on from there. It was fascinating. When you wanted to go back to check your accuracy as you were chasing, you took that acetate drawing and laid it atop—

SHARON CHURCH: And put it right over.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and you knew if a line had to be pushed in or pushed out.

SHARON CHURCH: I'm thinking about how you set your stones and how you accurately get your wires to intersect with your planes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: And I can't help but imagine that these workshops didn't help you um, gather the focus to do that.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, that one certainly did because man, you had to be accurate. It was so precise—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: When you're doing wire inlay and you have the channel cut—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —an undercut and chisel back and forth with this little minute chisel, half millimeter wide chisel that you've cut that has all these facets—you really do have to be precise and learn precision. And when you're working with a master like Professor Ando who's 70 some years old and he's giving you his time his life's experience, if you're going to show any kind of appreciation, it's in your skill and what you've learned and showing that you learned that. So, that one for sure really reinforced the importance of accuracy and it's certainly so in my work. You know, Michael and I we'll work in the studio in a room next to each other and [laughs] we can hear grumbling back and forth—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —and it's because we do such stupidly difficult things. I'm not worried about someone replicating my designs because they wouldn't be silly enough to do the difficult stuff that I do.

SHARON CHURCH: When you say Michael, you mean, Michael Croft?

ELEANOR MOTY: Michael Croft, my partner. It's so time consuming and I've gotten better, but I still have glitches and mistakes.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, there are days when it's just like, "This is just not working. Stop already. You're ruining this. Just start over." But I've also learned how to pull myself out of terrible problems and resolve them. Recently, I broke a stone. I didn't even know that I had broken it, but it was such a tight fit in the bezel or the frame that evidently when I was checking it, it caught and it snapped the corner off the stone. I was probably 80 percent done and this was a very busy year of preparing new work for the show in Germany and two other places and my gallery in Chicago for SOFA so, I was really up against the line. I just sort of took a deep breath and I thought, "Okay, I have to figure a way out of this"—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. What did you do?

ELEANOR MOTY: —because there was no finding the part and even if I found it you don't glue it back. I designed a little element to go on top of it. Because I had blacked Micarta in one section of it. I designed another sweep of a line of Micarta and basically pinned through the space—front and back, and floated this little piece of Micarta so, it kind of sweeps up the side and again, it's better than it would have been.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, that reminds me to just note that most professional jewelers do things like that—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM] and they know how to fix it.

SHARON CHURCH: —and they know how to fix it. So, in some ways, you're doing what we all do.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM] and you gain your skills to be able to resolve the problems.

SHARON CHURCH: Exactly, exactly.

ELEANOR MOTY: So that's really crucial.

SHARON CHURCH: So that—you've taught workshops at Haystack, Penland, Arrowmont and Summervail.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: As well as many, many—

ELEANOR MOTY: In schools. Oh one other workshop that I took as, you know, being invited to take was precious metal clay at Haystack.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Which you were in.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, the first time that PMC, precious metal clay, was introduced in America and that was interesting, wasn't it Sharon?

SHARON CHURCH: It was.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was very challenging.

SHARON CHURCH: And I thought we all worked very hard and—

ELEANOR MOTY: Some people did really well. You did.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I learned how to apply what I like to do.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: And that, I think, was the—one of the challenges—

ELEANOR MOTY: But not everyone was successful, Sharon. You were and Fred Woell was. John Paul Miller had the most frustrating time.

SHARON CHURCH: I think we were successful in our own ways.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, he just gave it up and so did Pat Flynn.

SHARON CHURCH: But Myra was hysterical.

ELEANOR MOTY: She was so funny.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. That's when I met Kim Cridler. Yeah, it was a great workshop.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was so much fun.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think—listening to you that and you're a jeweler, so this is in there, that you are a people person? You're drawn to these group activities. You like the people. You make

jewelry for someone to wear.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, definitely. I mean, I was so shy and isolated as a child. So, it's kind of ironic, but that is so.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. I think in order to be a jeweler you have to have a kind of sympathy, empathy, you have to somehow really—no?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think that there are a lot of people who work in isolation and aren't comfortable being with people and doing that. Like Fred Fenster, he's really, you know, insular. He loves teaching, but he doesn't like schmoozing.

SHARON CHURCH: But he's a hollow ware person.

ELEANOR MOTY: But he did jewelry a lot.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And Fred Woell is a good example too. He really is shy and doesn't like to, have to schmooze very much, but he loves to teach.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, he does and he's a good teacher.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] So, I think there are people who are real solo, you know? They really don't like to be out in crowds. But I—here in Arizona, I don't really know many people. Most of my friends are all over the place. They're—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: My professional friends and the people that I've met here because I'm in retirement, are people at the gym or, yoga class [. . . –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Well, that's another question. Who are you in dialogue with? Michael?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, well, kind of—I mean, Michael is really a quiet person. He doesn't like to make small talk and chit-chat [Laughs.] It's really frustrating at times. I find myself talking to myself more these days.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: The way that I do it, Sharon, is to communicate by email regularly with certain friends.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Every day I'm emailing certain people and I have the dialogue that way. I mean, Lynda Watson is a really good friend and I have a couple of friends in Madison that I correspond with regularly. I keep up with Fred Woell usually weekly.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because he's really a shut-in now and I think it's really important that he have some connection with the outside. And there's an interesting woman that I've met through my sister in Seattle and we host her during the gem show. She's not an artist, but she just likes Tucson and she likes coming and—

SHARON CHURCH: That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: —enjoying the gem show so, I like her a lot and we have dialogue going. So that's pretty much how I get my fix on communicating with people.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Do you ultimately see yourself as somewhat interior?

ELEANOR MOTY: I am because, the shyness that you grow up with is always with you and a lot of times you push yourself to go beyond it. Oftentimes I'll be in a big social setting and I really feel like an outsider looking in. I don't feel as though I belong. It was difficult for me to go to New York for the Hermitage Foundation dinner because I knew I'd see my friends—

SHARON CHURCH: Friends, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —friends I knew, but I have to really psych up for it because it takes such energy.

SHARON CHURCH: It does.

ELEANOR MOTY: And this is such a different lifestyle here. It's so laid back and I don't—you know, Michael and don't do social stuff. All of his friends from the university from all the years that he taught there have left Tucson or have died.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, we don't have a social circle here that we connect with. Plus, he didn't establish a social circle. He was busy raising two sons and because he's—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —so quiet anyhow. He's so intelligent and he's such a quiet man that he doesn't need it.

SHARON CHURCH: So, right now, you're very prolific and you're making a lot of work.

ELEANOR MOTY: No.

SHARON CHURCH: You don't feel that—

ELEANOR MOTY: No.

SHARON CHURCH: —way.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't make a lot of work. I make 10 pieces a year, that's a lot for me.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, so you're making 10 pieces a year. Do you make them because you have shows and commitments?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yea, yes. I don't make them for myself.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you purposely seek out?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative.] They come to me.

SHARON CHURCH: They come to you.

ELEANOR MOTY: I've had that experience for a very long time.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I gained notoriety early—not notoriety, but notice early on with the photo-etching and I was in the *Time Life* book and many other photo or media venues. Seeing Helen Shirk and also, Bill Harper at the Hermitage dinner—they were talking about that. You know, I kind of tease and laugh and say, "Gosh, you know," all these things have been happening for me recently. A couple of magazine articles and the show at the metal museum—I said, "I think that people say, Eleanor is an old name, she must be really old. She must be about to die. We better do something." [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: I don't think they think that.

ELEANOR MOTY: But you know, it did happen for—I mean, Helen and I had this conversation decades ago that when we would go off to teach a workshop and people were meeting us at the plane, they were looking, you know, here we were 25 years old or whatever, they're looking for a 60 some year old person because of our names. We had old fashioned names.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: We both had that experience. And Harper was remarking that we all came into the limelight early on, so people really do think we're very old because we've been around so long. It's not typical that you are getting this kind of attention when you're 22 years old, and time flies.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right. Um, well, having been in the professional saddle for as long as you've been in it, what is important to teach, to communicate?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, one the things that Fred and I were really committed to—

SHARON CHURCH: Fred Fenster.

ELEANOR MOTY: Fred Fenster—committed to teaching in Wisconsin was a very firm foundation in technique and also an attitude about craftsmanship.

SHARON CHURCH: And can you describe that or put that into words?

ELEANOR MOTY: To be able to solder or create dimension in flat metal—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —how you put the parts together, you know, mechanisms. Learning a broad range of skills so that you have this vocabulary, working vocabulary.

SHARON CHURCH: You had mentioned that before. You believe that if you have a strong

vocabulary you can express whatever is in you?

ELEANOR MOTY: I do because when I think of people who are designers and then hand their work off to the craftsman, they're at a real disadvantage because they don't know what can be done. The craftsman is saying, "Oh, sure, I can make that." But I think if they really had some hands on skill, they'd have a broader range of designing. And you know, all of the aspects of art history, knowing who came before you—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —who's who now, I really get frustrated when people would say, "Oh, don't tell me about that person. I don't want to look them up because I don't want to be influenced." How silly is that?

SHARON CHURCH: They must not have confidence in their own imaginations.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, they just think that if they open a book or go to the website and show them the work of so and so who is kind of aligned with what they're doing, they're going to be influenced by it.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And they think that they are inventing the wheel, you see. So by showing them [other examples –EM] you are showing them that you better do more than that because it's already been done. And it's really impossible to do anything that hasn't been done.

SHARON CHURCH: I—that's something I'm curious about that we're in this post-modern world where people think that there is—there can be nothing new—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: —and I think that the human imagination is boundless.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think that you may have representation of something that's been done, but you should be able to do something different with it.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM] absolutely. And I think that it is important to know what's been done before you so that you can push yourself farther.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you think that not only are you going to teach them techniques, but you're going to teach about the history of the field?

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: You're going to show them what's going on right now.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: And—

ELEANOR MOTY: And the other thing is to be really a kind person and a generous person and

really pay attention to things like that. I was on jury duty recently and there was a young woman from the university and she pulled me aside during one break and she said, "So, what advice do you have for someone who's a student now"—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —and I said, "Well, I would say always be cognizant of the professors who write your letters of recommendation. When they do that, don't assume that it's just an easy little breeze for them to do it, or that they have a form that they fill in your names for."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I said, "Make a point of sending them a thank you with a follow up that says, thank you so much for writing this letter for me. Unfortunately, I didn't get this job or this grant, or I did." Let them know because we never know. No one ever tells us that.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I said, "You will be remembered. So the next time you need a letter from that person for a fellowship or something else, they'll say, this person is a really thoughtful person—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —really professional in the way they handle themselves." So, you know, things like that and also, being generous and sharing with your fellow students. So many people and I found this in Europe, especially, more of that attitude where it's a secret. I can't tell you because you'll copy it. And I think that one thing about our field especially is that people share so generously. I mean, it's a whole workshop thing. Everybody is open about what they do and their philosophy and their technique and everything else. Here it is, "Don't waste the time. I've got this information and the notes right here." That's really rare and I think it's special to our field in jewelry and metalsmithing. And then also to remember who your friends were because there's going to be a time when you need to do a show and you can call your friend at such and such university and say, "You know, I put this work together. Is there any opportunity to exhibit it there?" And I said, "You know, all those connections and all of those things will really take you a long way if you are kind to one another and generous in that way."

SHARON CHURCH: Not so competitive.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes and I think that those are attitudes that are not necessarily taught. I also always taught the grads, especially about resumes and how to photograph their work. And how to do a presentation.

SHARON CHURCH: So is this about presenting to a public?

ELEANOR MOTY: How to write a statement.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Make the point and how many terrible lectures have we attended where they say, "Oh, this is my latest piece and I really didn't have time to photograph it well. If you kind of look in the corner you'll see," and they're describing something you cannot see. Fred Woell always used to say if it's that bad, do not include it because no one will miss it.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you won't have diminished the impact of your lecture by showing bad images or showing redundant images. Be concise. Really move through this. We haven't talked um, about art schools versus universities. [. . . –EM] I remember when Fred Woell was teaching at PIA, Program in Artisanry, that he taught process to each individual as they needed it. I thought, "How do you get anything done?"

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: "How exhausting is that?" And, you know, he had only eight students, but he had to reintroduce information because next week that person wanted to now learn to solder or whatever and I thought, "Well, that's not very efficient."

SHARON CHURCH: So, you believe in the kind of classroom structure.

ELEANOR MOTY: I do.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] It's efficient.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then the other thing that I could not get over—

SHARON CHURCH: What is that other way of doing it? The Fred Woell hand—

ELEANOR MOTY: The one-on-one when you need it.

SHARON CHURCH: One-on-one. Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: The other thing that I found astonishing was, this whole attitude of wasting time, like, critiques lasted six hours and I thought how could a critique last six hours? In a university, you've got 18 to 20 students in a class and you got to do critiques. So, you have to be concise and get through it because they have other classes to go to and you have other classes coming in. So, that whole business of not chatting, chatting, chatting to hear yourself talk is really important. And in lecturing, you know what, visiting artists' lectures or whatever, when they just kind of repeat the same images, you know, like they've got 27 images of a print that all looks the same—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —it's so boring and tedious. So, [paring –EM] down to the essence of the story has so much more impact. And you really learn that in being concise and using time efficiently when you have this commitment in a major university. Your time is structured and it's tight and the bell rings and those students have to get to their next class.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Actually, you're answering a lot of these questions. When you say that the history is important to teach—

ELEANOR MOTY: But, you know, it is. However, I can't say I'm a brilliant art historian when it comes to the crafts. I mean, it's by the seat of my pants, by my own research. And that was one thing that I really lobbied to change at Tyler too. All the art history classes taught at Tyler had to do with the traditional, you know, arts: Painting, sculpture.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, I think that, that has changed over time.

ELEANOR MOTY: I worked on that.

SHARON CHURCH: Good.

ELEANOR MOTY: We lobbied to get the crafts involved. And they began introducing art nouveau at that time and then, finally, real craft history classes.

SHARON CHURCH: So, what do you think knowing about the past of jewelry and metalsmithing teaches?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think it's important to know your foundation. You know, you just didn't happen to be great. There were people who came before you who really worked hard to bring you up to this level because the people who went before me had a very minimal background and, they worked hard to learn the processes and ideas that they taught me. And I remember Bob Schroeder who had been one of my undergrads and grads was curating a show at Fort Wayne where he lives and I said, "Now, Bob, don't [feel –EM] obliged to invite me. I do not want to put you in that position. You know, there are so many—there's so much new talent out there. Give other people a break." And he said, "No, you're missing the point. It's really important to recognize the foundation where we've come from and have those people included."

SHARON CHURCH: So, that—when you say "foundation," are you talking about to understand the trajectory and—

ELEANOR MOTY: The people who came before you—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —who brought you to this level.

SHARON CHURCH: Right and so, in some ways you're asking artists to recognize that they didn't get there on their own?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you know, the other thing, Sharon, that so many people see where you are now and they say, "Oh, your studio is so fantastic. You are so lucky." And it didn't happen just this way. It didn't happen by luck or by a windfall of money and tools and equipment. It started very slowly.

SHARON CHURCH: Right and you put together.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, little by little, you get some money for your [birthday –EM]—you get \$20 and you buy a pair of pliers. And it just keeps growing and I always encourage students in that way early on. I said, "You know, when you get money, forget the CD." I mean, back then CDs—

SHARON CHURCH: Right, right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —I said, "Get some tools because the quality is [important –EM]. Go for the best quality—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —or a used tool that's of good quality. Forget those transient things that are going to come and go. This is going to be at your bench for the rest of your life." And then the next generation.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, so the history of jewelry and silversmithing is more to you than just the objects that were made.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, without question.

SHARON CHURCH: But it's the practice.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: And how that has grown or changed over time.

ELEANOR MOTY: I put together slides and this was not easy of our, you know, the people ahead of us, starting in about the '20s. Man, there weren't many publications to pull slides from. You know, Velma Dozier—

SHARON CHURCH: Right, almost none.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and, all those people that are unknown to the majority of young people and they're not necessarily in books. No one's really picked up on that, so I always presented that to my advanced students and certainly my grads so that they would have some sense of—you know, they might say, "Oh, that's so trite." And I said, "Trite? It was done in 1920-something,"

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And they didn't have many tools or skills to fall back on. Casting wasn't really being done on the art level in this country. Wasn't really being researched yet. We had to go back to pre-Columbian to pick up on some of those techniques.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Right. Okay, so this might be the last and most important question for this lump.

ELEANOR MOTY: If it's too much, we'll leave it for next.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think it is important for jewelry metalsmithing to be taught in a college or university, and why?

ELEANOR MOTY: We need to do that another time. That's—

SHARON CHURCH: That's a big one.

ELEANOR MOTY: —big bunch of meat.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. So then I think we're done for this—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, I think so.

SHARON CHURCH: —part. Goodbye.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Affirmative.] I think it's—

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, Eleanor. This is Sharon Church, and I am with Eleanor Moty in her home and studio in Tucson, AZ. It is November 18—19, 2014. And it's the morning, and we're just getting started. So, my question is Eleanor is, do you think it is important for jewelry and metalsmithing to be taught in a college or university, and why?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think it is important, because it is a very different set up in an art, versus an art school, or people learning on their own. When you're in a university program, you are, in general, an artist first and foremost. There are no business classes being taught to be an artist. You are taught to be—you're expected to be creative, and develop the creativity. And in my experience at the University of Wisconsin, what was so unique with our program, for instance, was that there was an easy crossover to other departments, and also, programs within the art department. So, if someone—one of my students wanted to work with glass, and incorporate it, they could easily cross boundaries. Quite often, when you are in an art school, you are narrowly directed through that program, no branching off to take painting, or printmaking, or woodworking, or anything else. You just are uni-directed, all the way through.

And in a research university especially, and in colleges, often, you have access to academics that can feed you so richly in developing your own manner and aesthetics. You can take philosophy [classes –EM]. You can take music. You can take engineering. And we often had students take electives in engineering, and then build a rolling mill, and then cast their stakes. It was phenomenal access to information. Whether you were researching, there was always someone within that community who was more than happy, and actually intrigued, to work with someone outside of their realm. "What are you going to do with this? An art student; that's kind of curious."

So, I think that there's a huge difference in what the development is, of the individual versus learning on their own, which is the toughest way to go, by bits and pieces, and you know, perhaps, in a technical school. And doing workshops here and there. For instance, in our program, Fred and I really didn't want the students' work to look like ours. I considered myself as a resource for my students, so that I could guide them. They were determining their direction, and I would make suggestions and guide them. But we took great pride in the fact that, typically, our students' work didn't look like Fred's and mine. It was also very important, because, the art department is kind of a competitive department. We still have that [attitude –EM] of fine arts versus crafts. I think so many people have talked about that, and it's been an age old dilemma. Are you the important area, or the peripheral area?

For that reason alone, it was really crucial that we had that art attitude. People would come—come in and say, "You're not teaching how to keep books, and how to establish a business." And I said, "That would be our death knoll, if we watered down what we were teaching, to incorporate things that, if students wanted, could go into the business school and take as an elective." So, it's a very focused—in a different way—it's a very focused art program, in a different way. But I think that it frees people. They're not thinking about making production pieces, and replicating. You know, they really first and foremost are developing an aesthetic. For instance, who asks a painter, "How are you going to make a living, once you're out of here?" Or, "Do you know how to keep books?" and so on. So, I said, "We really put our students in that same realm of the arts."

SHARON CHURCH: You had talked a bit yesterday about being—and today—about being a resource for your students, especially graduate schools. Do you want to elaborate on that?

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, graduate students come from many different backgrounds. Most of

the time, they come in with a portfolio, and they gain admission on the strength of their portfolio. But there are times when, maybe, enrollment is light, and you don't have seven people vying for two spaces. Maybe you have two people vying for four spaces, or whatever, and you can be more generous in accommodating someone that you see a spark of energy and skill, and ability. Quite often, that happens, especially when the person comes to interview, one on one. You speak with them, and you get the sense there is something here. That is so rewarding, when you open the doors for them, where other schools have just said, "Mm-mmm. [Negative.] Not quite ready. Work a little farther. Get a better portfolio together." You never know if it's going to happen, but when it does, it is pretty special.

The other thing that I always felt that was necessary was, especially if someone was coming to visit and interview schools, after Fred and I would speak with them one on one, I would suggest that they go into the grad studio, and talk to the other grads. I said, "You'll really get a better sense of things, and how you think your fit will be." Because I knew, early on, that you're not at an advantage if you go to the program where you get the full ride, and the grant, if you're the only grad.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And there are programs that are very small, where that will happen. Because there's no competitive edge. There's no feeding off. And you don't get that from undergrads in the same way that you do with your fellow grad students. So, it's important to make that decision somewhere along the line, and be forward thinking. It's difficult, you know, and the finances are so tight, not to take that full ride.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. You've taught not only in a major university, the University of Wisconsin, but also at Haystack, Penland, and Arrowmont. You have a great relationship with Summervail and Yuma. So, having named all of those places, would you like to talk about—a bit about those experiences?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think that the schools, such as Haystack and Arrowmont, people are very familiar with; however, Summervail and Yuma Symposium are farther west, and they're not necessarily in the mainstream, so that everybody knows what was happening. But Summervail originated, um—I think around [1971 –EM], when a group of people who had been in the art department together at Nebraska, University of Nebraska, had graduated some time earlier and decided, "We need to organize something that would be kind of a [program –EM] where we can bring our friends together to teach, and bring students together in this part of the country, where these things don't exist." And that is how it originated. Jim Cotter and Randy Milhoan and Jane Gregorius were the lead team of that.

First it was a symposium in metals in 1975. And it was in Vail, because Summervail is not so crowded as when it's full of snow—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —but they still have the lifts running, and it's a tourist [place –EM] to be, in the mountains. It's quite beautiful. Lane Coulter was also involved in this, in the origination of it. So, I was invited to participate in that first group. Fred Woell was, Lynda Watson was, Ken Cory. So, good group. It was a dynamite group of people. And lo and behold, I got the flu. So I had to back out. I missed that first one, but I did do the next two. It was crazy, because you would get there, and Lane would say, "So, what do you need for tomorrow?" And we're going, "I need? Oh, my god." We are in the middle of nowhere, in Vail, so you really ran by the seat of your pants, and had to put a

workshop together from [what you brought –EM].

We were teaching in the lift house, so we had curtains hanging between each workshop group. So, you had this noise competition, and every once in a while, the ski lift would come rumbling overhead, through this thing. It was total craziness. And then, of course, in the evening, we'd have these mixers, and kind of parties. I remember one was a 1950s sock hop, or something like that. So, Lynda Watson and I were rooming together, and we had to put a costume together, and that's what it was about. It was total fun and craziness. People really got into these things. You know, the guys did the duck tail hair and found white sports coats at thrift shops, and put pink carnations—you know, take off some songs and blue suede shoes, painting their shoes. Lynda and I found these little sheath dresses in the thrift shop, and we put on the bright blue eye shadow, which we picked up at the drug store. I had Lynda paint seams on the backs of my legs [with an eyebrow pencil –EM]—it was craziness. It was fun. It was [an –EM] experience of, you know, teaching, and exploring processes.

And then, eventually, the school was more than symposium. It was summer workshops that were in all of the areas. Painting. Graphics. Printmaking. Glassblowing. Blacksmithing. Ceramics. Metal. The who's who of the [art –EM] world came to teach sessions. And the assistants that we had came to be the who's who of the arts, as well. Kris Patzlaff. Tom Madden. Steve Jordan. Mary Douglas. It was unbelievable. And we all worked together. I mean, we all did the jobs. The assistants, obviously, the ones emptying the garbage cans and washing the floors, and all of that, and serving food. We actually took over the kitchen, at times. Mary Hu teaching—putting together a Chinese meal for everyone. It was such a creative time, that people were vying for opportunities to teach there, and also to study there. And it went on for a number of years. Art critics came out of that, as assistants, or having been there—painters. It was a stellar group. And a really fun experience.

The parties that we had—as I said, themed parties went on. Fourth of July parades, we worked on all the way up to the Fourth of July, after we finished teaching, well into the night. John Ploof, who is a performance artist, was an assistant, and came up with the most creative venues. One party was cellulose party. And you think, cellulose? What am I going to do with that? We don't come there with costumes of any kind. This is just dumped on you. So, I remember that Bruce Breckenridge, who happened to be one of my colleagues in clay in Wisconsin, came with bubble wrap around his thighs. And he had a sign that says, "Cellulose? I thought you said cellulite."

[They laugh.]

So, it was just nutsy-crazy stuff that we put together.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I have to say, one of the things that I have heard, over and over, is that craft and community are almost synonymous. And you're describing a really intimate community. You were at the center of that. I was treated to coming out occasionally, and you were one of the people that everything kind of revolved around. And it was about knowing one another.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. I don't think I was the center of it. But I was in the group that was the activator.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And the same was true with Yuma. Yuma was an offshoot of Summervail, because Peter Jagoda, who was in Arizona at that time—would come to Summervail [to escape the summer heat –EM]. And he would take on cooking ribs for everyone. He loved doing barbecued ribs,

and had recipes to share. So, he said, "You know, I've got to do something like this in the wintertime, when people would come to Arizona." So, he was teaching at a small college, Arizona Western College in Yuma, and he put together Yuma Symposium. Peter was a sculptor, and he was now teaching jewelry at this college. Most of the time, he was teaching seniors and retirees. What we call out here snow birds—that is, people from Michigan and Wisconsin who come here to get warm in the winter.

So, Peter had to teach himself jewelry techniques, and the way that he did that was to bring in jewelers to teach workshops for him. So, I was out there in 1979, teaching a workshop. And of course, Michael Croft had done this, Dave Pimentel. The locals. You know, the people in this region, who could drive over to teach a workshop. And I think the year—I taught in 1979—and the next year, Helen Shirk came in to teach, and Dave Pimentel said, "Could we bring our students over from Tempe?" And Mike said, "Could I bring my students from U of A?" So, it kind of was the start of this Yuma Symposium. And each year, it grew. And then, two local ceramic artists, Neely Tomkins and George Thompson, who had gone to school with Peter at Tempe, ASU, and now teaching at Yuma, said, "Let's add clay." So, then, clay was added.

It took place the last weekend of February, every year, in Yuma. It was outside, because the weather is great. So, demos were done outside. Pete did the barbecue, and we did pit fire turkeys. The rest of us starting coming just to play together. And consequently, pitch in with the help. We helped with the cooking, and food preparation. And making posters, and getting people around, and picking people up at the airport. It was so enjoyable. You know, gatherings around bonfire, late into the night, and students felt so welcomed into this group. There wasn't any separation. The people who were teaching didn't go off and disappear. They were there with all the students, and that was what was so special, and so unusual. I think that in the crafts, that sense of community exists more than it does in—to my experience—in painting and sculpture, certainly.

SHARON CHURCH: Absolutely.

ELEANOR MOTY: Or the so-called fine arts. I think people are very generous and giving. And at that time, what was so—really different, was crazy fun stuff. We could make do with nothing, and turn it into a party.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And to this day, we're old timers now—I mean, it's been that many decades that we've been doing this, [1980 –EM] to now. We old timers are still pitching and sweeping the floor, and serving food and helping wherever we need to be helping. And the young kids, it's really different. I mean, they come. And then they find a place to go dancing, and they disappear.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: They say, "God, you guys sound as though you had a lot of fun. How did you do that?" And I said, "Well, you kind of find a group that you get together and let's do something."

SHARON CHURCH: Well, growing on that experience, you've been very involved with Haystack on the board, with the ACC, and you're an expected and anticipated presence at the Society of North American Goldsmiths. Can you talk about the significance of these more well-known organizations?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think that there's a time when it—you're it. You know? When you are moving through your career, and teaching as well, you're it means that it's your time to serve, and to

step forward. And make your presence known, and be of help, to keep the organization alive and growing, and strong. In a teaching situation, it means that you now have committee assignments, and you're a mentor to new faculty, and so on. In terms of Haystack, serving on the board, as an artist, it means you're helping with programming and fundraising, to some extent. But mainly programming and facilities, to keep the program viable to [draw students –EM]. You know, places like Haystack, Arrowmont, and Penland, they get the paying students. The people who want to take a break. They might be professionals, or hobbyists. And they have two weeks that they can study something. They're the paying students. But you also have the young, up and coming students, who are mainly scholarship students.

And you want to create programs that are viable and interesting to them. Whether it's a Yuma Symposium, or it's the SNAG conferences. And certainly, the schools. The American Crafts Council—I've only been peripheral. I've never served on the board of the American Crafts Council, but I've certainly interacted a lot. And the same is true with SNAG. I've never served on the board of SNAG—not that I wasn't asked, but it was just not possible. You know, when your commitments—SNAG is a big project, and—to serve on the board, so when your other commitments just preclude more time spent there. I would do kind of off-shoot committees. And you know, gladly so. But I also attended the conference from the very first—I attended most of the conferences, all the way along. What was so interesting with the early ones was that we had demonstrations. And that was undeniably fantastic, because it brought everyone together to see a workshop that you might not be able to afford to attend, or afford to bring the person into your own program.

So, the students were really brought together. And at that time, as well, we all had—you know, we old timers had this attitude of enveloping the students, and making them feel welcome. Mary Ann Scherr was renowned for opening the doors of a room, and you know, sending someone out to pick up some stuff to drink, and have a big party that everyone was welcome to. The students couldn't believe that they were meeting their heroes. The stars. And when I took my students, or my students were at a conference with me, I would pull them aside, and I'd say, "Who do you need to meet?" You know, I'd say, "That is so and so, and that is so and so." And their eyes would just get bigger and bigger and bigger. And I would attempt to make a point to introduce them to their heroes. And it was a—such a thrill for them. And I would say, "Okay, you are looking at Phil Fike sitting in that corner, and you have to know that Phil Fike is your grandfather. He's the person who taught so and so, who taught so and so, and he is the person who brought Niello back into contemporary use, and also introduce the fibula." And you know, these were important lessons to share, and I think that the conferences allowed that. And it also allowed us to see our friends.

SHARON CHURCH: That's an interesting topic that you bring up. That there are heroes and stars in our field.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: And I count you as one of them, and I know you'll probably argue with me. But what makes someone a star, or a hero? Is it the publications? Is it going to the workshops? Is it—we have a verbal history. Is it—are we part of that tradition, of making stars and heroes?

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, it's interesting, because when I think of who were the stars to me, there wasn't a lot of [published –EM] information.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I think it was the work that just—you know, when you finally saw the work,

whether it was in an exhibition or in a magazine, it was so breathtaking. That made them a star in your mind. "I want to be like them." It was often that, "I want to be like them." I think that that for me has always been the—you know, it's based upon the work. It's not because the person is a real smooth talker, or anything like that. It's really the work. Because some of my stars are so shy, and withdrawn, and quiet. I mean, we talked personally, about John Paul Miller. He is one who was the most, oh, such a gentleman, and just self-effacing and quiet. And the loveliest man. And of course, his work spoke for everything. His work is just timeless. And spectacularly beautiful.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, that's an interesting point, and I'm glad you think it's—lies in the work, because that's where it should lie. But now, let's go back to you. You have some gifts. What have been your gifts, as a teacher? As an artist? Where do you source your strength?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I don't know that I think of myself as a star. I think that I had a lot of attention, early on, because of the processes that I was researching. The photo-etching, and the combination with electroforming. In teaching, part of what's happening—what happens with teaching in a university is that you have to be visible, because that's how you draw students. By the time they're a grad, they go to a program to study with an individual. You don't go to the program because [your –EM] uncle lives there, and it's easy to find a place to live, or whatever.

So, you have to stay visible in some way, and that comes, partly, from going to the conferences and meeting other people, and being visible in that way. But unless your work is visible, that's not so easy, Sharon. And my work reached a stage where it wasn't so visible. You know, it was like not [being –EM] invited to shows, as much. So, I think it's more difficult to stay at the forefront and be viable out there. As far as teaching goes, I talked about how important it was for me to back off and not be so overbearing, as to what I thought the students needed to do and learn. But I tried to be a resource. And I remember very well, I had a Korean student, a woman. And she was really rebelling against the attitude toward women in Korea. You know, just sort of feeling pushed aside. And men are—the baby boy is more important and celebrated than the baby girl. So, I said, "You really need to take a course in women's studies. I think it would be very helpful to you."

And she would politely nod her head because of course, they're so polite, even if when they don't understand you, they nod their head.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So, semester after semester, I'd say, "You know, it would really be good for you to take a course in women's studies, as your elective." And finally, somehow, she decided to take it. And she came to me the first week of classes, and she said, "I am so happy; I'm taking the women's studies course. It's amazing." And I said, "Yes?" And she said, "You know, all the time you told me, I thought you meant home economics and sewing and cooking."

[They laugh.]

So, it was—oh, my god. Oh, I thought what that poor girl must've been thinking, because I really was trying to provide that impetus for them to free themselves.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think—when I—when I think about your program, I think about how you nourish and nurtured individuals. So, I think you're saying that, at the same time, there was this little intense community. Can you back up a little bit and talk about what that community was like when

you first stepped into it? And how it has changed, over time?

ELEANOR MOTY: The community of the crafts, you mean?

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. Well, specifically, jewelry metals.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. It was small, for one thing. You knew everybody. It's kind of ironic, when I think about that, because I could look at a catalog, and I knew each person who was in the show. Or I would go to the conference, and I knew almost everybody at the conference. And that has certainly changed. I mean, it wasn't that unusual to be a so-called star, because the competition wasn't as great. The communication wasn't as wide. It's very different now, and I think that the whole business of the competitive spirit is a tough one. Not a competitive spirit as it was then, in like make yourself better. You know, really push yourself out. Push yourself forward. Really push yourself in your work. Now, it's almost cutthroat. I think it's tough for young people to be coming into the programs now. And I think back to when I was a high school student and university, and I thought, "You know, this is a really small program. I can be really good in this. I can really make a mark in this." And I don't think that young people come into it having any sense or hope of that, really. You know, it's not obvious.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: They're going to really work, more and more and more, to become that. Teaching jobs. There were teaching jobs for all of us who wanted to teach. It was a matter of which job did you want. And over the years, there haven't been programs added, necessarily. We've had the same programs, and unfortunately, many of the programs had been cut. Eliminated. You know, once the person retired, it didn't exist anymore. So, I can't tell you how many hundreds of letters of recommendation I wrote for people applying for jobs. And in my own program, four or five applying for the same jobs. That was just my program. Across the nation, they probably had 60-140 or more people applying for that one job. And of course, they wanted all teaching experience. And how do you get teaching experience if you don't have a job? It was just this vicious cycle. And it's still that way. I mean, when I would interview grads and I say, "Why do you want to do a graduate degree? It's awfully expensive, for one thing. You know, it's a big commitment of time and finances." And they say, "But I want to teach." And I was very frank with them. I said, "There are no guarantees that this degree from the University of Wisconsin is going to give you a teaching [job. –EM] Be ready to have some other reason for being here"—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —"and to make a living."

SHARON CHURCH: That's very true. I want to return to that, but for right now, you have been in a lot of specialized periodicals. And I think they helped to aggrandize your reputation. What role do you think these periodicals have played in your development, as an artist? And which ones have been most important, and why?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I'm assuming you're thinking mainly of the ones that include my work—my early work and research in photo-etching, because I was in photo media shows that were—that was time, in the 1970s, when people were doing things with photo [blue printing –EM], photo silk-screening, photo decals on clay. All of the areas, in fact, Haystack, through Fred Woell, the assistant director, hosted a special session in photography, in the crafts. Dan Anderson from St. Louis was there, because he did the photo decals on clay. Each one of us who taught used photography in

our work. And that was a pretty dynamic session, because Fred produced a booklet from our notes and workshops. It was kind of a mixed bag of handouts and information, but it was a good little project. Eastman Kodak—no, it was Polaroid donated equipment that we used, so we could have instant imaging. And it was, really, quite special.

And I think that, also, the *Time Life* book on—the series on photography that included my work opened new venues for me. The shows that I did that were photo media shows gave me more opportunities for exhibitions. And they were some very impressive exhibitions. Really important work being done of that period. I had a feature in—early on in *Craft Horizons* that really dealt with my technique. And then, there were a couple of technical journals. But other than that, that's been a pretty quiet experience for me, in the major publications, which I would consider to be *Craft Horizons*, now *American Craft*, and then *Metalsmith*, and *Ornament*. Although I did have a feature article in *Ornament*, quite a few years back. And then quite recently, Glen Brown had written in [*Ornament* –EM], and a few others that have come along. So, my work has been otherwise, really peripheral. Like, maybe a note about a show. So, I don't think I've been out there, that visibly, except for some books, like Oppi's [Untracht] book, which covered my technique. And yes, in that way, there have been some important text books and catalogs.

SHARON CHURCH: I would agree that when you were doing workshops in your photo-etching processes, that you were technically very available. But I think, more recently, with this newer, quieter work, you have received a lot of critical response. And I think that that's a sign of the times. We're not so interested in technique anymore. But I think—you know, you can find you now. You did go underground for a while.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: But—

ELEANOR MOTY: And that wasn't by choice.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: It just is what happens. It's just part of what happens. It's like fashion. Every year, they want to know what's new, what the color is, and all of that. And even in jewelry, especially for people who are doing production jewelry, or fashion jewelry. It's like, "What's your line this year?" And people would say that to me, or they thought your work is just looking the same, every year. And I said, "Well, you wouldn't say that to a painter. Like, what's your line this year?" And I thought, I'm an artist, first and foremost. And I'm developing an aesthetic, and staying true, so that a person picks up my work and said, "Oh, that's an Eleanor Moty." And it's not a derivative of someone else. All along, that's been really crucial to me. And the work that I was doing, fell out of favor with what was really hot and moving.

And then, the Metal Museum—well, yes, the Metal Museum show really precipitated more attention. And the Metal Museum show came about from my peers. Because the people who jury you in, and select the master metalsmith year to year are your peers, who vote. Who come together and vote. And talk about, who should be recognized. I was fortunate that my colleagues and my peers chose to show my work at the Metal Museum in 2012. And Marjorie Simon's article in *Metalsmith*, which was my first article in *Metalsmith*, came along about that time—or, just before *Master Metalsmith*. And then, Glen Brown's review—or article came as a result of having seen this show.

SHARON CHURCH: And his article—

ELEANOR MOTY: Is in *Ornament Magazine*.

SHARON CHURCH: —it's a very good article. Excuse me. I think you've pretty much described what happens to a lot of artists. They hit the ground running—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —they're like a comet.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: And then they go under. And yet, you have survived. And you've talked about teaching positions. Do you think that a teaching position does sustain a lot of artists in our field?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, gosh, without question. When I think about how difficult it is for an artist to make a living totally from their work, it is astonishing. Because the creative side of them has to hold back until they get all the market work out, and the production items out. So, you know, I've heard so many of them say, "Well, I give myself two months in the summer to really express myself. Otherwise, I've got to do the bread and butter stuff." And I always admire them, because I think the work is fabulous, and it never wavers from being fabulous. They don't sell out to make garbage. They really keep their aesthetic, and their high level. But, it's production, you know? It is tough going. And of course, a lot of it is hiring people, which I've never had to do. And I would really, I don't know where I would begin, in hiring someone to do the things that I'm doing.

In teaching, and you know, this has been a criticism leveled to those of us who teach. Like, "You have it so easy because you have a salary." And I'll be the first to say, "Yes. That is great. That is absolutely true. I have a salary." But honestly, when I was teaching, teaching came first and foremost. And as my commitments in the university expanded with seniority, and more and more committee responsibilities, my studio work really suffered. And I couldn't buy—or I couldn't just manage an hour here and an hour there, to pick up at the bench, and make a piece, or continue where I left off. So, I finally resigned myself to just doing my studio work during vacations, or in the summer.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, my production was minimal. There were years—if I did four pieces through a year, that was a lot. And truthfully, I had graduate students who were so critical of me. "What kind of artist are you? You only make four pieces a year." They don't have a concept of the responsibilities you have. And of course, you're a human, as well, and you have personal responsibilities, and family responsibilities. And for people who have children, you have that to deal with, as well.

So, my work level was really minimal for a lot of years, because teaching was what I was paid for. The students were paying to work with me, and I tried to give them my all. And my focus.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that that's a truth. Did you feel obligated, at the University of Wisconsin—which is a known research university—to research and contribute new knowledge to the field?

ELEANOR MOTY: One thing about the University of Wisconsin is that they have a fabulous grant program. And when it comes to research, the grants are for your personal research. In other words, if you say, "Oh, I want to build a slide library in the art department for metals," they say, "No, no, no, no. You don't understand. We don't fund that. You know, this grant is for you to further your work."

Which, is the brilliance of it all, as it comes back to your students. You know, the fact that you are out there, visible. Your work is out there and visible, is remarkable. And I was so fortunate, over the years, to—we didn't—in the time that I started, we didn't have a sabbatical program, but you could take a leave of absence without pay. The grants allowed me to take a semester off at a time. And yes, maybe the finances weren't my total salary, but I could, live on them, and pay my expenses.

But I had some really significant grants along the way. And also, in some cases, I could get international travel help, for a flight or something like that. I didn't get conference money, to go to the conferences, and so on, as so many programs did. But it really did help expand my opportunity to do my own research.

SHARON CHURCH: When you—an artist's research, is largely different from a—

ELEANOR MOTY: Scientist.

SHARON CHURCH: —scientist's research. That I'm thinking that your research was based on going inside and trying to understand what it is within you to make.

ELEANOR MOTY: Or you sometimes had a technical project you wanted to do. And the irony of all this is that one of my colleagues, Walter Hamady who taught paper-making and book-making. He nominated me for one particular grant in the university that had never gone to anyone in the arts. And at that time, it was a \$20,000 grant. And I got the grant, which was totally amazing. I mean, it was a lot of work on his part to pull together recommendations from people in the field, and so on, because you are competing with the scientists. You know, everybody from the department is sending someone up from that grant—from the university, not the department. I was the only one who came up from the department. I was first to come up from the art department. I was the first woman to get the grant. And I was the first person in the arts to get the grant.

And years later, I heard from a committee member on that committee of grant selections, that when my portfolio came up, and my application came up, they were so fascinated by what is this that's happening? We need to know more about this. We need to encourage this. And I thought, wow, that is pretty forward thinking. So, that is one thing about the university. No matter what field you are in, you are equal competitors. And I had been asked to serve on that selection committee, and I had served on the selection committee of some of those significant grants.

I remember one grant that I had to review was someone from Linguistics whose proposal was to study the "syntactic and pragmatic differentiation of Mongolian question formation." And the only reason I remember that title because I had to read that proposal about a dozen times, to even begin to grasp what they were researching. So, you know, it's a pretty amazing university. They have a greater—a larger grant structure than Stanford, and partly because it comes from WARF, which stands for Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. And the greatest amount of money to WARF comes from the discovery of vitamin K, which is blood thinners. Coumadin. Blood thinner.

So, in the sciences, when they get grant money—international grant money, and national and federal grand money—and they patent something, the university gets part of the patent, a percentage of it. So, when you discover something as significant as vitamin K, that's a lot revenue that comes to the university. So, that's why the funding program at the University of Wisconsin is phenomenal.

SHARON CHURCH: That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: And also, I should mention that staff has access to this. Not just faculty. But peripheral staff, has access to grant money.

SHARON CHURCH: That's wonderful. I wonder, when you look at your work, it's so well crafted. And I know that the craft takes a lot of time. If working at the university and getting these grants didn't allow you to really hone that craft and dedicate untold quantities of time to the work?

ELEANOR MOTY: That's ingrained in me. You know, that really goes back to my mother standing over my shoulder and teaching us hand work. It gets better as you gain your skills, and that's something that has always been in front of me. As I mentioned dealing with the fronts and backs of pieces. And cleaning up surfaces, and you know, all the hand work that's involved. There was a time—I don't know if you remember that we used to cover up fire scale by putting a flash coating of fine silver on. And we all did it. It sounded like a great idea, until you sent the piece to shows enough times, and then somebody—some docent used some silver cream to polish it 18 times, when that show traveled, and you'd get it back, and you'd go, "Oh, my god. It's been showing all this fire scale." Because the lights in, you know, a gallery setting and a—on a white background. Man, that stuff is just like these purple blushes coming up.

So, I clean fire scale off my pieces now. And I do all hand work. I use scotch stones. I don't use buffers and flex shaft. But yes I've honed my skills, over the years. And what's interesting is that I've been getting some work back to re-photograph. I've been trying to re-document my pieces, because slides are so transient, as we've learned—images fade, and so on. So, I've called pieces back from museums and individuals. And I've actually sent them back improved.

SHARON CHURCH: I believe it.

ELEANOR MOTY: —I've said, "Oh my god, I have to fix this. This is too thick, or whatever." And I replace a pin stem, or just tweak it. Or if the piece has been dropped.

SHARON CHURCH: You fix it.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and a little dinged and dented, I fixed. And I tell certain of my collectors, "Don't let anyone else clean the pieces, or fix them. Send them to me. I will do it for you." Because you know, you do it your way. I've seen pieces that museums have cleaned, where they don't want me to touch them, and I'm [thinking –EM], "I can do better."

[They laugh.]

It kind of kills me that it's really shiny, instead of that nice, matte surface. So, as I'm building my pieces now, I'm thinking, "Yeah, you have improved. You've gotten better. You're working cleaner. Your cleanup isn't as difficult anymore." You know, it really is a matter of building skills.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, connected to this conversation is—I look at your work, and think, it seems very intentional and deliberate. At the same time, I wonder, now, do you deliberate over each design decision? And do you—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, Sharon. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: —do you have—do you think I've spent too much time on this? Or do you just relish that this problem is in front of you, and you need to take care of it?

ELEANOR MOTY: No.

[They laugh.]

I am a worrier before it's time to worry. It's pathetic. And when I have commitments, for instance, shows, and I've got to get a body of work out. I'm talking about now. You know, in my supposed retirement, where I just have one full time job instead of two. I will pull out a piece, a stone, and I do sketch after sketch. Pages and pages. And I could spend days doing that. I really ponder. And I go back, and I pull elements from that good—that's a good drawing, but not the bottom of it. And I pull them together, and then after—oh, let's say I spent 12 hours on this, and it's not going to happen. It's not coming together. I have the good sense to put it aside. Just, shelve it for now, and start over, and rebuild, and maybe go back to some sketches.

Yes, I ponder over things. I figure that I'm putting at least, at minimum, three drawings into the drawing, if I'm lucky. And then, I begin building. I used to make paper models. I mean, that's how timid I was to start. Like, let's see if this form works. If this stone will work in this position. And now, I'm beyond that. I don't have to do that anymore. I don't have to cut the patterns, and so on. But oh, yes. I am just impossible in pondering over something forever. Just not fun. Not fun, Sharon.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's in your work. Though you've shown me your drawings in the studio, and you have that wonderful DVD that describes your process. So, I think—I think that the work that you're doing now seems distinct from your early work. But after I've been here, and talking with you, I can see that there's a very strong connection. You were intentional about changing, and yet, those things have stayed with you. Can you talk about the similarities and differences between your early work and recent work?

ELEANOR MOTY: The earliest work was the struggle to get dimension into pieces. They were very simplistic translations creating dimension. The electroforming and the photo-etching. And the electroforming is so organic. And it's almost gloppy. I have never relied on—well, I shouldn't say never, because there were some pieces that were totally electroformed; however, most of the time, there was a fabricated structure behind it. And I often combined unlike materials.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I always had this interest in, "oh, that's a very interesting chunk of gravel" or "that's a really pretty piece of abalone shell" or "here's a pearl stem" or "here's a spodumene crystal." I would gather things as I would find them. Come upon them at whatever shows. Sometimes on the ground. Who knows where these things would come from. People would give me things. And it was always a matter of collaging things together.

SHARON CHURCH: Collaging.

ELEANOR MOTY: And hiding little images. You mentioned early on, the *Reversible Pendant*, or as sometimes called *Homage to Fred Woell*—

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because it has a picture of a fish shanty on the front of it. And that was the first shanty where he and two other fellow grad students went to Door County, WI, to fire—you know, make ceramics and jewelry. And they had no electricity. It really was a fish shanty on the water, in Door County, WI. So, it was an image that was really important to him. So, I made it [into a –EM] half tone, and made many etchings of it. So, Fred wears a belt buckle every day that I had made for him, with a fish shanty on it. And the pendant, this reversible pendant, has that photo-

etching, and then electroforming around it, and a crystal down below. And when you look through the crystal, there is a little oval, and it's a picture of my grandfather. And when you reverse the pendant, there is a worn down lava cameo. So, the grandfather's on the back of this little oval cameo that's floating above the stone.

And then, there are images—because the piece is deep. There're images sideways that you peek in and see. So, it's a very involved piece. And the chain is fabricated so that the piece—it's a very dimensional chain, and the piece reverses, so it's like a ball and socket, to allow you to change it. And it is big. It's four and a half inches by three inches. It's a massive piece. This is a grad school piece at a time when you did body jewelry that was really noticed.

So, that combination of materials has always carried—the landscape has always carried in that back of the mind, subtle way—that something that's important to you always comes forward. The way that I put materials together now is much more quiet and elegant and subtle. So, there are sometimes crystals, but the crystals are spectacularly beautiful and perfect. And stem pearls or something that appeals to me, because they're long pearls like a stick, but have a soft irregularly, and this velvety look to them. Those are the kinds of materials that I'm working with now, and then the accent stones. So, there is a—such a continuum, but it looks drastically different, because I went from that raw, rough, copper, and the electroforming, to total fabrication. Not growing metal, but really working with sheet metal and fabricating.

SHARON CHURCH: So, even though the work is visually, perhaps simpler, it might take as much time to make, because your demands of the craft are so high?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, that is so on target, Sharon, because it's a lot easier to cover up with looseness than when you start doing pristine shapes, every mark shows. If you haven't backed your piece with a soft piece of leather, or you—haven't cleaned your surface well before you were flattening that, you got pits in that surface. And when your surfaces are meant to be as soft, pristine, clean, as this, you have be thinking about that all the time. And it takes so much more time to clean up the pieces, too. Because you're going to have solder that's kind of ghosting here and there. And certainly, fire scale, because I'm working with sterling silver. Yes the attention to detail that I have to put into these things is stupid. Because I remember so well, some production artists who'd come in for workshops, talking about, "Well, you must create your designs so that your buff fits that curve." And they're serious.

SHARON CHURCH: You don't do that.

ELEANOR MOTY: You don't lose time in buffing things that are, not going to be easy to—you know, surfaces easy to get at. So, what do I do? I create planer surfaces, and then I jag in shards of gold at a variety of angles. Not just one direction, but opposing directions, which means that there is no tool that you can use to clean one direction. You have to improvise and make little tools and abrasive sticks that you can get in, and try to create this uniform surface. Because I don't just sandblast the surface, and I don't just buff it. I do it all by hand. And as I am working away, my fingertips are hurting, [Laughs] I have to cover it with cots and tape, and so on. I'm just saying to myself, "No one else would go through this agony, just to create this design that no one will ever know is there." As—we've talked about that, as well, you know, are we working against ourselves in creating forms that no one really knows how you've made, or that it was difficult to do? But that's not what it's about. You're not trying to, encourage someone to realize that this is really difficult. You're just trying to create a volume, a form, an element, that they just fall in love with. And they just love looking at.

SHARON CHURCH: That's such an important point. I imagine that you shape your scotch stones to reach in. I admire your surfaces. They're flawless. I think that everyone who looks at this work has commented on the level of craft that you achieve. I think I learned how to make chasing tools from you. So, the idea of making tools has been core.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Absolutely. You know, one of the trips that we made to Mexico to see the coppersmithing of Santa Clara del Cobre. It is really mind boggling to see the forms and volumes that are created by those artisans. And the tools that they use are so basic. They make their own tools. They make their own stakes. They make their own hammers. We watched them finishing off a piece, and planishing. And the hammer wasn't quite the right shape/size to fit into this groove. So, they went over to the pile of scrap metal. They pulled out a truck spring. They threw it into the forge. And when it got red hot, they pulled it out, and they chiseled off a segment of it, and straightened it out. And then, they punched a hole in the middle of it, to put a handle through. They shaped it and hardened it and polished it. And in the meantime, they needed a handle. So, they went to the corner of the studio—it was just outdoors, no less—and they grab a broom, and they cut off a section of the broom, and shave down the wood to fit into the hammer, and whack it on. And in about an hour, they had their planishing hammer. They didn't have to order it from Gesswein or Allcraft.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, and you have a lot of that work in your home. And it is extraordinary.

ELEANOR MOTY: Unbelievable.

SHARON CHURCH: So, that brings me to another question about how you see yourself within the panoply of metal work, the history of the field, and what is happening right now?

ELEANOR MOTY: Sharon, I never think of myself in that realm. I'm just such a teeny, tiny, little speck in this whole world of our field. You know, so few people see my work. So, in that regard, it's not like the Etruscan work, or the pre-Colombian work. You know, medieval work, any of the things that are in museums in mass that are collected. I think that the main thing is to do the best you can with the skills that you have. It wasn't so long ago that a woman was visiting with her daughter, who works in social causes. And she really was rather [dismayed –EM] to see my work, because she thought that it was superfluous by what she's dealing with in the world. And I said, "You know, I can't make excuses for what I do. And yes, it's not going to benefit society, but," I said, "it's the best way that I can express myself. It's where my skill lies. And I have to make the most of that. And I have been fortunate enough to help direct young people's lives in the way that I've taught, and made them happy with the career choice that they've made." So I said, "I guess that's the only, thing that I can tell you. Yes, I'm not, digging irrigation ditches to help people bring water to their village. But this is what I do best."

SHARON CHURCH: I think that there's a great deal of beauty in your work, and if I personally believe that beauty is an inspiration. And that human beings need that—

ELEANOR MOTY: It's true.

SHARON CHURCH: —along with everything else.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's true. That was one of the [points –EM] that I um, had made to this young woman. I said, "You know, if I can bring joy in some way, or pleasure in some way, to someone's life, that has to mean something."

[...-EM]

[END OF TRACK.]

[...-EM]

SHARON CHURCH: So, why don't—I think that that was very honest of you. And in this time of needing to give back, it is difficult to sustain our practice, when that kind of criticism is leveled against it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: However, I do believe that beauty is important. I think that that might lead to the question, have your sources of inspiration changed, over the years?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think that, for me, as an artist, I draw my inspiration and strength, and interest, in a broad range be it traveling, looking at other people's work. I don't think it's changed. I think it's just a gathering of information that just keeps feeding me. It's like, the same kinds of things that always interested me. When I travel, I love going to museums, and seeing contemporary as well as historical pieces. These days, more contemporary things, more up to date shows, rather than historical. Because over the years, you know, when you go to a lot of museums, you see a lot of historical work, and there's a lot of overlap with the aesthetic.

I also like going to science museums. I think that instruments are quite gorgeous. Recently, I've seen a couple of exhibitions of musical instruments, and that, too. I went to the Met recently, and I hadn't really gone to see the musical instruments, but I thought, "That's one gallery I have not gone to." There was no one in there, and it was just magnificent. And in Munich recently, we went to the Museum of Science and Industry, and there was this gorgeous room—room after room, actually, of instruments that was just mind boggling. You know, seeing the horns and the loopiness of them, and the complexity of them.

I really just continue to gather things. I think that my trip to Japan in about—I think it was around 1984. It was after the Ando Workshop that I had taken. I connected with Gene and Hiroko [Pijanowski], and then toured with them. We visited a number of living treasures. Hiroko's interest was in textiles at that time. She was exploring the stencil cutters, and the printers. And what was so fascinating to me about Japan was that I felt as though my mind—my visual memory was in fast forward mode. Because there were the tortured trees, and the supported trees, and picking blossoms off the fruit trees, just to bag the few peaches that will be growing, that will be perfection in the essence of taste, bamboo swaying in the wind, the raked gravel. The stepping stones with little squares cut out of them, to keep the moisture when it rains, to keep this moist air around the plantings. The moss. The bamboo used as structures around buildings, in terms of scaffolding. I just was so—it was mind boggling how beautiful. And the attention to detail. The way food was presented. It really put me in another realm.

There was nothing happenstance about any aspect of their life. The fact that they had very simple rooms, and they changed out the arrangements and the artifacts—because the rooms were small, they didn't put everything out like I have here, where you sort of ignore it after a while. Because that's the importance of it. They bring out new images all the time. You know, they put them away and bring out new. The things that I gathered and collected are things that, to this day, I am so glad that I brought back. We went to a flea market and I bought kimonos. They had bales of kimonos. I bought kimonos just dirt cheap. They were so inexpensive. And I bought a fireman's jacket, done in

ikat. I bought—oh, women's kimonos. I bought men's kimonos. I bought pantaloons, all manner of things. And then I remember seeing this gorgeous—a cast—this iron teapot from—from a tea ceremony, and it had a little remnant of gold inlay in the handle. It was so beautiful. It was chrysanthemum. I wanted to buy it, but I couldn't carry it.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I was like—you know, I didn't have a little Sherpa behind me, a wagon, or anything.

So, I remember that Hiroko's father—at the end of each day, when I would come back to the apartment when I was staying with them. He'd say, "Well, what did you buy today? I'm very curious what an American wants to take back to America." The things were usually from a department store, or a hardware store. Or a stationery store. And I came back with envelopes that have the—I have to look up the word—*mizuhiki* cord that is patterned and tied. I had a whole stack that I bought. Some were silver, and some were gold. I remember when I took them to the clerk, the ladies to pay.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: They gave me this really somber, sad look. And I thought, "Oh, something's wrong." And when I got home, Hiroko's mother said, "Oh, my god. Most of these are funerary cards."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: So, travel has been very important to you. That—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —Japanese trip was very—

ELEANOR MOTY: That was stellar.

SHARON CHURCH: —important.

ELEANOR MOTY: And Korea was also really important. And of course, the Santa Clara exposure was great. I did an artisan residency at Glasgow School of Art, which was memorable. I lived in the Mackintosh building.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh.

ELEANOR MOTY: Roger Miller had brought me in—

SHARON CHURCH: Gorgeous.

ELEANOR MOTY: —for three weeks as an artist in residence. And that was just phenomenal, being in that building. And many trips to England. You know, it's so easy to travel to England, because we can speak the language. So, the Imperial War Museum was one that's memorable to me, because that's so out of the way, but a very exciting place in terms of the uniqueness, as war stories are told from the home front. And you see how innovative people had to be, in recycling and making do.

SHARON CHURCH: So much of what you talk about, when you talk about your travels, I see in your

work. Attention to detail, textures, landscape, but also, this ability to make do.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. That's true. I mean, I don't have a lot of fancy equipment in this studio. It's pretty basic stuff.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, as a result of these travels, do you think of your work as particularly American, or are you more of an international artist?

ELEANOR MOTY: I haven't really thought in those terms, and I don't know what it means anymore, because I think that—I used to think of the European work, when I first knew about it, in the 1970s, through Lechtzin's lectures and images, it was distinctly different from the Americans.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I don't think it is anymore, because there is so much crossover. And the SCHMUCK-Show in Munich, and all the other exhibitions that are combined—all of the countries of the world. So, I don't think that there is a designation any longer.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think that's because of our ability to travel? And that—

ELEANOR MOTY: I think that it's the web's—the Internet—

SHARON CHURCH: The Internet?

ELEANOR MOTY: —and all of that, as much as anything. You know, how many shows there are, that are just Internet shows? Not so recently, but a few years ago—I was a reviewer for someone coming up for full professor, or tenure, whichever. It was so difficult for me to get any sense of their exhibition record, because you know, you used to give importance to international exhibitions.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But now, every exhibition is international—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —isn't it? Because it's on the web.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I was really kind of stymied as to how to judge this, and it really made me realize that we are an international world in our field.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, that's very true. And I would agree with those observations. I want to go back to this word, inspiration. Because you had some really important things to say about that. The Steven Holl architecture, and the stones that you use.

ELEANOR MOTY: Right.

SHARON CHURCH: Many could say those are inspiring to you, but you say more that you feel an affinity?

ELEANOR MOTY: That's right. Yeah, I think that article that we had in *Metalsmith*, I had been speaking with Marjorie at the SNAG conference in Seattle. And I said, you know, I think it's—before

she was writing the article—and I said, "I really want you to see this Steven Holl chapel on campus." The Jesuit campus. Could you read the name of the—place?

SHARON CHURCH: Chapel of St. Ignatius.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. My sister has been on the arts board in Seattle. She's lived in Seattle for decades—ever since graduate school. So, whenever I go to the city to visit her, she takes me to new art things. "Here's something, a site specific piece, or a neighborhood piece I want you to see." So, many years ago, she had taken me to this chapel. And I went into it, and it was so dynamic and contemporary. And the light quality coming in, and the way the light reflected off colored panels that faced the windows, but were baffles in front of the windows, so when the sunlight struck that painted baffle, it bled that color down the walls. There were so many aspects of it that were dynamic. In the baptistery, the walls were covered with bees wax. So, when you walked in there, the smell of beeswax, when the sun, you know—the warmth of the room. There were just so many of the aspects of the sensory, you know, richness of that building. So often, I would say, "Joyce, could we go back to that chapel?" And she would take there. And one time, I thought, "I know what it is. I know why I love this so much. It's like being in one of my brooches. This is exactly my aesthetic. This is how I build my pieces, with all the planer changes, which makes whites look different shades of white." But the fact that there's a turn in the wall, or a turn in the plane of the metal.

So, I wanted Marjorie to experience that, and to see what I was talking about. Afterwards, when Marjorie was working on the article, and she said, "So, the chapel is what brought around this work?" And I said, "No. No, no. That's not what happened. What was so important was my realization that on a very grand scale, there was someone else with this same aesthetic bent that I had." And that was really exciting for me to see.

SHARON CHURCH: You're referring to an article that Marjorie Simon wrote in *Metalsmith Magazine*, Volume 32, Number 1. And it seems that she understood—

ELEANOR MOTY: She did—

SHARON CHURCH: —your—

ELEANOR MOTY: —because I made it clear to her. And you know, she brought that out. But I think that otherwise, people would say, "Oh, yeah, yeah. Steven Holl. Yeah, yeah. I can see why you got that from him." But no, it's—the excitement was, really, a likeminded aesthetic.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's an important point.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think that, again, your jewelry has not received the critical attention of the work of Steven Holl, and therefore, people will point to his work, before they'll point to yours?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, I don't think so because Steven Holl, I mean, after all, he's international. You know, he's—he's everywhere. There is a Steven Holl building.

SHARON CHURCH: Everywhere, right?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. So, no. I don't think—that doesn't worry me. No, not really. Because I don't think most people think of Steven Holl and really know his architecture. I mean, you know, everybody, everybody.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Artists and architects.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. So, that's not a concern. But you know, the other thing, Sharon, in terms of inspiration. I had mentioned Margaret De Patta, and the piece—the early pieces that I had seen of hers, in 1929. Gorgeous crystal pendant. I really feel as though I'm channeling Margaret De Patta. I mean, it's like paying homage to someone whose work you admired and respected, and regret you were not able to meet. But there's no doubt that they—I have gathered some of what was her sensitivity and used it in certain pieces. You know, like the ones that's connected in that *Metalsmith Magazine*, next to the Steven Holl photograph. You know, the crystalline structures of that, and the architectonic elements of that.

Over the years, I've often been asked, especially when I'm doing public lectures, and my brooches are [projected –EM] on the wall. And they're enormous. In a lecture room, people say, "Have you ever thought of doing architectural pieces?" But I couldn't, because I would have to totally change what I was working with. They would have to cast glass, for instance, to be that large. Steel, aluminum, fabricated, and it's not my interest to have that indirectness. There's something about working directly in the material, which is, I suppose, why I'm not too keen on casting, and working on wax, or having other people make my pieces, because it's the handwork that is still part of what's important to me.

SHARON CHURCH: I also think that it takes a lot of knowledge—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —to work with silver, and gold, and stones. They're difficult materials to work with. You have found a way of creating the surfaces that you like—

ELEANOR MOTY: Right.

SHARON CHURCH: —of setting stones. All of these things require a lot of—

ELEANOR MOTY: Right. I always talk about that vocabulary. And I also use textures. I really read the stone, and pull through the stone what is there in imagery, and bring it into the metal. So it dictates a certain pattern, texture, volume, color. And the textures are sometimes the Japanese carving, sometimes engraving, sometimes roller-printing.

SHARON CHURCH: Now, we're going to talk about gemstones. And similar to the Steven Holl architecture, the gemstones are part of your work. Can you talk about how you read those gemstones?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, when I think back to the first of the—I mentioned yesterday, some of the double terminated crystals that I was using. And then, I was working with slabs of rutilated quartz. Rutilated quartz just appealed to me, and it was only through the De Patta article that I recall that I became first aware of them. They come from Brazil, and it's—

SHARON CHURCH: The De Patta article?

ELEANOR MOTY: —Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] In 1964, 60-whatever, *Craft Horizons*. The stones come from Brazil, and it's shards of the mineral Rutile that are floating in quartz. You know, that's been millions of years that they're growing in place.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: We're still in Tucson, AZ with Eleanor Moty in her home and studio. It is November 19, 2014. And Eleanor is talking about her use of gemstones. Can you continue?

ELEANOR MOTY: I began working again with stones—it was a time I was now teaching at the University of Wisconsin, and I was back to working with precious metals. Initially I was working with slabs of rutiled quartz, and sometimes tourmalinated quartz, and I was able to use a diamond saw to shape the outsides of the forms from the matrix slabs that I would buy at a lapidary supply, or lapidary store.

And I had a vibratory flat lap that I would use, polishing several stones at the same time. So that's how I was developing my pieces around, you know, the stones that basically, I was polishing. They had been slabbed already. I was maybe trimming the edges to shape them. But otherwise, polishing them by the flat lap.

SHARON CHURCH: You selected these stones—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: —because they had aesthetic potential?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. They were typically, you know, they had great lines of gold and shades of gold and rutile in them, or that dynamism of the black tourmaline rods going through them. So they really were like graphic pieces to me. The first one was rutiled quartz, square, and you know, you have it—it's in my collection, so that this is one that you can see. But it's basically a square format, with the corner cut off, and then topaz used as an accent stone, and then gold shards coming in at angles to pick up on the lines of the rutile. The stone was an end cut, so there are conchoidal fractures showing through it, on the back of it. The back is irregular. I like that visual quality, and the graphic quality of the patterning that came through of that irregular back surface. So that was the first one, using the rutiled quartz. And then there came a sequential grouping of them. Eventually, I wanted more dimension to them, and I tried to polish a facet myself, and I had no success. Six and a half hours later, and my shoulders are aching, and I'm not getting good results. So that's when I hired local lapidists who—lapidary artists, lapidists, to cut and polish for me.

The pieces [became –EM] more dimensional again, and I was very happy about that. However, I was now facing very complex fabrication to accommodate these stones that had facets going every direction. They weren't like in the typical [faceted stones –EM], calibrated and all symmetrical. These were my own designs that went off at these weird angles and undercuts. Someone asked me if I had the artists—the lapidists—cut the stone to my frame—to my setting, and I said, "I would never do that to them." Because that is so difficult for them to have to cut. I would have them cut my shapes, and then I would fabricate. And it was more difficult for me, obviously. But I felt as though the end result was much more interesting.

One that's in my collection has three sides that are angled and smoothly faceted, and then the front—the three facets don't come together directly, but perhaps separated, there's just the conchoidal fracture of the edge of the crystal. Which I really feel is important in creating a little different edge to it. A little bit of natural quality of the material in a—kind of a challenge to the piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Did you see that, and then say to the stone cutter, "I want that."

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Leave that. Exactly. "Leave that, cut away from it."

SHARON CHURCH: And did you find this rough material in a lapidist's—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, in a shop.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, in a shop.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: So you're not out with hammer—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, gosh, no.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Considering they're in South America? No.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Sometimes I look at the odd shapes of your crystals, and I'm reminded of Herkimer County diamonds. Something that all people who don't know how to make jewelry want to set.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Oh, yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: And they—I can appreciate the difficulties you face setting these unusually shaped stones, because it's impossible, like you said.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. And I don't use epoxy.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, these really are mechanically held in place. They're riveted. They're—you know, the setting and the panel behind. The sets are all done from the back. So the stone pushes into a window, and there's an element, plate or whatever with a cutaway that is held in place in the back—

SHARON CHURCH: Holds your piece.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and it's all mechanically joined. One of the pieces was a very deep stone. And I design them of course, to be brooches worn on the front of the body. And the woman who owned it, I saw her at an opening, and she was wearing it on her shoulder. And that was really striking to me. I'd never thought of it that way. As she moved through the gallery, the lights of the spots and so on, came through that crystal and made it come to life. It was like a flashing beacon. And I thought, "Wow. That is so cool." Because, of course you know, once you sell a piece and it's handled and dealt with and worn by the individual, you have no control. You know, and if they want to put it on their pet, you don't—you know. [Laughs.] But I just loved the fact that she did something different with it. And Helen Drutt is renowned for that—wearing them on her hat.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So few people have that kind of intrigue in the way that they put things together to look at it in another light. But it was really striking for me to see in another light.

SHARON CHURCH: So the creative enterprise of the client came back and built on what you had done.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, interesting, isn't it? I mean, it was so refreshing to see another way of looking at my own work.

SHARON CHURCH: That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: And of course, my work changes depending on what color or texture you're wearing it on, because these are crystals. They're like windows. And whether you're wearing a piece on black or white, it's going to make a difference in how light comes through the stone. And light, with these stones, is really crucial. Pattern is sometimes magnified.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So the texture of the garment, or a little tweed of a garment, whatever it might be, is very different. I was also finding some of this rough material at the Gem Show. You know, early visits to the Gem Show.

SHARON CHURCH: Out here in Tucson?

ELEANOR MOTY: In Tucson, AZ in February, the biggest in the world. And you can get everything from ready-made jewelry to cut and faceted stones, and the finest diamonds in the world, and emeralds, and so on. Or you can get the raw material, and fossils, and pearls—just bales of pearls. I mean, it just goes on forever. So, I would go and buy the rough crystals. You know, quartz crystals, and all of those that were intriguing to me.

And then, eventually, I started going into some of the other venues of the Gem Show. You see, the Tucson Gem Show is not one pavilion that has everything. It's like, 50 venues throughout the city. Hotels, convention centers, and so on. And they specialize. There might be pearls in particular at six different venues. And then, the high-end diamonds and cut stones are at the AGTA show—American Gemological Trade and so on, at the convention center. All of these, you know, the high-end shows you have to have a tax number and it's high security.

And some of the shows are open to the public, because there's also the African village, where you've got furniture and garments and beads, and all of that kind of stuff. It's mind-boggling. Anyhow, you can get roughs and minerals at certain venues. So you just go there, because you can't possibly go to all the venues in the course of the time—two weeks that it runs.

So I would bring back my materials. Well, eventually I said, "Well, let me go to this venue." And oh, I found all these large cuts. You know, large meaning oh, an inch and a half, an inch by three-quarters of an inch. Fantasy cut stones that were—or fancy-cut stones in rutilated quartz and tourmalinated quartz, and I thought, "Well, this is interesting." So I started buying those and incorporating them into my work. So it really changed the tenor of the pieces, because they weren't these big slabs anymore, they were just sort of like feature stones that I had to build and integrate into a form and a shape. So, then they became these kind of narrow, long pieces. Because I didn't want just the stone and a big wing around it. I really wanted this sort of soft movement.

And as I continued to work with those stones, sometimes they were tourmalinated quartz, and I wanted something black. And that particularly came when I found a barrel-cut, large tourmalinated quartz. It was the most stunning stone I'd ever seen, and it was fairly large—it became "Columnar Brooch." It was fairly large, probably an inch and a half by an inch wide, and it had a barrel facet across the front of it. I translated that faceting down through the silver with wisps of roller-printed metal translating from the stone, and wedges of gold highlighting what was happening in the stone.

And then I wanted a finial at the bottom end, countering the stone that was black. Ebony is a beautiful material, and carves wonderfully, but it has a grain when it's at the scale of jewelry. I just was finding that so frustrating. And I think that I was working on that piece here in Arizona. I was probably on leave from teaching. And Michael Croft, my partner, said, "You should really try black paper Micarta." He worked with this paper, impregnated with resin material, for many years in making knives.

It's often used in knife handles, and it's used in print circuitry, and so on. So he said, "Here's a piece. It carves wonderfully. It keeps its shape. It polishes beautifully. It's velvety and the luster of it." And it was perfect. It was, you know, mind-blowing, because it was just like, "Whew. This is just what I needed. This is so right for it." So that was the start of my incorporating this black Micarta with my pieces. And that happened when I had a reference of black coming from the stone. I also discovered some pretty wonderful agates at the Gem Show. I had always had a fascination with picture jaspers.

Now I'm finding some pretty wonderful cut stones, slabs, small gem-shaped stones done in agates, petrified palm, and black jade with metal inclusions that had been gold-plated. That came from Jim Alger, the supplier. And it was just like, "Oh, gosh. These are beautiful." And I would buy the stones just on speculation—I mean, my speculation. I would buy them and say, "I should be able to do something with this." And that was really just the turning point of all of the pieces coming into a different direction with the stone, and really using the graphic quality. And now, because the stones are pretty small again, they're not those big slabs, I have to find other things, other materials to make the piece of the size that I want. I don't want it to just be a tie-tack piece. I want it to be a brooch. So, that's where the Micarta was very helpful in creating these dynamic shapes and form and pleats and patterns. And the stem pearls started emerging, and again I would find things at the Gem Show, such as meteorites plated in gold, which makes it the most beautiful cross-hatch pattern. And these were accent pieces. And now I could find little accent stones. If I'm using rutilated quartz, which has the gold threads, I want yellow sapphires, or I want yellow citrines, or yellow topaz. And those were easy to find. I mean, gosh. Faceted stones in little tiny baguettes? Easy.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Little tiny accent stones of garnets, anything you want. It is somewhere in this community in those two weeks. And wholesale prices, always wholesale prices. So basically, that was my gathering point—the Gem Show every year, to get my materials. And build my um, supplies that I work with all year long. And not only all year long, for years to come. Because I have things that I can go back to, that I bought 15 years ago, 20 years ago, and they might now be something that I use.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that your use of gemstones is very unique. You explained that you're not a collaborator. What is the role of the gemstone in your work?

ELEANOR MOTY: It's the starting point. I always begin with the particular stone. I don't start with the shape, and then find the stone in my collection. I go to my collection first, as I'm getting ready to design a piece, and I lay them out, and I just sort of look them over and say, "Oh, yeah. I think it's time to address this piece." I begin sketching from it. And what I do, initially, is—I used to Xerox them. And now, I scan them on the flatbed scanner. It picks up the color, and every particulate and shape, and so on. And then, I used to lay them out under tracing paper, but now I take clear acetate and a magic marker, and I trace over the scanned image, and I pull out the important essence of the stone, and the inclusions—the major inclusions and the shape of it, obviously. And then, because

that's so striking, black against clear, I lay it under a sheet of tracing paper and move it, back to forth, back and forth, through the entire sheet of tracing paper. I often work with 14 by 17 inch tracing paper, so I get a lot of images on one page and can look back at them.

SHARON CHURCH: I just want to—you draw to scale, pretty much?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, always.

SHARON CHURCH: And each page might have as many as—

ELEANOR MOTY: 16, 25, you know.

SHARON CHURCH: And you have how many of these pages?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, books of them.

SHARON CHURCH: You have hundreds of them.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. I have books and books of them.

SHARON CHURCH: So you have records of every piece you've ever made.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, probably.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: All the way back to—certainly, all the way back to graduate school. I don't know about undergraduate. I don't think so. But certainly graduate school. And notes about them, and you know, just—there are pieces that never became real, you know, that don't exist.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I still go back to them and go, "That could have been a good piece."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Or, in terms of the jewelry, sometimes I go back to them and say, "Maybe it is time to pull that one out, or work with those images." I work in—usually with a mechanical pencil, you know, real thin line.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Sometimes with a graphite, beefy pencil. But I don't usually. I usually work with really just the thin line mechanical pencil. And it is just over and over and over, and then often when I turn the page—often, not even necessarily turning the page. I re-orient the stone. I might have it, you know, vertical if it's rectangular, one direction. And then I'll turn it horizontal. And then I'll turn it at an angle, and it just is a development, and just jarring the visuals, you know? Jarring your memory so that you don't get staid. When I reach a point where I'm stale and it's just not going to happen, I put it aside and I might come back to it the next day, and it's amazing how, you know, a day or even a week or more, can make you look at it differently.

So finding all these stones was just remarkable. And it was really going back to the Gem Show each year. I had been familiar with the Munsteiner work—Bernd Munsteiner's work. Had encountered him,

I believe it was at the [SNAG –EM] Asilomer Conference in the early '80s, when he brought [stones to sell –EM] people. I do remember all of us being so stunned at [how –EM] beautiful they were, and how different from what faceted stones [typically –EM] were. I bought from Bernd an amethyst, because I always loved amethyst. But it was such a strong shape, that I knew I could never make anything with it that would be mine. But I bought it as a work of art, and I have it to this day. So eventually, the group from Idar-Oberstein, the gem cutting capital of the world, of Germany—Idar-Oberstein, Germany, had a presence—a major presence, at the Gem Show in Tucson. They had a pavilion, or a ballroom, all to themselves. So it was everything from the fine carved cameos, to carved quartz—

[Timer beeps.]

Oh, there's our—ah.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, thanks, Eleanor.

ELEANOR MOTY: Okay, we'll pick up on that. Because now we're getting into the one-offs stones.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: Hi. This is Sharon Church, and I'm in Tucson, AZ, interviewing Eleanor Moty in her home and studio. It is November 19, 2014, and Eleanor had just been talking about finding the Idar-Oberstein group.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. The gem show eventually—the Tucson Gem Show established a ballroom venue just to focus on the Idar-Oberstein Group, and as I mentioned they had the agates.

They had—no, they had the carved agates, and large carved crystal pieces. The traditional stones, but then there were cutters such as Bernd and Tom Munsteiner, and Dieter Lorenz, and um, Hermann Petry, who also had their unique cut stones, that sort of went off another direction from the traditional pieces. And although I [admired –EM] Bernd's stones, to see Tom working with quartz, and finding his pieces that were so [aligned –EM] to my aesthetic, that I was just overwhelmed. I was really excited.

So the first of Tom's stones that I bought was one that really was like a room interior. And it had steps cut from the back, and it had ghost parts of it. It was a phantom quartz, which meant that it had this kind of ghostly veil within part of the stone. So, I basically used that imagery and expanded it into the silver and gold, using the imagery that was already there to make it look like a room interior, with gold steps coming away from the carved steps on the back of the quartz.

And that was really the start of finding these one-of-a-kind, unique, dynamic stones and using them. Eventually that became my focus. I was no longer buying—you know, after a number of years, I was no longer buying the little—the fantasy cut, and the cabachons, and other things. I was primarily zeroing in on Dieter's stones—Dieter Lorenz, the carved agates. And then, occasionally, I would find something very special from the Hermann Petry group, all of these coming from that vicinity in Germany.

And that was really a turning point in my work, because the pieces—the stones themselves were so strong in the imagery. It was a natural for me to develop my designs from it. And eventually, and even in the cut stones—the simple cut stones that I was using—I reached a point where I began covering and altering the openings for the windows of the stones to make them more integrated into a linear and a lyrical kind of design. So I wasn't allowing the outside form of the stone to dictate

my designs, and that was a turning point as well. I started canting, and covering some of the corners of an emerald-cut large stone—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then eventually with these agates. Initially, when you're working with a very important cutter's work, and each stone is unique, you pay them respect by treating a stone in a very special way. And it wasn't long before I was feeling like, "I could cover part of this, it's not going to be a problem. It's my stone now, I'm going to make it even more so." And I really didn't have much compunction after a point of working with stones for a while to do that, to really bring the metal and the stone together.

And what was also interesting, was that in conversing with Dieter Lorenz after two or three years of having been to his booth at the Gem Show and buying from him, he confessed to me that he had seen—when he was just starting out doing cutting, he had seen my work in a magazine, and was so taken by the fact that I was really integrating the stone and making it personal in a way that he hadn't seen before. And he said he had that photograph on his wall in his studio forever. You know, all those years. So he said to me that he was very happy, finally, to have met me. And I was just like, "Whoa." You know, you don't put yourself in that—in that kind of place. Because, here's the stonecutter. You know, he has his fame and he has his importance. And you don't think that he knows anything in terms of who's doing [what –EM] with his stones. So, it meant a lot to me because I respected him so much.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, to hear that—it was a very high compliment for him to say. And, over the years, I have found myself moving away from the cuts that are just anonymous, beautiful although they are in terms of what the mineral is, but now, as my work is limited. I'm not doing—you know, I—when you reach a point when your hands start hurting, and they start trembling and so on, and you really are limiting your time, I am focusing solely on pieces that are done with the stones that these artists do.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that it's important to note that each one of your pieces is one-of-a-kind.

ELEANOR MOTY: They are.

SHARON CHURCH: And that starts with your selection of the stone.

ELEANOR MOTY: Exactly.

SHARON CHURCH: And then it continues through your design sensibility with the stone, and all the way through to completion.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. And also, if a piece—if a person owns a piece, or if I break a piece, you know, I drop it? And the stone breaks?

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: In these pieces it would be impossible to find a replacement.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because they are so specific to the piece. What's also interesting, in keeping with what Dieter had said, recently I had the honor of participating in a show at the Munsteiner Atelier in Stipshausen, which is the village where they have their studio and where they live, about a half-hour from Idar-Oberstein. And one of their goldsmiths—one of the Munsteiner's goldsmiths, a young man, was helping with setup of the show. And he was looking closely at my work, and he just said, "You know, we see our stones,"—all the 12 pieces I sent to that show—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —had stones cut by Tom Munsteiner, which I thought was rather important to do, even though Bernd had said, "You needn't worry about that. You can have other stones." But I just felt that this was important to do. And this young man said, "We see our stones used a lot. You know, we sell our stones"—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —"but it's always done the same way." You know, a bezel around it, a casting, and so on. And he said, "I've never seen anyone who has really used the stones in this creative way." And he was looking at the pieces where I kind of mask off a corner, or change the window of the stone, the opening, the visuals of the stone. And he just turned to me and he said, "I love what you're doing. I just have never seen anything like it." And again, that compliment was like the highest compliment I could have received. Because, you know, here is the source. And, of course, I should say the highest compliment was being invited to this exhibition by Bernd and Tom.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that it's very hard to work with stones like that.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Because they're so much a work of art on their own.

ELEANOR MOTY: Truly.

SHARON CHURCH: I wanted to ask you about your very decided act of buying the stone first. You own the stone.

ELEANOR MOTY: Right.

SHARON CHURCH: So this is not a collaboration.

ELEANOR MOTY: No.

SHARON CHURCH: But you begin with the stone. You own it. Can you take it from there?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Well, that's really important, because um, I say that in the same way as when someone buys a piece. You know, whether they wear it on their head or, you know, put it on the wall—

SHARON CHURCH: Good point.

ELEANOR MOTY: —you have no control. And the same is true with the stone. Initially it was kind of intimidating. You know, here are these gorgeous, gorgeous stones, and felt that I had to just show all of it. But then I reached the point where I realized: It's mine. I can do with it what I want. And if—

even if I wanted to cleave it in half, I could do that. It would be okay.

SHARON CHURCH: That's an interesting idea.

ELEANOR MOTY: If I wanted a gold jag to come through the middle of it, it would be okay. I could do that.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] So, your ownership gave you a kind of—[coughs] excuse me—artistic freedom?

ELEANOR MOTY: Truly. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. Because my whole intent was to integrate the two—the aesthetic, which I think is similar.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: But to really make the stone mine, rather than, "Oh. It's a Munsteiner."

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Which is so often the case.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. I mean, I recognize the pieces, and you know, when I go through the Gem Show, there are often pieces that are made in other venues of the Gem Show that use Munsteiner stones. Or I go to SOFA, and I see pieces using Munsteiner stones. And I look at them, and I go, "Oh, my God. I could do so much more with that stone." [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I feel badly, you know, it's like, "You're doing what's already been done." Because the work that Tom and Jutta and Bernd make with their own stones is spectacular.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's breathtaking. It is so beautiful, and it's so magnificently crafted. It shows off the stones to the ultimate. So to do something different with it is important, and I recently—I'm now sending photographs, for instance, to Dieter Lorenz when—or when I see him at the Gem Show, I give him photographs of what I've done with his stones, and explain a little bit of, where it's gone.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he's always so grateful. And I met his wife recently, and she said, "You know, we never get to see what's done with our work. So it's so lovely to see the images that you give us, to know what you've done."

SHARON CHURCH: I think I would like to stress the unique approach you take to stones. Most jewelers drop a stone in, as—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] It's an accent.

SHARON CHURCH: It's a—or even if it's a central element, the—they don't see the stone as anything to do with them.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: And in fact, sometimes stones can be interchangeable.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: And I would say that in your work, that can't possibly be.

ELEANOR MOTY: No. That's really an important point, because people have come to me and said, "We love your work, but we would really like this to be a green stone, or"—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —"because we love green." It's the same thing artists get, like the painting over the sofa. "But our living room is amber, could you do browns?" So, you know, they don't get it. That's not what it's about. And I use white metal. I use silver, because of the iciness of the quality of the quartz, and carried into the silver. And yes, I use gold accents because of what's in the stone. But it's true, I don't use anonymous stones so much. You know, most people use—their highlight stone is just a simple faceted stone that's symmetrical and all the rest. And yeah, I used those early on in those kind of emerald-cut large pieces tourmalinated—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —but I tried to really bring other elements into the piece that related to that stone. It was always a matter of melding the imagery of the stone with the metal. And now, most definitely so, because the stone is so selected.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's where your work begins.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Now I'd like you to focus a little bit on your design sensibility, and that moment when you decided to change. To edit your work to the essentials—what you think of as the essentials. Can you describe what they are? You've talked about—

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, certainly that time in the late '70s when I thought that there was just so much busyness in the work.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I felt that I really, in my own work, had to move away from that and pare down to the essentials. And just really good, clean design. I think that that's what I've carried on ever since that time. You know, the purely formal aspects of design in terms of composition and color and texture and proportion, that is first and foremost. I don't work narratively. Social commentary, political commentary does not exist in my work. It's purely the essence of good design.

SHARON CHURCH: I also notice how well each piece is balanced, visually.

ELEANOR MOTY: I hope so.

SHARON CHURCH: And yet, of course, nothing's symmetrical.

ELEANOR MOTY: Right.

SHARON CHURCH: And you choose stones that throw you off.

ELEANOR MOTY: Truly.

SHARON CHURCH: So you have to work hard to achieve this piece that looks completely like it's always been.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. Especially since I'm fabricating—hand fabricating.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Instead of machining or casting, and using production techniques. On the other hand, making a piece symmetrical, I think is the most difficult.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] You're up against measurements.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. So actually, I kind of—give myself that leeway by doing pieces that are not symmetrical, and not perfectly matched. Uh, but I really do try to hone those basic instincts of good design. The work isn't edgy. It's not what's hip today, and it doesn't get very much attention, because it's not what's popular in that regard.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, it seems to me that it's coming back into focus. I think silver is a difficult material to work with. It has fire coat.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Silver and gold, you just really up the ante. Hard solder doesn't work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: You really have to know what you're doing to make this work, and to make it look as breathless and easy as you do.

ELEANOR MOTY: That just comes with years of experience, though, and, as I say, honing your skills. Practice. Yeah, you know, what I do is tedious. It just makes me crazy. I sit there, and my hands hurt, and [laughs] my eyes are [tired –EM]. Yeah, it's not easy stuff, but it doesn't show in the end. I mean, that as a practicing goldsmith—metalsmith. But the viewer hasn't any clue of that, and it's really not important.

SHARON CHURCH: What is important?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think the end result. If there's a beautiful piece that strikes you and takes your breath away. Or you just appreciate in some way. Or it brings a reminiscence of a snowstorm, or a snowdrift, or an icicle, or a landscape, or whatever it might be to an individual. The translation is up to the individual. I title my pieces, which people have asked me about, and I title it purely for my own use, so that I know what they are, and I can look up the records easily. Because if it's Brooch No. 262, I haven't a clue as to what 262 is.

SHARON CHURCH: So, for instance, does this have a title?

ELEANOR MOTY: *Rutilated Quartz*.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: And that was the first one I worked—the first piece.

SHARON CHURCH: But this one is also rutilated quartz.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's called *Warped Perspective*.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. So, do you want viewer to be aware of the title?

ELEANOR MOTY: Doesn't matter. They usually don't know what it has to do with anything. I mean, there's a piece over there called *Noko. Fan Brooch* is pretty obvious, because it's a shape like a fan.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: *Petrified Palm*, I think is called *Petrified Palm. Windswept* or *Windward*, has this kind of sweeping line on the bottom, where the curve goes around. So, *Autumn Veil* is piece that has amber colors in it, where iron oxide was trapped between elements of quartz crystal. So that's *Autumn Veil*.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And it has accents of citrine. *Remembrance* is a piece that was really dedicated to Oppi Untracht. The stone is a carved agate by Dieter Lorenz, and [there's —EM] a ghostlike image within the milky white of the quartz. There's like a feather of black, and then the carving looks like the flap of an envelope, in this rectangular stone. So when I bought it, I thought, "Wow, this looks like an envelope," and you know, Oppi popped to mind, because of our—

SHARON CHURCH: Correspondence? Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —correspondence. And I began working on that piece, and used a black Micarta element to pick up on the black of this little fan-like shape that was floating in space in the agate, and used a stem pearl. I didn't use any gold in that one.

SHARON CHURCH: No. Well—no. No.

ELEANOR MOTY: That was the first one in a long time, that it was all silver. No gold.

SHARON CHURCH: You loved Oppi Untracht and he loved you. That was a great relationship.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mmm [Affirmative.] Very much so. This was completed on the day that he—I learned that he had passed. So I decided I would keep that for my collection, and you know, it just was a remembrance of a very special person.

SHARON CHURCH: The agate is truly remarkable, and I can see why you saw the envelope in it. Who cut this agate?

ELEANOR MOTY: Dieter Lorenz.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. So, has he seen this piece yet?

ELEANOR MOTY: In photographs. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] I gave him a photograph of it.

SHARON CHURCH: It's completely remarkable.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I think I told him the story of who it referenced, and the homage to Oppi.

SHARON CHURCH: And I think you mentioned that the black Micarta is referencing the feather-fan shape, yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: Feather-like fan shape, of the black in the agate. And it's almost like a little wing shape. A little leaf, floating in space. And here, too, the agate is rectangular, but part of it is covered by an element of black—the black Micarta covers it—the side of the agate.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Is it important to you, especially in a piece like this where you've covered part of the agate, that when I turn it over I see the fullness of the agate?

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't know that it's important, but I think it's great that you do. And that's part of why the pieces are hollow in the back, and I attend to the detail of the back as well. Because there's something more to see when you turn a piece over.

SHARON CHURCH: The backs of your pieces are where you're aware of all the engineering. And—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yes. Because the stones are very cleanly set from the back, so that from the front there's no intrusion in the stone.

SHARON CHURCH: You set your stones from the back. I see you've set your pearl from the back. But, you know, I—looking at it in the made form, I think "Oh, she slipped that in, and she pronged that over," but you have to invent all of that.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh boy, is that true, Sharon. You are so perceptive, [laughs] obviously a maker, because the engineering of a piece means you have to get the sequence right.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And we've all done this, where you say, "Oh, now I'll put this in place"—

SHARON CHURCH: No, you won't.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then you go, "Oh, God. I've already done that, so now this won't fit." Yes. I mean, you really have to pay attention to what you're doing. And I think that that's one of the reasons why I could never take snippets of time here and there to work.

SHARON CHURCH: You need to—

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, I need blocks of time so that I can know where I left off and not miss anything, and take something out of sequence and make an error.

SHARON CHURCH: I've often said, "I like to work until I'm done."

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: That doesn't mean that you're done with the piece. You've reached a point in the piece. And is that what you're talking about? Or is that part of what you're talking about?

ELEANOR MOTY: No, I think what I'm saying is that, in completing a piece, you clean all the surfaces and now it's time to assemble it. And there's a sequence that must be used in the proper order. And it also takes into account what the most difficult and vulnerable part will be.

SHARON CHURCH: [Affirmative.] Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So if there's a breakage, there's time to go back or there's some damage or something happens. There's time to go back and do a repair. So I'm very much aware of that. You know, when I'm going to finally set the stone. When I'm going to set the pin-stem. When I'm going to push the tab over for the pearl. And that comes with experience. And also, what comes with experience is knowing how to bail yourself out of a jam.

SHARON CHURCH: I love the riveted inner bezel, and think that that took a lot of both knowledge and experience to do that well.

ELEANOR MOTY: And to do it cleanly, without messing up your surfaces.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But, you know, it's part of the game.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Well, it's part of what makes an Eleanor Moty piece.

ELEANOR MOTY: And also, I changed my pinning systems, which you probably have noticed already. They're much more secure now.

SHARON CHURCH: I didn't notice that, but on this piece I'm remarking at how you've cut that out so the pin mechanism goes—moves smoothly—

ELEANOR MOTY: Make room for it.

SHARON CHURCH: —and fits well, and—

ELEANOR MOTY: I want them to be secure on the person and not fall off.

SHARON CHURCH: And not break.

ELEANOR MOTY: And not break. Yes. It's, you know, if I get a call from someone saying, "Can you fix it?" I have to say, "Tell me what is wrong." [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right. [Laughs.] What are you talking about there? Can—

ELEANOR MOTY: It's inevitable that pieces fall, or whatever. And it could—you know, something could be damaged. Most of the time it's a dent. Although I did get a piece back from a collection, and it had been dropped. It was a box, and it was major, major, major damage and bad. And it had the photo-projection printing on it, so—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, my.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was a piece from hell when I got it back.

SHARON CHURCH: Were you able to repair it?

ELEANOR MOTY: Amazingly, I did. I just had to be brutal with it, and just take my chances, and I did. I mean, the whole thing—it was a hinged box that was totally torqued and twisted, and because the surface is so fragile, I could not just whack it with a mallet.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was a real—luckily, I do [hinge –EM] pins that you can take out.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: The tapered pins, instead of riveting them on the ends. So I was able to separate the two halves and then work it around. And I got it in place so that it was in my museum show in Memphis.

SHARON CHURCH: But again, making a tapered pin for a hinge is a very time-consuming job.

ELEANOR MOTY: But so smart to do it that way. You're always thinking ahead to, should you have to repair this piece, and that's what—and those are the lessons you learn, when you're a student or when you're teaching it. You know, I use stitches. Pulled up stitches—

SHARON CHURCH: I saw that.

ELEANOR MOTY: —a lot. I'm known for that. I taught that, always. And I also—yes, holding the parts in. But I also use them for positioning pieces when I'm soldering them.

SHARON CHURCH: Soldering them. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: They're crucial, because I'm building forms and volumes, and you don't build a box with six separate pieces. You score and fold corners to keep it in—as much as possible in units that hold together. And then, when you're floating shelves in place, you have to use a little burr that keeps that position. So, I'm renowned for using stitches as my guides in holding parts.

SHARON CHURCH: But I don't see where you took the stitch from, so is that lying—

ELEANOR MOTY: From the underside. Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —underneath the wire. This is just amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. You want to cover the groove part with the element, so you always take that into account, as to which side to pull the stitch from.

SHARON CHURCH: But none of these things that we're talking about are part of the design. They're simply part of how it works. Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, no. The workings in the back, yeah. And you know, pulling up stitches means that I learned engraving from that French printmaker when I was an undergraduate.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Those are the things that come back, that you don't think about. I didn't know what stitch was at that time. And there weren't books that taught it. I don't even—I think I learned it from Stanley [Lechtzin], probably. Because he knew everything, and it wasn't in books at that point. You just use systems, and each time you make a piece you have to engineer a new system for it.

SHARON CHURCH: Each one of these pieces is made differently.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: And we're talking about 10, 12 pieces that are out. But each one has a unique solution to the structure, and yet they hang together well as a group.

ELEANOR MOTY: But they all have the same way of working—scoring and folding. You know, manipulating sheet metal. Starting with sheet metal. Scoring and folding. Cutting to form. Soldering, reinforcing. Scored seams, closing open seams. Next part, slitting into a volume to put a shard of gold in place. The gold isn't soldered on top. It's cleaner if I slice into it, push a tight fit of the gold in place, the little shard—and then solder it from the back. So that you don't see any solder lines on the front, and there's clean surface on the front. Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Now might be a good time to really talk about your relationship with Oppi Untracht.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mmm [Affirmative.] Indeed. I met Oppi when he and Saara had come through Tyler, when they were visiting Olaf and Stanley. Oppi was doing his big volume, *Concepts and Technology*, and was gathering images and artists, so on. So he had invited me to send images of my work and process. And then, I believe it was 1982, that I had occasion to go to Finland to give a lecture at the [goldsmithing –EM] school in Lahti, L-A-H-T-I.

So I contacted Oppi, and he said, "Yes, Saara and I would love to see you. You know, please do come over." So the plan was—Peter Jagoda was also going to do the lecture, so we were going to then go to see Oppi. And when we arrived, we learned that Saara was terminally ill and hospitalized. Oppi hadn't wanted us to know that, because he was afraid that we would cancel and not come. And of course, we were both quite devastated for him and very concerned that we were intruding on this time.

So when we finished our lectures in Lahti, and we also did a side trip with the Finnish group to Leningrad at that time, St. Petersburg now, to see the Hermitage. We made our way back to Finland and then took the - a taxi, from Helsinki to Porvoo, where Oppi lived, and had I think the weekend with him. It turned out that, you know, Oppi could only see Saara in the daytime, so evenings were to himself. And he's an American. A lot of people think that he's Finnish, but he really is—he's an American, or was an American, married to a Finnish woman. And so his friends in Finland were not particularly close.

And as it happened, the time that Peter and I spent with Oppi was therapeutic. You know, for him, and also for us, because we had each lost someone very special in that timeframe. So I think it was a bonding. I mean, you know, we just drew close to one another.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And I came back home, and Saara died—oh, I think a couple of months or maybe a month later. And sometime after that, Oppi came to the United States in the wintertime. You know, Finland—the Finnish winter is very long, and cold and white.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I remember when Oppi took Peter and me through downtown Helsinki, and the design area. Travelling with Oppi through the design shops was like the best design seminar you could ever imagine. Because he knew all the Finnish designers.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because his wife, Saara, was a very important Finnish designer. And I remember him walking through the Esplanade, and he said, "Look at this. White flowers. Why would they plant white flowers? We see nothing but snow most of the year. Why couldn't they do color?" Because you know, at Oppi's house there was always gorgeous geraniums and impatiens in vivid, rich colors.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And everything about his house, because of his collection from India, was richness and lushness of color. So Oppi had to escape winter, and he was visiting some friends in Santa Fe, and then was going to come here. It was February and I was here that semester. I was on leave, I think, so I was at home base in Tucson.

So he said, "You know, Santa Fe is not agreeing with me. The altitude is making me ill. Could I come ahead earlier?" Which we welcomed, Michael and I. And I took him to the Gem Show. Well, that was an experience, because you wear a name tag. And [laughs] his name tag said, "Oppi Untracht."

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So as we're wandering through the Gem Show, I am specifically introducing him to dealers whom I know, who would appreciate meeting him, like Jim Alger and others. And then, I took him past the Indian booths, work from India. And because Oppi had had this significant book, imagery and photographs and shows he was putting together—[the Indian dealers –EM] would see his name and leap, practically, over the counter—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —to thank him, shake his hand, meet him, pull out their best work from the trunks. And the same thing was true when we would stop and share a table at lunchtime out on the patio, and someone would happen to look up and [laughs] see this nametag. And say, "Are you *the* Oppi Untracht?"

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So it was hilarious, because Oppi was so self-effacing. But it was very exciting going through the Gem Show with him, because he would talk about the Indian jewelry and the significance of the pieces.

SHARON CHURCH: When you say, "Indian jewelry," you mean from India? Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. India, not Native American. So eventually, I found my way to Finland a few times, and again, as I say, it was always a very rich experience going through the design shops with him. Marimekko, Finlandia, all of those. Because he had the pieces in his home, and he knew the designers and he knew the artists and he knew the conception of when colored glass came into being in Finland.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, he was a marvelous cook, and he had varieties of flatware. You know, Finnish flatware? Silver and stainless, and crockery—you know, dish sets of shapes—squares. Wonderful glassware, a lot of Saara's glass work, in colored [glass –EM]. He would put a setting together that was just magnificent. Jewel-like. The linens were one color. The plates, the goblets, everything very carefully planned. It used to drive Michael crazy, because Michael would help to set

the table. [Laughs.] And Oppi would say, "Oh, Michael. Not that, the silver, with these, not the stainless."

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: So we just had such joy. Richard Mawdsley was president of SNAG, and called me one day and said, "You know, we are awarding Oppi Untracht the Lifetime Achievement Award, and wonder if you would be interested in being commissioned to make an award for him?"

And I said, "Richard, what a wonderful thought. I would love to do that." Oppi had given me a teardrop-shaped tourmalinated quartz. It was a big, lunky piece, actually, and it had a hole drilled in one end. And I said, "Thank you, Oppi," and thinking, "What am I ever going to do with this?" Because it was really a difficult shape.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I thought, "Ah-ha. I think I know what I have to put in this piece." So I used that stone, and as I think back, it may have been the first time that I shaded and covered over some of the stone. And I covered that hole with a black piece of Micarta. So I really altered that stone that was so difficult, to make it work in a brooch that he would wear at his throat.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because he wore bolo ties. And he wore Nehru-neck shirts that he had made in Finland. And it was really lovely, because I think it was Arline who presented the award for him that conference. It was probably Seattle. Oppi was thrilled. He said, "Oh. It's an Eleanor Moty. I've always wanted an Eleanor Moty." [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's so great.

ELEANOR MOTY: Every time we went to Finland, Oppi would meet Michael and me at the airport wearing the brooch.

SHARON CHURCH: That's such a beautiful story.

ELEANOR MOTY: And Michael would—he'd never relent. He'd say, "Oppi, it's okay. You can throw that back in the dresser drawer. It doesn't matter."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: But you have not done a lot of commissions.

ELEANOR MOTY: Have not.

SHARON CHURCH: And this one—

ELEANOR MOTY: Was the most significant. I've done a few—you know, I had wedding bands to make, or maybe a brooch using someone's stone. But I don't easily take commissions. I really don't, because it's a distraction for me. My time is limited. I really want to focus on what I want to do. But this really was the most significant of the commissions for me.

SHARON CHURCH: Because of your personal relationship with Oppi?

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely. We corresponded for decades, regularly. And then eventually, Oppi took to the computer. You know, he did his books on a manual—or an electric typewriter.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, I was told that.

ELEANOR MOTY: He had to have been into his 70's when he began using the computer. I remember that one of the visits over there, Michael took a picture of Saara and put it on his screen saver, and he was just blown away.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's just great.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because he always [saw –EM] a picture of Saara as he entered his apartment, and he would greet her. So Michael used that picture. And he was so thrilled. When he was here one time, Michael showed him how to do research on some of the metalwork in India on the computer. And he was so blown away. We also took him to our wonderful used bookstore, Bookmans here in Tucson, and lo and behold, he found a volume that he had been searching for, for decades. It was \$12. And he says, "Do you know how much this book is worth?"

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's so great. Yep.

ELEANOR MOTY: It was thrilling, to have experiences like that with him. He was such a fan of my work, which was heartwarming, and wanted so much to place it in the Louvre. He just couldn't understand why it wasn't there. And I said, "Oppi, you know, my work is very quiet. It doesn't get a lot of attention." You know, and he just was so—such a champion of my work—

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —which was heartwarming. It was very special.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, if it makes you feel any better, I don't think there are many Americans in that collection at the Louvre.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, but Saara was. And he went to see the collection when that wing of jewelry opened.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. Yes, yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And this lady was taking too much time, so he kind of pushed ahead and grabbed her shoulder. And it was the First Lady.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] Oh, no.

ELEANOR MOTY: And he said he was just grabbed by the bodyguards. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] Right, right. Right, right. "Excuse me, I have to see my wife's jewelry."

ELEANOR MOTY: It was the First Lady of France. Yes, so—

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, jeez. Okay, thank you, Eleanor. I think we'll stop here.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is Sharon Church, out in Tucson, AZ, interviewing Eleanor Moty in her

home with studio. And it is November 19, 2014. I would like to continue this [SD] card with the same or related subject matter. I'd like to know from Eleanor, do you work alone or with others?

ELEANOR MOTY: I work alone in the studio, although Michael Croft is in the space next door, and occasionally if I need another hand to hold something, or just another eye, another look at something. But that's rare. I mean, I really do just work solo. I've not hired anyone at any time in the past, either. And that was something that, in Europe—at this recent show that I had in Germany with the Munsteiner Atelier, a number of people asked me, "How many people work for you?" Because that's a very common thing in Europe.

SHARON CHURCH: It's interesting that you work alone, because there are occasions when you need a very skilled hand, setting a rivet, or whatever.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: And then you're lucky to have someone like Michael.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. And if he's not around, and I don't want to wait, I have systems that I can devise to—little aids to help me hold, tape for one.

SHARON CHURCH: That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: So—but if it's something really crucial, yes. I do have him nearby, and he is, as you say, a skilled hand.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, his being a metalsmith as well. He knows the issues that I'm up against, and how to hold and where to hold. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: I find that to be an important thing.

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely. I can't ask the mailman.

[They laugh.]

Or the mailwoman, I should say.

SHARON CHURCH: So, what artists do you greatly admire? And—

ELEANOR MOTY: Well as I—as you know very well, Margaret De Patta is an artist who took my breath away when I first saw her work, when I was an undergraduate student. And along the way, as I've seen exhibitions and opportunities through magazines and books, I've loved Miye Matsukata's work and really felt allied to that. And John Paul Miller, Jack Prip, Hermann Junger from that generation. I adore Myra Mimplitsch-Gray's work. I just am so impressed by how skillful she is and how innovative and ingenious—her work is just beyond my imagination.

And in the same vein, I appreciate Kim Cridler. I cannot believe how she accomplishes such complex and giganto pieces, so beautifully. Kiff Slemmons is another person whose work has really struck the chord with me, and I love Pat Flynn's aesthetic. You know, he's a person who's very much involved with production, but oh, my gosh, I just love the way he puts parts and pieces together. It's so in tune with my own aesthetic. Merrily Tompkins is someone [whose work –EM] I so enjoyed in

the 1970s and '80s, with the kind of crude mechanisms, and the narratives. Hiroko and Gene Pijanowski also. I thought the work they were doing in the '70s and '80s—the collaborative things were magnificent, with the mokume-gane, and the chisel carving, and the lining of kimono material inside the boxes.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: Breathtaking. Just beyond me. I adore your work. I think it's just stunning. The carving that you do with such finesse, and such skill, but the aesthetic of it and the beauty of it, is also breathtaking. And I'm really enjoying what Marilyn Da Silva is doing with the narrative. I saw a show of her work at the Mesa Art Center in the springtime. And one piece to the next just makes you marvel.

SHARON CHURCH: It's interesting to hear these many artists whom you admire, because I don't think anybody's influenced you.

ELEANOR MOTY: No. And I hope not. I really do try to stay conscious of not making look like, or if I see an element coming up, I think, "Oh, what's bringing that on?"

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I really try to separate myself from replicating other people's work. There are a lot of people who do that. They follow their master or the person they admire, and it's meant to be complimentary. But I really try to be independent of that. And I think as we've talked, in so many ways yes, I'm influenced by things that I see, but it's my visual vocabulary. It doesn't necessarily come out in the work.

SHARON CHURCH: I can understand that. Though the first two women you mentioned, Miye Matsukata and Margaret De Patta, you—in the articles I've read about you, they have been sourced as people who sort of showed you the way.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I'm the person who brought that out. No art historian or writer discovered that. I always talk about that, because it was such a strong impact when I saw the work. Margaret De Patta was deceased before I began working. Miye Matsukata I met only briefly and peripherally, and I'm not sure if I ever saw her work in actuality. I only saw pictures of it. But it—to me it was so striking, that I guess you could say that they directed me in that psychological way.

SHARON CHURCH: I think we all need mentors.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Would you say they were mentors?

ELEANOR MOTY: No. I think of a mentor who someone—who's physically involved with you. Who you [have –EM] dialogue with. And I never did with either of them. I think that they were just people whose aesthetic influenced me.

SHARON CHURCH: Very good. Could you—

ELEANOR MOTY: Or I should say, I responded to strongly. De Patta's more influenced me. Miye's didn't. I just responded strongly to it. In other words, I love looking at it.

SHARON CHURCH: As an aside, Helen Drutt has some Miye Matsukata pieces.

ELEANOR MOTY: Ah. I should investigate that.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. That might segue—you name mostly people in the field.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: I want to talk about how your work relates to contemporary art. And I'll just start by asking if you have any heroes in the contemporary art world. Heroes.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, I do. When a show comes up, and it's someone whose painting or sculpture I really love, I kind of perk up, and try and see it. Recently we were both in New York at the Hermitage foundation awards dinner, and Richard Serra was receiving an award. And I was so thinking, "Oh, my gosh, I want to see him at least across the room." Because I love his work so much. And I mean, he is a star in sculpture. Unfortunately, he wasn't there, but still—he is someone whose work I have always appreciated.

I love Kandinsky. I saw the Matisse cut-paper show while I was at MOMA—the Museum of Modern Art, recently. There are more contemporary painters, but truthfully, Sharon, I have to tell you, my memory is so erratic now, [laughs] that I would really have to study, and really have to deeply think about it to pull up the specific names. Because even in the contemporary sense of our field, I am hard-pressed to come up with names of the more current people whose work I love. I'll pick up *Metalsmith Magazine*, and I'll say, "Oh, there's that person's work again."

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But you know, you and I had a conversation about the fact that you've just retired, and I've been retired for more than 10 years. And what's very different from me, is that I'm not feeling obliged to hold all this information in my brain, and in my memory bank, as I call it. Because, I used to have to regurgitate this information for the students, and I don't anymore. So I take in the imagery. When I go to a museum, I don't read every label and every placard. I take in the imagery and leave it at that.

SHARON CHURCH: And you're probably not looking at it for ideas. You're looking at it out of a kind of curiosity?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and just appreciating the compositions, the aesthetic, the message that they're bringing across. But I don't feel as though I have to hold onto it and remember it, to translate it to someone else. To be their resource when they are designing something, and say, "You should look at the work of"—I don't have to keep that in my mind anymore, which is kind of freeing.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. Do you worry about how you fit into the contemporary art scene, or have you also removed yourself from that?

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't even think about it. And I have to say, that living way across the country from where I had [lived –EM] for so many years, in Madison and prior to that on the East Coast—it is a different world out here. And it's much more isolated, and people aren't so seriously involved, or take themselves so seriously.

You know, when I was in Madison I had to go to all the openings, and every graduate show. If I had a weekend to myself it was like, "Whoa." Heavenly. It was rare. Because I felt that it was important to

do those things. For instance, attending grad shows. You know, the students worked very hard to put a show up and it was important to represent the faculty. Not all faculty would attend them. And it was such a thrill to them when their parents could meet faculty.

So, out here, I really am not involved in the art scene at all. And it's freeing in that regard, and it's taken the pressure off. I don't feel as though I have to take myself so seriously. So I don't place myself in the realm of the art world. I'm more relaxed.

SHARON CHURCH: So you don't feel that competitive edge—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-mmm. [Negative.] No.

SHARON CHURCH: —that often characterizes schools and big cities?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, that is the case. You're placing yourself in that when you have to get tenure. You have to work for promotions, and so on. Not that I'm still not serious about my work and what I do. I haven't lightened up on my work.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: In fact, I think that it has freed my time to put more focus into my work. The distractions are not there.

SHARON CHURCH: I think you said yesterday, that now is the time when you are doing your real work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. And you know, what's ironic is that as we age, the physical side of us begins to break down.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I find that I don't have the stamina to do certain things, and in holding and so much of what we do is really tough holding. You know, vice-like holding of really [small –EM] parts when you're filing and sawing, and so on. And I find that my shoulders ache, and I get aches up the back of my neck because of the tension, and I'm using massage regularly and sometimes acupuncture. And I try not to rely upon ibuprofen, unless I'm really desperate. I'm really doing more physical things. I do yoga, and exercise. But my hands will spasm and tighten up, and I'll suddenly have to stop and flex my fingers. [Laughs.] It's kind of crazy.

But also, you know, in the morning after you've done whatever it is—gardening, or taking a long walk—you know, you wake up and something else is aching, and you're saying, "What did I do yesterday that brought this on?" It's just part of where we are. And our eyesight is not as good any longer, so you're relying upon bifocals. And so many of us eventually face cataract surgery. But you know, at least I have a bigger block of time, so that even though I can't work for—you know, indefinitely, and I stop working by 5:00 in the evening—I am managing.

SHARON CHURCH: It's not just that block of time, then. It's that you're freed from those other obligations.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Yes. So I can use the time efficiently. PBS did a wonderful audio series called, *I'm Too Busy to Talk Right Now*. Do you know it, Sharon?

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] No. That's so funny.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's amazing. It's interviews with artists, and writers, and theater people, over 70. So, it's Louise Nevelson. It's Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy. And it's Julia Child. I mean, this was done 30 years ago. Fred Woell introduced this program to me. It's fabulous. Because they talk about what their day-to-day activity is like. They get up very early. And the best time for them is in the early morning. And they have two good hours to do their writing, or their work. And then they take a break, and they have a light lunch, and perhaps take a walk. And then they read or just take a light afternoon and rest. And again they have like a block of time that's their perfect time to physically and mentally focus on something.

And I thought, "That is really brilliant. I could learn from that." And I'm there now. I'm thinking, "Oh, my gosh." You know, this was the lesson to remember. It's a brilliant series. You should look it up online.

SHARON CHURCH: I will.

ELEANOR MOTY: *I'm Too Busy to Talk Now*. And it's amazing the variety of poets, writers, sculptors, artists who are interviewed.

SHARON CHURCH: The wonderful thing is that something like that exists. Because certainly no one prepared us for entering this part of life.

ELEANOR MOTY: No. No. But you know, your mother has lived a long life, and my mother lived a long life. And I think that those set examples for us. And we have wonderful friends, who—I mean, who can keep up with Helen Drutt? Today is her birthday and we're celebrating her. And you know, Helen just goes from one meeting to—one event to another, and she has been so wonderful in promoting my work and making a point of placing it in important collections and museums over the last—oh, five to 10 years—since we've really reconnected.

And the other thing that constantly amazes me, is that Helen is so thoughtful. You know, we all reach the point where we have friends who are ill and need help. And boy, Helen's the first one at the door.

SHARON CHURCH: Absolutely.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, she is amazing. She is just the best friend. She's a good role model for us. I don't know where her energy comes from, but every time I think I've kind of overdone, and I can't go any further, I think, "But Helen's going to three meetings today."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: That's very true.

ELEANOR MOTY: So I think we have some good role models. Alma Eikerman was, you know, quite amazing to keep going so long.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes. She was amazing, too.

ELEANOR MOTY: John Paul Miller was still working into his 90's. I spoke to him a couple of months before his—he passed, and he said that, yes, he was still working but he says, "The hands don't react in the same way that my brain does. They don't follow the instructions so well." And I thought, "Well put."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: Since you are in the now, perhaps privileged position of looking at your lifetime's—a lifetime of work, can you tell us what your working process is now, and how it has changed over time?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, now as I say, I have more often, blocks of time. Instead of every two weeks when I have a weekend off. So if I have to get projects done, I can pretty much work around it. I still have certain regimens that I follow. You know, going to the gym. And I used to do it early in the morning, and now I do it in the middle of the day, to break up that tension of the day. And even though it's extremely hot in the middle of the day, to do that, to go out. It's not what you typically do in Arizona. But it works better for me.

SHARON CHURCH: Are you going to the gym?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Is that inside?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, of course.

SHARON CHURCH: So that helps a little bit.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because it's important for me to walk, and I've heard said that sitting is the equivalent of smoking.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh.

ELEANOR MOTY: And that we, as humans, really should not be sitting as much as we are. And of course, we sit at the bench. And I notice that I really pay the toll when I sit at the bench. Lower back, and hips. So I make a point of walking. And when it's hot in the desert, I use the treadmill or the stair-climber, and I go to the gym and do that. And when it's really bothering me, I go five days. Not just three.

SHARON CHURCH: What do you mean, when "it" is really bothering you?

ELEANOR MOTY: The back, or the hips. I've been sitting too much, or working—you know, particularly long hours. Then I make a point of taking a break and doing that. And I also make a point of walking, even in the house. Like if I'm putting laundry away, I won't just layer all the clothes and take them back. I will take socks back first. [Laughs.]

Then shirts to make more trips.

SHARON CHURCH: So, do you regard this kind of exercise a part of your process now?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, without question. I cannot continue to work if I don't take care of my physical body.

SHARON CHURCH: I think this is important, and it always has been important to you. I'm seeing a little lizard looking out Eleanor's window.

ELEANOR MOTY: Lizard? Oh, good. I'm glad you did.

SHARON CHURCH: At any rate, you talked about the Alexander Technique when I first knew you.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Right. [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So you've always held taking care of your body—there are stories about you.

ELEANOR MOTY: Really?

SHARON CHURCH: In—as a graduate student, having a bar in the studio, and doing—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, yeah. We did. Oh, I didn't do this so much as Fred. Chinning—and Matthew Halloran. They used to have contests to see who could chin so many times.

SHARON CHURCH: Who? Fred—

ELEANOR MOTY: Fenster, and Matthew Hollern, one of our students. They would have contests of chinning in the studio. I hang by the bar, and I do that at the gym as well. But yes. I followed the Alexander Technique many years ago, and I found it very helpful in aligning the body and making it conscious in that way.

And I've come back to that, because my gym has Alexander therapists, and I really have watched them cure people of chronic headaches, and shoulder aches, and all these other things. Because so many of the things that we do, have to do with chronic misalignment of our body. For instance, someone's on the phone, and you know, in the old days they would lift their shoulder and hold the phone while they were taking notes.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, that's an obvious one. I remember Don Reitz, the clay artist, always having really bad problems with his back. And [laughs] he saw the Alexander therapist, who determined that he was sitting on his wallet in his back pocket, when he was throwing. And you're kind of throwing, and canting your hips anyhow, and leaning to one side. So, it was something as simple as, "Take the wallet out of your back pocket," and then for a time put a lift one shoe to re-align you.

SHARON CHURCH: That's great.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I think it's so important to be aware of your body. My mother was very much in tune with that. She didn't use prescriptions and she didn't use pills—you know, headache or whatever. She would use pressure points.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And she used herbals. You know, homeopathic.

SHARON CHURCH: And you do, too.

ELEANOR MOTY: I do too. Homeopathic remedies. And we, here in Tucson, have integrative medicine led by Dr. Andrew Weil. And that is really something worth following. So, I try to avoid prescription drugs if I can, and use change of diet, or other physical activities, and homeopathic or herbals.

SHARON CHURCH: We're talking so much about your body, but you really can't make jewelry unless you have a healthy body.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, it's true. And you know, I'm still so aware of all the chemicals that I was exposed to.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Sometimes, it's like a ticking time bomb. So, I am really aware of the organs that are affected by the chemicals, and I'm watchful, and I try to—I do a liver cleanse twice a year to remove toxins. Because the environment brings on toxins as well. And I try to eat properly, but it's all part of keeping your body active and well so that you can continue your creative work.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that you speak a truth, but I also think that this is part of Eleanor Moty.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: I'm looking at your work, and some of it—forgive me if I'm completely wrong—reminds me of the spinal cord.

ELEANOR MOTY: Interesting.

SHARON CHURCH: And the kind of combination of structure and softness that you bring to the work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, interesting. I like that analogy, Sharon. I'll have to use that.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I don't know if it's true or not, but—

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, the other thing I should make more use of, is the fact that I'm using stones that are healing stones.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, can you talk a little bit about that, because you mentioned it to me.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I know that crystals are used for healing. I've never really pursued it and studied it fully, but I always said jokingly that I could probably do really well if I went to metaphysical [followers –EM]—

[They laugh.]

—and had a show of my work. If there are people who own these pieces and feel the energy. And there have been people who are very sensitive in that way, and they say, "I really feel the energy when I get near your work." And I think, "Wow, that's quite amazing." They really feel this vibration come off it.

SHARON CHURCH: They're picking up on something.

ELEANOR MOTY: Or they feel a heat come off it. And I say, "Well, I hope it's a good energy." And not a standoffish kind of energy. But there are people who use crystals for healing.

SHARON CHURCH: Your work has always had crystals in it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Almost always.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. I—

ELEANOR MOTY: Quite a lot. I'd say the majority of it, yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. So there's been an interest in minerals and the earth.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: And in the structure of minerals.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. All back to the earth, isn't it, Sharon? Coming up from the farm.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I wonder?

ELEANOR MOTY: It's kind of ironic.

SHARON CHURCH: There is a trail in there.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Yes. I think back on my life, and I think I have been so lucky, but in silly ways. I'm not lucky like you win the lottery. But I'm lucky in that I lose my favorite pen and find it two weeks later. You know, those kinds of things, which I think are like, "Wow. It's like guidance."

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, you've had experiences like that, too, which I think, "Whoa. Who's doing that? What's doing that?"

SHARON CHURCH: You know, I think we all have those experiences and we tuck them away, but they're there.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that, while your work is very planned and designed, and clear and beautifully made, it also does touch on what I would call the spiritual. And I don't know if it's because you use crystals, or because it's beautifully worked.

ELEANOR MOTY: I like hearing that response to it. I don't think of it in that way, but I like hearing that that's how you relate to it.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] I wonder if you might—oh, I just wanted to clarify, that before you would work longer hours at the bench.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Now you work fewer hours at the bench.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I work often, every day.

SHARON CHURCH: You work every day.

ELEANOR MOTY: If I have a project to do. For instance, getting ready for the show at the Munsteiner Atelier, I worked throughout the summer. Relentlessly. It was very tough going. And I would—I keep a time card of my pieces.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, do you?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: On each one?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. When I begin a piece, I chart it, and I indicate the year, of course, and the materials that I've used, you know, for tax purposes. And when I bought the stone, and how much it cost, and how many carats, et cetera. And who the cutter was, if that's germane. And then I indicate the design time, and then each day, the date and the time I start and the time I stop. And I don't get as distracted in my working. I kind of work consistently. I don't count off if the phone has rung and I spent 10 minutes.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I just keep the basics of it, start to finish. And each day, or whenever I come back to it, I mark that off. And then I tally up the time, which is part of my pricing structure. It's just a little three by five card, so in the corner I do a sketch of the piece, and once I get the title, I might put the title on. But that card is then kept for my filing card, which is four by six. It has more details and pricing. And on the back of the card is the exhibition record. So, I hand write wherever the show has been exhibited. Because quite often, when people buy a piece, they want the provenance.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: What a mess to pick that up, if you've shown it X number of places, or if you've owned it for 10 years. You know, very difficult. So it helps with my recordkeeping. So in the working day, I would probably start, maybe at 10:00 and take a break for lunch, which I mark off, and then finish about 5:00. So I might work six or seven days, doing that. Week after week after week, to get projects done, [when I am preparing to do a show –EM].

Once I finish a piece, I label it, you know, with the vibro-graver. I sign it, I copyright it, the date and the materials—sterling, 22 karat, 14 karat, whatever. And then I come into the house, and I record on a card—the four by six, the real details of it. And I price it.

And I pore over the title. And as I said earlier, the title is only for my use. It doesn't necessarily direct the viewer as to what they're supposed to be looking for or seeing. It might be a pretty anonymous title, but it helps me to remember it. And then, when I have a chance, if it's just one piece that I'm doing and I won't be working for a while, I photograph it. If I am doing a whole bunch of pieces, then I wait to—you know, if I'm making several pieces, like three or four pieces over a timeframe, then I wait and I photograph them all at the same time.

SHARON CHURCH: Together.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because it's such a bother to set up. I don't have [a permanent –EM] setup for photography. And I have a Nikon digital. I taught myself to use it to photograph my work, because I've not managed to find a professional photographer who is able to do for me what I need, and to see what I want them to see.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, you've become an excellent photographer.

ELEANOR MOTY: Thank you.

SHARON CHURCH: So, I think you should recognize that you're pretty good.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, the main thing that digital photography has done for me, and using Photoshop on the computer, is that I can bring light through the stones with Photoshop.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I used to layer a mirror behind it, and reflect light off it to come through the stone, and go through all kinds of gyrations to bring light through the stone with reflections. And now I know better. I tend to photograph on frosted glass, and then once it's in Photoshop, I color correct and then I highlight.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, halo the area that I want to do, and then lighten it and bring light.

SHARON CHURCH: Bring the light.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, it is magical. It's just such an incredible help. And I also record my work. I keep records of my work—you know, we're speaking of, you know, technology and the computer. I keep a running inventory of the pieces, so when I make it everything is there. The pricing and all of that. And then when I sell the piece, I italicize the piece so I know it's gone.

SHARON CHURCH: Great.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then I indicate who purchased it, and their address, if at all possible. If a gallery has sold it, or if Helen has sold it, I try to get the name and address of the person for future reference, in terms of a retrospective, or a book, or whatever. I have found that using the computer and Microsoft Word for files to keep all of that, has been immensely helpful.

SHARON CHURCH: Helpful. Did you always—were you always this—

ELEANOR MOTY: Organized?

SHARON CHURCH: Organized? Careful? Detailed about each piece?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, yes. I mean, from a child, I was very fastidious.

[Cross talk.]

SHARON CHURCH: So this hasn't really changed. Yep.

ELEANOR MOTY: I've always been that way. You know, not a messy person. Really organized and fastidious, and yeah. So it's just a natural to carry it into my work. I mean, I'm known for that. People say, "Oh, just ask her to get her tax papers from 18 years ago. She can do it." [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's great. Well, it's a—it's a peace of mind.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I used to say to a friend of mine, who collects things—he'd see *Antiques Roadshow*, and he'd say, "I have one of those." And I'd say, "Do you know where it is?" And he says, "No." And I said, "You don't really have it, then."

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: If you can't put your hands on it, you don't know where it's gone. You don't have

it. But you know, that's just my nature.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's really great. So, would you say that the only major change is the amount of time you can put in at the bench?

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. The focused time, and fewer distractions. I'm not, you know—

SHARON CHURCH: You've gotten rid of them.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. I'm not trying to go to three different places in the same weekend. I have a much more quiet, subdued life.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, we've talked about how your work became more quiet and more subdued.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: So, do you think that maybe that's a reflection of your change of life?

ELEANOR MOTY: Probably. Yeah, it probably is. Because these are not such frenetic times. Although I've been in the pressure cooker since May, I think. One thing after another.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's been push-on commitments. And actually, in the last several years, when my work has been quote-unquote rediscovered, things have been pretty active.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I thought, "Wow. It's pretty good that I'm not teaching anymore, because I could not do some of these things that have been offered to me." Doing the Metal Museum show was a big thing. Organizing—I did all the photography for that, and a lot of it was calling work back to do the photography. And prior to that, the 2006 show that Fred and I had at the Chazen Museum at the University of Wisconsin. I had first approached the director, Russell Panczenko, because Fred was going to be retiring. Fred was about to retire, and I approached Russell, and I said, "Fred is going to be retiring, and I think that it would be really wonderful if the Chazen gave him a feature show—a retrospective show."

SHARON CHURCH: [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And Russell said, "No, I think it needs to be a show of the two of you and the program that you've led all these years, and some of your grads—a selected group of your grads." And I thought that was pretty splendid. Of course, Fred would not have been comfortable with the solo feature.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because he's just not that kind of a person. So, with that in mind, he selected the writer—he initially selected Jody Clowes and Glenn Adamson, because both of them were teaching back and forth from Milwaukee to Madison. In the end it turned out to be only Jody, because Glenn was off to the V&A. Jody's primary interest had been clay, but she did a really excellent job doing the essays. I had to pull together slides of all the grads that we had had over the

nearly 30 years that Fred and I had worked together, and that was quite a challenge. And then present them to Jody, because she made the selections of the grads.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, that's interesting. I just wanted to emphasize that that's a very good catalogue—

ELEANOR MOTY: It's magnificent.

SHARON CHURCH: —and that Jody Clowes?

ELEANOR MOTY: C-L-O-W-E-S.

SHARON CHURCH: Her writing is extraordinary.

ELEANOR MOTY: It is.

SHARON CHURCH: So, that's the 2006 Chazen Art Gallery exhibition—

ELEANOR MOTY: The Chazen Art Museum.

SHARON CHURCH: Art Museum.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it is called, *Metalsmiths and Mentors*.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. I think that's an important thing.

ELEANOR MOTY: "Fred Fenster and Eleanor Moty at the University of Wisconsin, Madison." Beautiful catalog. It was a gorgeous show. Absolutely stunningly beautiful show, and beautifully presented.

SHARON CHURCH: One of the things that impresses me now—and I don't think that this was always the case—is you do everything right here.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: You photograph. You make the work. You have your life. It's all a piece.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] It is.

SHARON CHURCH: And I think that adds to this serenity that you've found, that didn't exist before when you were constantly going out.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's true. Yeah, that frenetic lifestyle is very stressful. Not that I don't put stress on myself now, because I do.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I expect so much of myself. But it's very much different in not being pulled by other people. It's a more self-directed system that I have now.

SHARON CHURCH: It's interesting. I don't know that it's that you put stress on yourself. It's that you demand a lot of yourself. You know.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's true, too. But it's all stressful, when you demand of yourself.

[They laugh.]

It's like, slow down, calm down. You know, every once in a while Michael will say, "Now remember, you can say no."

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: So, in this beautiful home, there is your studio.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Can you describe where it is, how that came about?

ELEANOR MOTY: It's not a grand studio. I'm often fascinated when I see images or visit people's studios, or visit them, and I'm going, "Oh, my God. This is a showcase. You know, everything is laid out in a very artistic way. And they've got interesting little artifacts in a beautiful composition on the wall, or in a frame, and so on. And I'm thinking, "Whoa." Michael and I share the space that had been the carport, because he owned the house before I came along. And bought it, he says, because it had a little woodworking shop. Part of the carport was closed off.

When I came along, we closed off the middle section that was more like a breezeway, and that became my small room. And it is a small room. I just have my bench at one end. And then there's a packing table and a storage area. And I have a stump, and a really nice anvil, and a hammer rack in that room. But otherwise, it's just hand tools and a flex shaft that I use for drilling, primarily.

And then the adjacent space is primarily Michael's studio. But it's the shared space, where the soldering is, and my wonderful Dinkel rolling mill, a double-decker, and a really nice draw bench. And then we've got drill press and belt sander in there, and I've got a bead blaster. And, you know, sink, water. Michael's bench is there, and now—his jeweler's bench is in there, but he's now added a bench for his making of mechanical toys. Wooden automata.

So, that's it. I mean, it's a tiny space, and it's not very aesthetic. It does have a window way up high. Michael does as well, so we get good light in there.

SHARON CHURCH: But no distractions.

ELEANOR MOTY: No. Mm-mmm. [Negative.] I have a TV, and I keep the TV on in the background. But other than that—I mean, I like TV as noise.

SHARON CHURCH: Can I ask a question? You mentioned you had a bead blaster, but all of the work that I see is hand-finished.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, you know, the problem with using the bead blaster is that I make my surfaces perfect and pristine.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

ELEANOR MOTY: And if I use a bead blaster on the back—which I do occasionally—if I'm not careful, it will warp the metal, and that's bad. You know, all the hard work that I put into keeping it really excellent, and straight, and the curve just right. And then if I get divots. You know, welling. Oh.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh.

ELEANOR MOTY: The worst. So I'm pretty much back to all the hand-work, which is Scotch stoning and diamond—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —abrasives. And I actually have devised so many little systems. I use toothpicks with lapidary abrasives. I use—yeah, I know, Sharon. Sounds crazy, but I said I was crazy in doing these things. No one else would do this.

I have all these little wedges and niches to get into, that I have to devise a little—little systems. And I also use orange sticks, which I can shape and carve. And I dip them in water and then into 600 carborundum.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Loose grit.

ELEANOR MOTY: And use that. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Loose grit.

SHARON CHURCH: The thing that I'm most interested in, is an aide that you have of the filing—

ELEANOR MOTY: The rubber filing block.

SHARON CHURCH: —block. That might seem stupid to you, but I don't know a lot of people who have one, and I'm going to get one now.

ELEANOR MOTY: I guess not. Yes. Michael gave me one as a gift, and I then introduced them to the jewelry studio at Madison, and invariably one semester after another, somebody would grab that rubber block out of it and use it for something else, and it disappeared. It was so frustrating. You know, the control you don't have in a general studio.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But it's a cast metal device, similar to a bench pin, and it has three screws. So it's attached to the edge of your bench. And then, there is a thick rubber heel. It would look like a shoe heel, but it's kind of at an angle, and cants back. And it's probably two inches by three inches. And it wedges into the device, and it allows you to saw against it, to file against it, to engrave against it. Where the pieces that you're bracing aren't going to get scarred as they would, perhaps on the bench pin—on the wood.

SHARON CHURCH: Which is important to your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. And it doesn't slip. So, when you're pushing that burin, that piece of metal isn't going to slip, and you're not going to put the burin [into –EM] your hand.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So it's a great little device. When you saw really delicate parts, like rivet ends, or tubing cheniers into that—knuckles for [hinges –EM]—they're not going to pop across the room, because you can really hold onto them against the rubber block. The saw blade goes through, and yes it cuts into the rubber filing block, but no matter.

SHARON CHURCH: You simply replace it once it's worn.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. And I've never had to replace that. I've had that for almost 30 years. I've never had to replace it.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So you have not too many aids, because you do everything—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. By hand.

SHARON CHURCH: —by hand.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I devise systems, you know, you have to. I call it—

SHARON CHURCH: You devise systems. You make tools.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. And I used to teach a workshop called "Tips and Tricks," and I showed people how to sharpen the burin. I showed them how to pull up stitches, and just—all manner of things that I have learned. And we all have that. I mean, Andy Cooperman teaches a session like that. But what's interesting is that I've had professional metalsmiths in my workshop, and they say, "I never thought of that. I'm going to use that."

SHARON CHURCH: That's right. That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I love sharing that kind of information. At Yuma symposium, Dave Pimentel and others of us, used to sit around and talk about that. And Dave said, "We should just have a little jam session, and someone should take notes and write all these things down, and publish it."

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's true. Would you describe yourself as clever, or resourceful, or both?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, I'd say more resourceful than clever.

SHARON CHURCH: I agree.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't think I'm—oh, I don't think I'm so clever. If I were clever, I wouldn't paint myself into these corners with the work that I do.

[They laugh.]

SHARON CHURCH: I think you're resourceful in that, when you come up against a problem, you solve it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Yep.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Recently I broke off—I think I told you, I broke off the corner of the stone, and I devised a way of fixing that, and it was better than the original piece would have been.

SHARON CHURCH: That's excellent. When you're—you moved here to Tucson, which is very different from your home in Madison. And I wonder, how this environment might affect or have

affected your design sensibility.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, one thing it's affected my psyche. Because I love the sun, seeing it every day. I really found the grayness of winter in Wisconsin to be depressing. Cold, damp, uncomfortable. My fingers would go numb. Poor circulation. And out here, the sun shines almost every day.

Now, on the other hand I have to be very wary of the sun, and I use sunscreen every single day, and I wear a hat when I'm out in the sun for any length of time. Because you know, I'm one of those—I'm fair-skinned, and I see my dermatologist at least twice a year.

SHARON CHURCH: Again, that health is centered.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. Because skin cancer in this part of the country is very bad. You know, it's common—far too common. I like seeing the sun every day, and I like color year-round. And what's so different is the light, and how the light hits the cactus, for instance. The greens are sagey and green and blue, and they're almost like what's happening with my planes of metal.

We talked about the architecture in the Steven Holl planes and turns of walls. Well, that's true here, because a cactus—you know, people will see drawings of prickly pear, and they think it's all flat, flat, flat, like frontal? Two-dimensional? But each one is canted a different way, and it casts its light a different way. So that one cactus, which is all the same green, looks 62 shades of green.

SHARON CHURCH: So you have 62 shades of gray—

ELEANOR MOTY: That's right.

SHARON CHURCH: —and white in your silver. I also am curious about your use of Micarta. When I look at the mountains from your window, they're light and almost black.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Mm-hmm.

SHARON CHURCH: So, I can see that there's a sensibility there.

ELEANOR MOTY: Right. But, you know, the Micarta was really a translation from what was already in the stone. Black lines in the stone.

SHARON CHURCH: So everything is being pulled out from the stone?

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] And it might be—you know, when you look at it after the fact, you go, "Oh, my God. That does look like that cactus, or that panel that I saw." But it's not the intention or the interpretation initially.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But that's just the way we are, I think. We're a combination of experiences.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I think that your sensibility was probably established.

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely.

SHARON CHURCH: But now you're here, and you can draw—or I can draw these things.

ELEANOR MOTY: And I really love the look of the mountains, and that light plane, and the light

change. You know, I talked about how the farm fields have that quality, and now it's the mountains that have that quality.

SHARON CHURCH: And there it is. However, you've also talked about the Tucson Gem Show.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: Was that just a fortuitous—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Amazing. Yes. But it provides me with all of this wonderful resource material. I don't have to mail order it, because you can't mail order and choose stones like this.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, I could. I mean, now the Munsteiners, for instance, can send me scans—scanned images of the stones which are actual size. But it's still different to see the stone in actuality.

SHARON CHURCH: I've always thought that, with a stone you fall in love.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. And there is light quality. And when you turn the stone, it changes and catches a different panel of light, so I am so very fortunate in that I can just drive across town to go to the Gem Show. I don't have to plan this big event, and get a flight, and have only two days or three days that I can use. I can go back as many times as I want over two weeks. And I can also find all the materials that I need. I discovered [that –EM] Hermann Petry, one of the Idar-Oberstein Group, has black slate with pyrite inclusions in it, which have just mesmerized me. I think they're so stunning. And then I wanted separate chunks, separate pieces of pyrite crystals.

So I just look up in this giant volume, the Gem Show guide—it's like the old Sears Catalogue. And I look up "P"-pyrite, and I find the venue that has pyrites from Spain. And I drive over there, and I go into—this is a motel room, where the person has set up. They have everything from really gigantic, perfect crystals for [display –EM] and interior decorating, and that sort of thing. Just as beautiful artifacts and sculptures. Down to little tiny ones that are sold in trays of, let's say, 64. So much per tray. And they are all perfect. They're not broken or in matrix. They are absolutely perfect.

And I bought them. I had to buy a tray of them [laughs] so I have, like, 64 of them. But they're gorgeous. They're like little tiny sculptures. They're like the Enron sculpture, but beautiful.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And there I am. I'm off and running. If I need my accent stones, or stem pearls, there is a venue in the Gem Show where I can buy them.

SHARON CHURCH: You've said that term, "stem pearls," many times.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. They are a manufactured pearl, so obviously they are not naturally produced. I can't imagine. But they have to introduce the nacre into the oyster, and they're probably—you know, like, they do cruciform pearls.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, they shape the nacre. They shape this shell—usually a shell—and put it

inside to create the nacre around it. They are like little sticks. And they are wiggly, and they are in various shades of white, and pink, and yellow.

SHARON CHURCH: They're beautiful.

ELEANOR MOTY: They're beautiful. They really are. And they're not drilled, so I set them in 22 karat gold, almost bezel-like.

SHARON CHURCH: To great effect. I think they are—they lend a note of sensuality to your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. And they soften the look of the piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because they're so organic and soft, the gold around them tends to be ruffled and burnished against it. And, see? That is where Miye Matsukata was.

She burnished that soft gold, thin gold around those pieces of glass and so on. So see? That's where Miye's coming out.

SHARON CHURCH: I wanted to talk with you a bit about your process, and what part you think process plays in your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: My process is so basic. It's just straight on fabrication. Scoring and folding, keeping planes really sharp, edges crisp. And that means removing the material to do a sharp bend and a sharp fold. And then it's [reinforced –EM] with solder in those corners. So it really is a procedure.

I start with the bezel for the stone, and then I build from that. I attach to that, usually the front. Yeah. I will make the bezel, and it's got to be really [accurate –EM], especially if it's an odd stone. You know, really measured.

And I want the stone to just fit, without play. [But –EM] you don't want it to be so tight that you're going to jam your stone and chip it.

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, shiver the edge of it. So that takes time and care, and, you know, measuring the depth of it, because I don't want the pieces to be too deep. I want them to be wearable.

Then, the next part that comes along is the frontal surface. If it's going to have some sort of an inset of a change of metal, or a texture, that's done before it's attached to the bezel. It's done in the raw. I've kind of roughed out where the bezel's going to be, so I give myself extra material for roller printing or engraving, or whatever.

Once that surface is ready, I lay on the bezel and with dividers, or a scribe. My scribe is a needle in a pin vise. That was something that I learned from Satsuo Ando in that Japanese techniques [workshop –EM]. That is so brilliant, because you really get up close against your material. Most scribes are really fat and chunky, and you can't get close to where you're working. So I scribe and then I cut away very carefully, very precisely, so that the plane on the front slips over and surrounds the bezel. And I use these burrs, the stitches. Use dividers to mark off the top edge of this bezel.

Then that evenly places my upper sheet onto it, and it floats. I use iron binding wire to hold it in place, and solder from the back, so the front is left clean. If there are gold shards to be cut in place, and slipped in place, I usually start the cut rather than have to drill and use a big gaping round hole. That's done before the pieces are soldered. And then once all of the elements are built on the front, be it the segment that's going to hold the pearl laying on another sheet of gold, that's added. And then the last things that I'm working on are the surround, the vertical sides. There's always a top edge showing of the vertical side, which is going to be burnished in the end, and it adds dimension. It adds glisten to the final piece. And then, further along, once the sides are on, I build the bearing. That is the frame that fits inside the bezel, that's going to hold—

SHARON CHURCH: I just want to interrupt for a second. You never use rubber, or any kind of cushioning device.

ELEANOR MOTY: For?

SHARON CHURCH: For your stones. They are—

ELEANOR MOTY: No, they are really within that metal frame. No, I don't use—unless it is in a box, or floating in a portrait mirror. I had to use packing for that.

SHARON CHURCH: But in this recent work, you rely on your metal skills.

ELEANOR MOTY: Nothing, no. It's—I rely on metal. Oh yes, it's all metal on metal, and I don't use glue.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's an important emphasis.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, you know, I think that was something that was engrained in us, not to use adhesives unless you absolutely must. And there are times when I do, but not typically. Obviously, I do when I'm using pearls on pegs, that's adhesive.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, and I do pin the Micarta, and I also use epoxy.

SHARON CHURCH: But that's because you're joining dissimilar materials.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. But no, for the bezels, they're all just mechanical.

SHARON CHURCH: And you have invented each setting.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Sometimes they're tabs. Sometimes there's a stitch pulled over. Quite often there's a rivet. And I try to make the bearings so snug, that there's no give. No—it just slides in, like telescoping tubing would.

SHARON CHURCH: Really, only a very good jeweler would be able to do this.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, most jewelers are very good, though. When you think of traditional jewelers, they do this day in and day out, you know, like stone setters and so on. This is the norm for them, and they do it far more skillfully than I. But I work within my means, you know? This is what I need to do, and I've learned to do it pretty well for what I need to do. So probably the last things that I—oh, and I also have to devise my pinning system. So most often it's very direct. It's just a

piece of tube that I flatten. It's thick-wall tubing that I make, and I flatten one side of so it lays in good contact to the wall of the brooch, on the back. And the pin—the pin material is nickel silver. And I draw it down and also planish it, so it's really—

SHARON CHURCH: Springy.

ELEANOR MOTY: —springy and tight. And I taper the end of the wire. This is something that a lot of people have questioned me about. They say, "Oh, your pin stem is so bulky. It's not going through the fabric." And I said, "No, it's rounded on the end." And it's tapered, but it's not needle-point sharp. It's rounded. And the reason for that, is that it doesn't break thread. So when you're putting it through a finer fabric, what it does is push the weave aside. Apart.

SHARON CHURCH: Perfect.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it doesn't break the thread and cause a ripple, or a shear, or a pull in your fabric, which is really important. You don't want to have this person buy this piece and then have their favorite [blouse –EM], or shirt, whatever—

SHARON CHURCH: Silk.

ELEANOR MOTY: —coat, destroyed by it. So it eases through. And then I devise a pinning system that is like a safety pin. It's got a safety on it, so it goes through a slit and then behind a ledge, so that it's secure. I don't want this to come undone and fall off the person when they're wearing it. But then, the nice thing is, when you take the pin off you just pull the fabric, and it [relaxes –EM]. You know, it closes the hole, so nothing's been destroyed.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] That's very considerate of you.

ELEANOR MOTY: I also try to—I really think about, where is the placement of the pin?

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, so important. I try to allow a couple of ways of wearing it. Like, canting it as well as wearing it horizontal. But make sure that they're not going to wear it upside-down so it flips forward.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, I look at it as I'm designing it, and before I put the pinning system on it, I think about, which is the best view of this piece from the front? I've designed it this way, but maybe I should turn it and have the—what I thought was the side, being the top.

SHARON CHURCH: And you allow yourself that freedom.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. And I try to think ahead to what the viewer—what the owner might want to do with it. Sometimes the pins are on the diagonal, so that really does give you more options as to how to wear it. But even so, it's that secure pinning system that's most important.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Your pins—pin stems, always snap into place. It's a very satisfying "click."

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: Reassuring—

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: —to the wearer, that this is now secure.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. I recently sent my work to a new gallery that that has not handled art jewelry before. And I sent it on—I use Plexiglas stands I should mention when I show my work. For instance, at SOFA or at Perimeter, which is my Chicago gallery and at Chazen I had them use Plexiglas stands, 8x10-inch front, and bent Plexiglas, so it has a four-inch [base –EM]. It's like a vertical upright, slightly at an angle. And then I place the piece in position and drill holes. Turn it over and find the pin stem and drill small holes and then have a fitting that is tubing [with –EM] and either threaded rod [and a small hex nut –EM] or a tubing and a clutch.

SHARON CHURCH: Nice.

ELEANOR MOTY: The pin stem [goes –EM] through the tubing and it's held in place. It floats on Plexiglas, which is perfect when light is going to come through the stone. And it's also perfect, for instance, at the Metal Museum, I watch people look at the backs of my pieces. It allowed them that and they were fascinated. Especially the metalsmiths were fascinated to see how the backs work.

SHARON CHURCH: The backs are as compelling as the fronts.

ELEANOR MOTY: I really am conscious of that in terms of the finish of the piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Why is that important to you?

ELEANOR MOTY: Because it's a small piece. It's similar to the concept of walking around a sculpture, but now it's small enough to be in your hand and you can see every aspect of it. So I want the viewer, the owner to have that other aspect of it. That sort of secret that no one else necessarily sees. Now if it's on the Plexiglas stand in a showcase, they can see that as long as it's a walk around case.

SHARON CHURCH: You have always been interested in embodying secrets, little messages. This is maybe appropriate for an intimate art form.

ELEANOR MOTY: Truly. Yes, and I feel that. It's sort of like having a message for the sender or a message for the recipient, you know. A message for the owner that only they see. And I think that's really nice. I like that.

SHARON CHURCH: It's something you can do.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's always appealed to me.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. So your work is done and it's on display. Now we talked about the process. Is process different from technology in your mind?

ELEANOR MOTY: For me, I'm not using technology necessarily in my work. I'm not no longer using electroforming. I'm not into CAD/CAM and designing in the computer and replicating and so on. But I guess you would say that technology has come into my work via a digital camera and certainly the computer. I don't design on the computer, but I keep records on the computer and I keep track of my images. I have an archives of my images, which I keep on a separate drive from my computer. So

if my computer crashes, I'm not losing my thousands and thousands of images and that could be kept in a safe.

SHARON CHURCH: Can you define the word technology?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well for me it would mean industrial updated explorations. And to someone else—I'm not sure how it's directed in your thoughts. But I've always thought of research and technology meaning new processes and I'm not doing that. I mean, I'm not feeling compelled to do it and I'm content with what I have under my belt so far.

SHARON CHURCH: And playing that out. I think that's an important thing to say. At the same time, I know that you have taught yourself to photograph your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: You have taught yourself how to work with a computer. You find those to be extraordinarily useful tools.

ELEANOR MOTY: Unbelievable. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So technology doesn't intimidate you.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, but I'm selective as to where I'm going to spend energy because it is a lot of work learning to do things on the computer.

SHARON CHURCH: A new language.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, it is, it is. And I am really lucky in that Michael Croft is so good and he loves solving problems on the computer. He gets calls all the time—how do you do this and get me out of this problem. He's really helped me a great deal in directing me, and I'll say, thank you, thank you, because now I know how to do it. Photoshop, we both did a tutorial, an online tutorial, which was magnificent. I didn't learn all the graphic design aspects of it, you know, that I don't need. If I need it sometime, I will go through that tutorial, but I did enough. I learned enough of the language so that I can do what I need to do and I am so happy with what I've learned. It's just so freeing in that you can control it. Um, as I said, I've never found a photographer who could, you know, nearby, who could do what I needed to do and I really feel that you have to work with a person.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: They've not—even though I've tried to direct them to see what's in the stone, they're not seeing it. They think they are, but they're not seeing it, so—

SHARON CHURCH: And photography is so important to us because most people will see your work through that.

ELEANOR MOTY: Only the photograph or the catalog. It's true, very true because people have said to me, "Oh my God, I've saw your photographs, but now, seeing the actual work, there's so much more there." And I said, "Yeah, when you're photographing," this is something Bobby Hansen had said in a conference years ago, a lecture, he said, "You know, you're only going to take one view of that piece. It's only going to be reproduced in one image, so it's got to tell the story."

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: So I'm always aware of that when I photograph my piece. I try—although I want it to be frontal because that's the way a lot of the lines come up and so on, you know, they follow through, but I also have to show dimension, so sometimes I have to cant it a little bit so show that it's a deep piece. It's not just a flat piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Because as the work is worn, we see it in a variety of positions, yet when you photograph, that's the one shot.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, so I photograph it for myself frontal, but I don't use that in publications. I always use a little bit of a cant.

SHARON CHURCH: Some you see a three-quarter view.

ELEANOR MOTY: Something like that. And I also photograph the backs of my pieces.

SHARON CHURCH: Very important.

ELEANOR MOTY: For my own record, because if I ever do a book, it could be—it might be interesting to the viewer to see the front and back. There are certain pieces in particular that are really important in that way.

SHARON CHURCH: I agree.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yeah, that's the consideration. And also, I clean the pieces well enough that I'm not ashamed of the back.

SHARON CHURCH: The backs are beautiful. They talk about the structure. But the thing that I am enjoying a lot about your backs is that I see the entire stone.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: As opposed to the fronts where you might have—

ELEANOR MOTY: Masked some—

SHARON CHURCH: —chosen to mask.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's true. And also people, you and other metalsmiths appreciate seeing the engineering.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, absolutely. I'm so curious as to how you do all these things and I admire your resolution.

ELEANOR MOTY: Thank you. I think that's part of what keeps it interesting is that you have to problem solve. Often Michael and I will have projects in the house and it takes problem solving. Because we were both teachers, university professors for decades, between the two of us, we have a lot of skill.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: We can really pull off a lot of problems. In fact, when we hire people to do projects for us, it's often really frustrating because they don't have a good sense of craftsmanship and we have to undo their mess.

SHARON CHURCH: That's difficult.

ELEANOR MOTY: Don't you find that true though, Sharon?

SHARON CHURCH: I'm fortunate to be married to somebody who builds, but I know exactly what you're talking about.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. You know, they'll do something and say, that'll do. I'll say, "No, that won't do."

SHARON CHURCH: It won't do, right. No, it's very true. Okay, now I want to shift gears a little bit. And we've been talking about your work from start to finish, including the display and the backs.

ELEANOR MOTY: And the photography.

SHARON CHURCH: But now I want—I know you to be such a warm and welcoming individual. You have a lot of close relationships primarily that I know of in the field, but you also have family. But anyway, can you talk about the interconnectedness of the field, your relationships within it and describe those a bit.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well I think that over the years I have counted my blessings in knowing so many really fabulous people through our field and I've met them through conferences, through workshops, you know, events. I keep up with some of them. I'm always delighted when I see them again at events, but the ones that I maintain contact with regularly are Fred Woell, Lynda Watson. I see Mary Hu regularly. I see Pete Jagoda at Yuma and sometimes we correspond, but he's so busy with his farm and animal rescue that we really primarily connect there. David Pimentel used to be on that list and, unfortunately, has passed. And then there are some Madison people and, of course, I don't know if I mentioned Helen, but Helen [Drutt] has these little terse messages that come back and forth, so I've maintained contact with her and I have a really wonderful colleague back at Wisconsin, a man by the name of Walter Hamady who is very important in art book making and paper making.

SHARON CHURCH: Can you spell his last name?

ELEANOR MOTY: H-A-M-A-D-Y. We've maintained correspondence for years and he's quite a character. He's a real curmudgeon and he's brilliant and his work is brilliant. Unfortunately, Walter's not very much beyond my age, but he's developed macular degeneration. So it's limiting the work that he can do because he used to set type and, print. So we correspond. Occasionally we phone now because it's too difficult for him to write and he was never on the computer. His wife sometimes connects with us, but I keep track of him and maintain that. And there are two women, Audrey Handler, who is a glass artist, and Jan Fox who is involved peripherally in—in the arts in Madison. And a few other people here and there who have a soft connection. They're not necessarily artists, but I just enjoy them.

SHARON CHURCH: And, of course, there's your sister, Joyce.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], I actually am in touch with the other people more often than I am with Joyce because she's a very busy person, but [yes –EM], we do maintain contact. And my niece in England. She's married to a British man and we regularly correspond.

SHARON CHURCH: What is her name?

ELEANOR MOTY: Deborah Shortt. So we are back and forth with e-mails and to some extent, as

much as possible, I keep track of my grandnieces more than my grandnephews because the guys don't write. But I do stay in touch with my grandnieces who are young women in their 20s. And I pretty much stay in contact with my brothers. I Skype with one of them and phone the other occasionally. I'm the person in the family who kind of keeps it altogether. I keep in touch with my nephew, who's the father of the grands—grandnieces and nephews. I spend a lot of time on e-mail. I don't do texting and I don't do Facebook other than seeing what people are doing.

SHARON CHURCH: I think e-mail is the method of our generation.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's the old way. The young people do not [use—EM] it.

SHARON CHURCH: No. But it allows for writing and it allows for description.

ELEANOR MOTY: If I want it to be private letter, I don't use e-mail. I still do stamp postage correspondence. And when someone is ill and I want to send a message, I usually send a stamp postage correspondence because I think that it's a much warmer message. And I also think that when you're not well, sitting in front of a glaring computer is exhausting. And when you have a letter that comes in the mail that's tangible in your hands, you can sit in the sun on the patio and read it. You can lie in bed and read it. You can, you know, read it—re-read it easily.

SHARON CHURCH: You're speaking as a real people person. I get the idea that you're very connected.

ELEANOR MOTY: I am, I make point of it.

SHARON CHURCH: And you're faithful.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, you know, I have so many good friends. I try to be a good friend to them too.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] So here you are making art to be worn. You're connecting with people. It makes sense to me. Do you spend hours every day communicating?

ELEANOR MOTY: Actually I do. Yeah, I do. You know, my morning is handling e-mail, business or social. I mean, there are people that I speak with every day via e-mail.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, so you have a day where you have some e-mail. You go for a walk, you take care of your body, and you work at the bench.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, and some days I don't work at the bench. I give myself a break. Like right now I have completed a round of commitments and I'm going to take a break. We have company coming for Christmas and that's going to take some planning and preparation. And then, of course, during the gem show, there's no bench time.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I'm busy, you know.

SHARON CHURCH: We talked a bit about this. You don't necessarily seek this out, but you use their commitments, professional commitments to organize your activity at the bench.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, yeah. Because people have said, do you love working at the bench. It's

sort of like people who say, I love going to the gym and I have so much energy when I'm done. That's not me. Really, that is not me.

[They laugh.]

ELEANOR MOTY: I go to the gym and I'm spent. Actually, my lure to go to the gym is to read. I have a tablet and the reason I like to use the tablet at the gym is that I don't have to wear glasses when I'm reading. I can boost the typeface, I can brighten the screen, and I don't have to turn pages and hold a book down and use clips. I can just stroke across it and easily read while I'm on the treadmill or whatever. So that's my lure. I just, you know, read novels and books and biographies and whatever else. So that keeps me on that treadmill at that pace.

SHARON CHURCH: That's a good trick.

ELEANOR MOTY: Otherwise, it's really tedious. And as far as being at the bench, it's hard work. There are times when I really don't feel like being at the bench. I would rather—I don't know what I would rather do. Maybe sit and read a book.

SHARON CHURCH: As my friend Judith said, "That's why they call it work."

ELEANOR MOTY: It is work. It's still work. And for some people, they love working at the bench and it gives them their energy. It doesn't, it zaps my energy. But there's something that's driving me to do it and stay creative. Fortunately, there are still shows that occasionally I'm invited to and I have my galleries. Not that I sell very much, Sharon. I don't really—I couldn't make a living selling my work. I really could not because—

SHARON CHURCH: Don't you think there's something to rarity?

ELEANOR MOTY: I suppose so, yeah. Yeah, I'm not glutting the market, I'll tell you that.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, I think that your work is very special and part of it's being special is because it contains a lot of your thinking, which takes time, your consideration, and if there were a lot of it, it wouldn't be the same.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, that's absolutely true. I mean, the uniqueness of it. I've seen people's shows where they had 42 of their pieces, and you don't see it after a point because you look at the 20th piece and then they start blurring, you know, if it's a solo show. So if I'm doing a solo show, it's typically at most 12 pieces. You know, like a feature show at my gallery. Now, of course, at the Metal Museum for the Master Metalsmith Show, it's a retrospective. So, it was 60 pieces and it went way back in time to probably my undergraduate work. It took up a whole museum. All the rooms in the museum, so that's quite different than stuffing one room with 60 pieces.

SHARON CHURCH: A lot of work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. So by being in the entire museum and it was also sequential and it was timelines with storyboard, it was a teaching show.

SHARON CHURCH: It's interesting that you mentioned that show because I think if you as a mentor to others.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well it's really been my pleasure.

SHARON CHURCH: And do you feel you have specific people you feel you've mentored or do you just simply have a vague—

ELEANOR MOTY: It's interesting in that regard, Sharon, because I could say that I mentored, you know, especially my grads and some of the undergrads, but in truth, I don't like to take that—I don't know if it's responsibility, but I don't think that's the right word. I don't want to take that limelight away from them because they worked so hard to get it. So I congratulate them and I don't step forward and say "You're doing it because of me."

SHARON CHURCH: You don't claim them.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't claim them. I eventually become their friend rather than their teacher and I take pleasure in that. I take pleasure in their success, which I laude them for. As I always said, I want to be a resource person. I don't want to say, "Oh, you know, I made them what they are."

SHARON CHURCH: Well I'm not sure that that's what I mean by mentor, but I think you lead by example.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, because it was done for me, I try to give them opportunities. If I see there's an opening for a show or a job, I put their name in the hat. Grants or whatever else, I drop their name in the hat and I support them. They don't always know it just as I didn't always know it with people who did it for me because it's sort of like it's your turn to do that and what a pleasure it is to be in a position to do that. I've always felt that. When you reach the point where people listen to you and follow your suggestion and invite that person to a show or give them the job, it's the greatest of all.

SHARON CHURCH: Well that's very gracious of you and I know that's how you operate. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: But I think a lot of professors do that. I think a lot of people in our field are so generous in that same way. I don't think it's unique to me at all because it's been done for me.

SHARON CHURCH: Well then you're saying you're paying it forward.

ELEANOR MOTY: Exactly. Yeah, that is so.

SHARON CHURCH: I would like to stop this evening and I look forward to speaking with you tomorrow about the future.

ELEANOR MOTY: Good.

SHARON CHURCH: So is there anything we haven't covered?

ELEANOR MOTY: I'll have to think about it. I'll think about it this evening.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, thank you.

ELEANOR MOTY: Thank you, Sharon.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is Sharon Church and I'm interviewing Eleanor Moody in her home and studio in Tucson, AZ. It is Thursday, November 20. And what we want to do this morning is revisit some of the topics that we talked about yesterday because some of them were not as fully

developed as the need to be. One of the first things that I think we need to talk about, Eleanor, is your use of silver and gold, and also the Micarta with regard to how you set the stones and use light. Do you want to take that?

Eleanor Moody: My aim in incorporating the stones with the metal is to really bring them together. And as I had said, I—the design ideas come from the imagery that's in the stone, but they're also planes that are not necessarily angled planes, but lines that I see and translate as planes. So that in bringing dimension to the metal, I sometimes put soft folds or score lines into them so that it's not just a flat sheet across the front. There may be planer changes that create that line—that light quality that I like so much. So there's the white silver, the iciness of the silver, which is the primary material, but then there's a lighter silver, a darker silver, a grayer silver as you look at the piece, which really changes the format of the piece. So it's not just the stone that's the focal point, but what's happening on the surface of the metal is really integral. And then gold is accented quite often pulling imagery off the stone and the gold is often a panel that is textured as well if that is an important reference of the stone. The vertical sides are there to create depth and also accommodate the depth of the stone, but the vertical sides don't often have any interruption in the surface, with the exception of planes and insets of gold that come off the surface and then wedge down the side. So they may slice into the side.

SHARON CHURCH: But this is not at 90 degrees to anything. They're all at slightly different angles.

ELEANOR MOTY: They are, yes.

SHARON CHURCH: She when you look at a piece, you are getting a lot of different whites and light grays.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, so it really is like a painting. The metal becomes something other than just metal. It's got subtleties that really play into the effect of what's happening in the stone. So that's the part of integrating the two processes and materials, the stone cutting and my fabricating, that hopefully make the piece successful.

SHARON CHURCH: Another thing that I was delighted to see is that while you roller print some textures, some things are hammered in, chiseled in. You've chased some textures. I don't know if I'm covering it all, but it does pull on your vast knowledge of metal work.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's the pleasure of it because having accumulated information, I really am able to go back into my technical library and decide which tells the story the best because, you know, although my work is not narrative by any means, it's telling a story. It's a story of serenity or dynamism because some of the stones are truly dynamic. And that's the kind of emotion that I'm trying to pull out, as well as this sense of completeness, this sense of calm, this sense of quiet.

SHARON CHURCH: One of the things that I have noticed looking at the work over time and how it's grown is that it does seem that things are becoming increasingly complex in their quietude.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. That's a good way of saying it, Sharon, because you being a metalsmith really see more in it than the common observer because [to –EM] someone who doesn't know metal at all, it may seem like a really simple piece. But someone who does know how things are made and fabricated, there's a lot of thought and process that goes into making it look so gentle and soft and calm.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, absolutely. Okay, another thing we wanted to revisit this morning was the

artists who are important to you.

ELEANOR MOTY: I go out of my way, and quite literally this is the case, to see the work of Andy Goldsworthy and also Patrick Dougherty. Both work with nature in process. Andy does both onsite transient work, as well as permanent work like the stone fences and so on, as well as using ice and water and leaves and things that just—they remind me somewhat of looking at the landscape from a plane. You know, when you're up in the air and you look at crop circles and textures and it's just so amazing, and wooded lots and tree lines.

Now Patrick Dougherty, on the other hand, his pieces have been more transient. They are willow branches that are not—tied together, not necessarily with twine, but really woven together you might say. And they sometimes envelop a feature of the landscape or the building or the room and other times they are freestanding structures. Many times you can walk inside and through them and I think that that interaction of the artist and the viewer is amazing. You know, he's gone, but now you can walk inside his artwork. That I find really pleasant.

SHARON CHURCH: Architecture and light. It's interesting that Helen Drutt has an Andy Goldsworthy piece that creeps onto her land from Storm King, and Patrick Dougherty works to build these structures, like hives—

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] That's right.

SHARON CHURCH: —at the Morris Arboretum, which is quite close to where I live. So you're just going to have to come back east.

ELEANOR MOTY: I will. Even at the Kohler in Kohler, WI, Sheboygan, WI, there is—outside the museum building, there's a wall left from an old library and he created a volume and a structure away from this wall. This wall that had been the library had Doric columns. It's just stunning. It's so beautiful.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's interesting about the connection to these two artists is that they work directly with nature, which you're doing with the stones, and they use the natural materials abstractly.

ELEANOR MOTY: True.

SHARON CHURCH: And I see a strong connection between Patrick Dougherty and Steven Holl in the use of light.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's true too, isn't it? I think what's fascinating about Patrick Dougherty's pieces is that it's almost like drawing, graphite drawing, scratchy drawing. The way the things wisp around and sweep up.

SHARON CHURCH: Amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: It carries your eye by the fact that there's often a lyrical line in the sweep of these willow branches. He did an installation at the University of Wisconsin on the main [quad –EM], Bascom Hill it's called, and it was a free standing piece. I think it lasted through part of winter, you know, a couple of seasons. But it was very exposed. Even when they begin [deconstructing –EM], they're amazing.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow. And I think that both those people, through their abstract building in

nature forms and natural materials, that act relates to how you work your metal around the crystal.

ELEANOR MOTY: I suppose that's so. I never—I guess I haven't connected myself in terms of my work with them. I just connect with their aesthetic, certainly, because my work obviously is permanent.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: But it's also, you know, teeny, tiny. I love the fact that you can interact physically with theirs.

SHARON CHURCH: Let's talk about scale because you seem very drawn to nature and architecture and yet you make these pieces that can be hand-held, and it's a very different involvement with the viewer.

ELEANOR MOTY: True.

SHARON CHURCH: So can you, is there a point there that should be made?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well I've often been asked, "Would you consider doing these pieces huge," because when [they are projected on a lecture wall –EM], they're huge. And people say, oh, they translate so well, but I work within the materials that I can handle and the processes that I can handle because if I had huge pieces, I would have to farm out the work. You know, it would mean fabrication on a giant scale and all of the research that's involved with doing that. And I'm very content with working within the skills that I have and being self-sufficient in that because there's a time lag. When you have an idea and then you have to research the processes and the companies and the fabricators and so on who can follow through with your designs, that is just so much time spent. And then if you're disappointed in what they've done, oh, you know, you've spent all that money and you have to start over. It also puts you in a place where you pretty much have to have a commission.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, a lot of money.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, you cannot be doing this on your own and I don't do commissions and I am not making pieces that I know are going to sell. I have a lot of inventory.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think there is an issue of compromise? When you're building, you have to deal with somebody's skills.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Mm-hmm [Affirmative.]

SHARON CHURCH: So you can rely on yourself and if you don't have a skill, you get it.

ELEANOR MOTY: True, or you just do something else.

SHARON CHURCH: Right, you can problem solve around it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, plus, you know, I—I've never and I think this is something that I've really been fortunate over is that I've never had to earn my living from my work.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: If I did, I'm sure that my work would be different. The fact that I've had that

luxury and the freedom to do anything and not have to worry—is it saleable, that's a huge issue and so many people who are in the position of supporting themselves from their work, salability has to be at the front of their mind quite often, because otherwise, they can't pay the bills. They can't buy the materials to make the next piece. So as I say, I have a lot of inventory and it doesn't make me frantic. It's just there. And, you know, I don't worry too much about whether or not the pieces are going to sell. On the other hand, what happens is that I don't feel compelled to make a lot more work.

SHARON CHURCH: You've talked about the fact that you might only make four or five pieces a year, and yet when I add up that over a lifetime, you don't have that much inventory.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think I do right now in terms of having just made a push to get pieces ready for some major shows, certainly the Metal Museum. Every year I prepare new pieces for a Perimeter Gallery in Chicago to exhibit during the time that people come together for SOFA, Sculpture Objects Functional Art, in Chicago. And then most recently having new pieces ready for the show in Stipshausen, Germany with the Munsteiners. So that prompts me to make more than I typically do and really push myself beyond the discomfort and the physicality of working at the bench a lot. On the other hand, if I don't have shows in the wings, I just work off the new stones that I buy in February. I mean, I'm just addicted. I have to go to the gem show and see what the Munsteiners have brought and see what Dieter Lorenz has brought and the Hermann Petry group has brought. And then when something appeals to me and I can't leave it behind, it's now in my shop inventory and then that prompts me to say, okay, get in there and do something with this because it's a pretty exciting piece.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: And then I don't worry about, oh, so and so is going to love this or whatever because I have a select group of collectors who follow my work and purchase. But on the other hand, I have lot more than they could [laughs] ever gather.

SHARON CHURCH: Good. Okay, the third thing we wanted to get back to is what it means to mentor. To be, I interrupt that differently.

ELEANOR MOTY: Let's stop that for a second because I wanted to look up that word.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: We're back, and Eleanor is going to discuss what it means to be a mentor, and then, she looked it up, and I'm going to ask her to also talk about being an example to those of us who came afterwards, especially as a woman, a powerful woman, who did not have a lot of examples to follow.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, it is true that as a student, there weren't, in my immediate range of study, women professors. I had those really two strong women in high school, and, of course, my mother was a very strong woman. In university and grad school, there were no women professors that I worked with, and then, of course, in stepping into teaching I was one of two, so, I found myself—

SHARON CHURCH: One of two women at the University of Wisconsin—

ELEANOR MOTY: —in the Art Department.

SHARON CHURCH: —on the faculty in the Art Department.

ELEANOR MOTY: In the Art Department. Yes, and it was a large faculty. So, the other woman preceded me by about 20 years, and she'd been there quite a time already. So, I found myself, literally, being a mentor to the women faculty coming in after me, and at the University of Wisconsin, when someone comes up for tenure and promotion—or in the years before, they are assigned a mentor in the department and that is another faculty who advises them and observes them in teaching and acts as their liaison and go-between, and also, eventually, when they do come up for tenure, is a major writer in the package that goes to the university and the administration. So, I found myself being a mentor, literally, to every woman who was hired. Debbie Butterfield was one, and numerous others, and Debbie, of course, didn't stay. I mean, she stayed a couple of years and then moved to Montana. And that was true of quite a few of the women. They just found other jobs that were, a better fit for them, but I also found myself mentoring the men because they said, "Well, you know, we don't just want to have men as our mentors." There were three faculty assigned as mentors. So, I found myself mentoring a lot of people. Far more than most of the faculty. Most of the men [mentored –EM] had perhaps one, some had none.

But my main concern was my students, and most of my students were female. I found myself especially addressing the women who had been out of school, had raised a family and were back in school. And I found myself really welcoming them. Unfortunately, I was there at the university at the time with a lot of chauvinistic men [who were sexist –EM], and they were giving the class space to the very young women, the pretty women, and here were these [mature women –EM] who were really trying their best to find their identity again. And many times I sort of reached [out –EM] to them, as we were in a big room for the registration, all the classes being represented by the faculty sitting at a table, and when the women would find that the course they wanted to take was filled, and Metals didn't fill so rapidly because it was a tough area and it had a reputation for being a tough area, I would say, "Excuse me. There's room in my class. Let me talk about my class and perhaps you'd be interested." So, you know, in desperation, I suppose, they would end up in Jewelry.

And one thing that was kind of interesting is that when you're a woman professor, the men and the women just have to do what you tell them to do. I think that [sometimes –EM] there is this attitude that, "The man is the professor, and he's done this difficult technique, and maybe I can't do it because I'm a woman." I mean, it's just sort of an [innate –EM] attitude in some women, and when I would do something, there was no question that the women were going to follow through and the men were going to follow through, so it made for a real strength that the women in this case, quite often, didn't even know that they had.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that we've commented that the field is mostly women and that our classes are mostly women. So, I think that learning how to work with metal is enabling. It makes you feel powerful.

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely, and to learn to use tools, most of them had never used tools, and that's not just women. I would demonstrate things, and I would say, "How many of you have ever used a drill press?" and, of course, maybe two, even the men, you know, unless they came from farms. Shop classes aren't taught any longer. Decades back, the men took shop classes, for instance, but now, it's all computer, and it's all techno, so that there's very little hands-on skill. There isn't model-making for kids. It's all computer games, and that's what they lean toward. So, in that regard, teaching has become very different, too. Having to teach the skills from the bare bottom, you know, basic, basic.

SHARON CHURCH: Do you think that is perhaps why you are so regarded within our field as a powerful woman? Because you are so competent? Because you use tools so well? Because you are adept?

ELEANOR MOTY: I didn't know I was considered that way, Sharon.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, you are.

[They laugh.]

See, I've always held you up as exemplary. You know, if things get hard, I think, "But Eleanor has done this."

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, you know that, interestingly, Sharon, women aren't supposed to complain.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Especially when you're in that situation, and that's certainly what I was up against. I had mention to you in an off-side that I cannot watch the show *Mad Men* because I lived through that, and if you showed a softness, or an inability to do something, it really worked against you. So, I think part of it is just, standing up and just saying, "Sure, I can do it," even if you're not sure that you can do it.

SHARON CHURCH: But you maintained your femininity. Some people lost it.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't know.

SHARON CHURCH: So, I think you have been exemplary and a leader for many of us who followed us in your wake because, as you say, most of the people who study this and enter the field are female.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's true, and as I said, I had mostly female students, and, of course, because I taught with Fred, it was inevitable that a lot of the men would just lean toward doing smithing and the "tough" stuff, the forging and the smithing, and end up working more with Fred. There weren't that many men who really followed through as much with me as they did with Fred. More the women, but we had so many dynamic students, and so many that we both keep up with.

SHARON CHURCH: But I was never your student, and I was aware of you—

ELEANOR MOTY: That's interesting.

SHARON CHURCH: I spotted you. I followed you. So, it got—it leaked out. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: That's interesting, Sharon. I never thought about that because I certainly know, um, how my students react to me and how I've been able to assist them along their way, and I really do mean assist them because I've said again and again, I was a resource. But, I really loved leading them so that they could then move forward and take the credit and know that they did it on their own. You know, have that independence. So that when they left Fred and me and the studio, they were still dynamic.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Real dynamos, you know? That I thought was so important.

SHARON CHURCH: Finally, I want to revisit something that you've talked about with me, and probably with everybody else, this idea of "sequential making."

ELEANOR MOTY: Ah, yes.

SHARON CHURCH: And I call what I'm teaching "strategizing," right? You really—we're in a funny field.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah, you know, engineering a piece, that's how I look at it—each piece—as well. Each piece is engineered, which means that you have to understand how something is built or comes together—and yet, it takes focus to do that. You know not only understanding and skill, but you can't walk away from something and forget that you were about to do such-and-such because, you let's say, reinforce or seam or place something or cut something or slit something, because the gold has to go in before you then place it in position for the final front. I think all of us have had something happen where, "Okay, I think I'm ready to put the pin in the hinge." and you do, and then it's like, "Oh, dear. The box won't open now" because of something you neglected to do. So, if I don't have the time to work in a [sequential –EM] time frame, I make notes to myself.

SHARON CHURCH: Smart.

ELEANOR MOTY: —pencil in some notes as to, you know, "Grind down this panel," "Shape this," et cetera. So that the last things that go together in building a piece are the most fragile. The pearl is the last thing that's set, for instance. The rivets may already be in place, and then the pearl, that delicate little piece goes in, and then the pin stem. But, interestingly, I don't set the pin stems until I've finished my photography because if you sometimes notice that the pin stem slashes across the back of the stone—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —You know, I've done a diagram that shows—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —it shows through the stone, and of course, when it's worn, the pin stem is not showing, but if I'm photographing it, I don't want that intrusion of the line that has nothing—no reference to what's in the stone, so I don't slip the pin stem in place until I've finished my photography from the front, and then, as I said, I photograph the pieces from the back, and then I'll slip the pin stem in, but I won't secure it. It will just be there so that for my record, there's the pin and how it attaches. And sometimes, if I forget and I've half set it, it's like, "Oh, you dummy. There it is," but I'm pretty good at remembering that little bit of it now so that my photography is clean as I'm documenting it. So, probably, the pin stem is the last thing that is set.

SHARON CHURCH: I would say that—

ELEANOR MOTY: But all of the surfaces are finished before anything else.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, it's a mark of your craft and your confidence that you do that. I like to—usually, I photograph when the piece is almost done—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —and then I'll photograph when the piece is really done.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah. That's very wise.

SHARON CHURCH: But, it takes a lot of confidence to say, "I'm going to photograph this and then I'm going to set the pin stem" because making jewelry, working in these materials, anything can happen at any time.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. Absolutely. I mean, sometimes I even—if I can photograph it without showing where the rivet is going to go, I don't even set the rivet.

SHARON CHURCH: Wow.

ELEANOR MOTY: If the stone is in, and the bearing is in, and then I photograph it, and then I finally go back to set the rivet. But the worst thing that can happen is for the stone to break—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] That's huge.

ELEANOR MOTY: —at that point, you know. Like, the piece is gone. It's a total loss because these crystals, if they break down the middle, you know, I've built the piece already. It's done. That's a goner, and that would be devastating.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah. Okay, so I think that really mature, capable artists in this field have the kind of confidence that you're talking about—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: —but people who are still on their way—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, gosh. It's a long learning process.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: And it's a hard lesson. Even though you learn it once, you don't always really learn it. It happens again, and I do it myself. I think, "You know, this is so stupid. You did it, you know, here. This is it." So at least I can bail myself out.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: I know how to do that, and if I have to repair a piece, I know how to do that. I can drill out the [rivet –EM] pin, make a new pin, all of that business. But for a student, it can be devastating.

SHARON CHURCH: I think it's really wonderful to know you are worried enough about your work that you deal with that idea of "This might need to be repaired."

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, Stanley taught us that.

SHARON CHURCH: Oh, it was a smart thing.

ELEANOR MOTY: So brilliant because I can remember when he talked about the structure involved in making, let's see, a chalice or a Kiddush Cup, and he talked about the threaded rod that goes down the middle from the base of the cup, but it's not soldered onto the base of the cup. It's soldered onto a cruciform, domed piece, and then if the cup drops, it doesn't put a big dent in the bottom of the cup because this cruciform, loose, open space takes the tension.

SHARON CHURCH: Takes the—

ELEANOR MOTY: And then, because you may have [stacked decorative elements –EM] on the stem, the pieces are mechanically joined and slipped up the rod in segments. I thought, "This is so brilliant." Every aspect of how that piece is built has to do with [how it could be –EM] repaired, and wouldn't that be obvious? A chalice is going to fall, to fall over. A Kiddush Cup the same—

SHARON CHURCH: Everything that's used.

ELEANOR MOTY: —it's used everyday.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, used. I think most people don't understand the many considerations that go into a good piece of jewelry.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: And so, you are a good jeweler. You have a responsibility to the piece and to others who use it.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and a respect for the person who owns it because they're paying a lot of money for these pieces and I want them to be the best things that leave my hands.

SHARON CHURCH: And you don't want them to come back.

ELEANOR MOTY: Preferably not, but it's inevitable that that may happen, and of course, I work in silver, and the metal tarnishes, so I try to offer instruction as to how to clean the pieces—

SHARON CHURCH: Sure.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because you can't just dip in cleaner all the pieces because I have pearl and sometimes opal and materials that should not go into those liquids. It has to be very carefully done. Robert Pfannebecker, who owns a good many of my pieces from very early on to now, knows that if —if he needs a piece cleaned, it comes to me, and I take care of it.

SHARON CHURCH: Is this a lifetime guarantee? Your lifetime? [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It's my lifetime guarantee, absolutely. He is often called upon to lend pieces. I mean, it's chore for him, and I'm so grateful that he does that, but he does it for hundreds of artists, and it's a great imposition for the collector because he doesn't have a big staff of people. It's him now. And it's costly because he's often not reimbursed for shipping for putting those pieces out, so it's pretty interesting. I think it's just astonishing that he's still willing to do that although he's saying, "I'm just not going to do this any longer."

[They laugh.]

And I don't blame him if he starts becoming very selective because we—so many of the artists have needed pieces for major shows, and he's just always gracious in lending a piece.

SHARON CHURCH: That's lovely. We did talk about how difficult that has become for artists who are well-placed in museums and collections, and then when their work is needed—

ELEANOR MOTY: It's difficult to get them back. Quite often, there's a cost involved. You know, this days—in recent years, many of my peers are having retrospective exhibitions—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and major books published, book catalogs with the shows, and that's been astonishing to learn that there is such a high fee for borrowing the pieces from museums, but more than that, the security is a big issue. They don't want the pieces in a place that doesn't have 24-hour guarding, et cetera, so they can't go to smaller venues, and the other thing that was really distressing recently is that, for instance, the show *Multiple Exposure*—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —at the Museum of Art and Design, unfortunately, my photo pieces were in a case with tintypes that needed diminished light because they were borrowed from Boston [Musuem of Art –EM], Bob Ebendorf's pieces from the Daphne Farago Collection, and they had to be under dim light, and all the rest of us were in the dark, and my pieces need to be in the light. So, it was really frustrating to see that my pieces were not visible. You really didn't know what you were looking at because it was so dim in that whole bank of cases.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, even in the Museum of Art and Design, it sounds like there is not a complete understanding of what each piece requires.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, part of the difficulty in that situation is how do they set up a separate case —

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —for that piece, and they don't have that kind of capacity, so it was happenstance. I just happened to be unlucky enough to be in the case with that piece. It wasn't something that they purposefully did. They were really trying to follow the edict of the Boston Museum, and, of course, they don't want to lose the life of that daguerreotype image in that piece of Ebendorf's, so, you know, but it was very disappointing to see [laughs]—

SHARON CHURCH: An interesting problem.

ELEANOR MOTY: That show is so long in the works, and then my pieces aren't even visible.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: This is Sharon Church, interviewing Eleanor Moty, in Tucson, AZ, on Thursday, November 20, 2014. This is a time when I'm going to ask Eleanor to imagine a little bit about the future and to answer some questions about that. Eleanor, do you foresee a change in your work?

ELEANOR MOTY: It's not something that I really focus on. I think that the changes that have occurred in my work, aside from the departure from photo-etching and electroforming, have been really subtle and so many people didn't even recognize them. I mean, really, unless people have [been –EM] watching and been close to it. So, I think if there's a change, I think it's going to be subtle. I can't imagine that I'm really going to turn a corner and do something drastically different, but one doesn't know. I respond to what I find at the gem show, because I'm still using stones. I don't think I'm going to move away from using stones because I find them so fascinating and they really are my inspiration. It could happen, but I don't know that.

SHARON CHURCH: They've been a part of your work from the beginning.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, absolutely, because it's the land, you know. The stones come from the earth. One thing that I do have in the future that do want to deal with is to publish a book about my work, but it's not going to be a—a book alone. It's got to be in combination with, perhaps, a retrospective exhibition—

SHARON CHURCH: Great.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because I think, otherwise, it's just a vanity book, which is, looked down upon and means nothing, but I think if it was a book in combination as a catalog as Jamie—as Jamie Bennett has done, as Gary Noffke has done, as Mary Hu has done, they're absolutely, stunningly beautiful, and they really mean a lot because it represents that exhibition that very few people in actuality get to see, but the book catalog allows in perpetuity—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —to be seen as a grouping of work, so that's really going to be a major project, and it's going to—I know how I am. I am going to obsess over it. Just the thought of it makes me anxious, but I will really have to think about the writers. The photography will be my responsibility, and I know that I can control and handle that. And I have already in anticipation of this, pulled together quite a lot of my work from collections and individuals to re-photograph because the slides are just, you know, they've turned—well, slide film is not archival so that the slides go bad, the light changes. We don't even know how digital photographs—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —how archival they will be. I mean, that's still up into the air as to photographers and technicians with that regard. But, in any case, I hope to have a good body of work and imagery available when I'm ready to do this, but then [selecting –EM] the essayists will be a major challenge, as well.

SHARON CHURCH: That aside, you seem remarkably prepared to look back over your work because you have all the drawings, you have been good about recording everything, you have notes, you have taken photographs of the front and the back and the sides—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Laughs.] [Yes –EM], true.

SHARON CHURCH: —and, so, the selection of authors and the development of theories that you espouse, that is something that remains.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, and I've also had some "trial runs," you might say because the catalog that we did for the Chazen Museum show that Fred and I and our select group of grads had at University of Wisconsin in 2006. I mean, that was pulling back a lot—quite a bit in time. And then certainly, the Metal Museum, the retrospective that I had there—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —as part of the *Master Metalsmith* series, that went back in time, and Marjorie Simon did a great job of doing the essay for that, which followed the article she had done for *Metalsmith*, so it was a natural blending there, but this may take a different turn. And I was so impressed with Mary Hu's book, in that she wrote little asides about some of the pieces and storylines and drawings that were just wonderful.

SHARON CHURCH: And she had instructions.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes. Wasn't that fabulous?

SHARON CHURCH: Well, it makes it a very useful book.

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely. I mean, it was not just a vanity book. It was really [laughs], really usable—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. I agree.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and in my show in Memphis, I had seen Fred Fenster's show the previous year. He was *Master Metalsmith* the year before I was, and I thought, "Wow. There's all this wall space. We're taking up the whole museum, and these walls are empty, but the cases are in the middle of the room," so, for my show, I really wanted to include my drawings, and I had that in mind as a teaching [exhibition –EM] because the whole museum's premise is a teaching museum. So I was really fortunate in that the curator at the time, Joel Parsons said, "You know, I'd really like to make this a teaching display," and I said, "[Yes –EM] we're on the same wavelength. That is exactly what I want to do." So, I framed—oh, I think I did about 30 framed pages of my sketchbooks, which would mean, maybe, 20 images on a page in many cases. And it was my intention to have the drawings of pieces that were in the show, which I did.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: So that a person could reference and see the piece and then go, "Oh, she came from there to get to there." And the other thing that we did, we included my video that Michael had helped me make for the Chazen show, which talked about how I designed my pieces. It's a 20-minute video, and that was on a constant loop. It was very interesting to see how it was, really, being used. I mean, I watched people sit there, and they weren't just metalsmiths. They were travelers coming from wherever they lived, going to Nashville via Memphis, and it was raining, so "Where should we go?" "Let's go to the Metal Museum. This sounds [interesting –EM]." So, there they were, and they were watching the video, as well, and then they saw me [passing by –EM] and they said, "You're the person in the video." And we struck up a conversation, and they said, "We know nothing about any of this. And this was fascinating, seeing this museum and the collection that's here and having an insight into how an artist works," and I thought, "Wow, this was good. We hit the mark on this."

And the other thing we did at that museum was to have stones. I sent them crystals, and I sent them slabs of stones, and I sent them cut stones, and I sent Xeroxes of my stones, so they had a display of the materials that I use—

SHARON CHURCH: That's wonderful.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and, as well, they had, a little library of materials, books, magazines, that [included –EM] my work, and catalogs, magazine articles, et cetera. So it was really a cohesive presentation. Plus, they grouped my work with story panels, room to room. I had been so impressed with how the Chazen Museum in Madison had displayed our—Fred's and my work and our graduate students'. They had a blue violet wall that was just luscious when you came into this big gallery, and they used a silk cloth, that was creamy white, a soft white which showed off the work splendidly. It was wrapped around stands and displays, and my work was actually on Plexi stands—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So that my pieces could be seen in the round, and light came through the stones. So, we used the same format at the Metal Museum. Carissa [Hussong], the director, was so wonderful in accommodating what I wanted to do and to make the show my show. So I got the color chip sample from the installation people at the Chazen, and I got a swatch of the fabric and sent it to the Metal Museum. I sent them my upright Plexiglas, so they'd know to have those fabricated, and so, when you walked into the Metal Museum, the first wall was that blue violet. God, it was gorgeous, and then there was, I think a piece on a display, a flat display, and to your right, as you looked into the first showroom, my *Portrait Mirror*, which is a very significant piece, was front and center in a freestanding case on display, beautifully lit, so the whole thing was like this beacon coming in, and you could see the photo image on the front if it, just right there. You knew it was something you needed to look at.

SHARON CHURCH: And it's a picture of you as a little girl?

ELEANOR MOTY: It is a picture of me as a little girl. So, they did follow through in finding a similar fabric, you know, that was a nice, light, creamy color—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —so that we had light, and they the Plexiglas pieces, and they mounted the [brooches –EM] on Plexiglas. People really were taking advantage [of –EM] taking a look at the backs of my pieces and looking around them. And what was also so funny is that when you are a Master Metalsmith, you are to attend "repair days," which is usually the first weekend in October, and what was wonderful for me is that it was a reunion of friends. Richard Mawdsley is there. Richard Prillaman is there. Elliot Pujol is there. Mary Hu and Jim Wallace. and it was hilarious hearing Mary and Richard Mawdsley after they had gone through my show, they said, "We were just laughing, and kind of nudging each other, as we'd see your work back in time and say, 'I remember when she was doing that because she would talk about working on that one'," and it just made me smile. It made me so happy that my friends were there to celebrate with me—

SHARON CHURCH: That's that community—

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely.

SHARON CHURCH: —that you grew up in—

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely.

SHARON CHURCH: —as an artist.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you know, they hadn't seen my current work, and they really had lost the transition because, as I said, when we're together, and I see Mary regularly, we don't [necessarily –EM] talk about our work.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And my work hasn't been in that many shows, like, SNAG shows that a lot of people see, so you have that blank of time where you're kind of in limbo. I hadn't had magazine coverage, either, so they were intrigued to see that range of my work, and they were very sensitive to it because they've known me for 30 and more years. So, it was really a thrill doing that show. I think that what's planned in the future, and what falls in place in the future, I hope will be that enriching. The one thing is that as years move on, you just don't know who's going to be seeing it.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Who's going to be here to write about me because, right now, it'd be ideal to have people write who know me.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that it is hard to talk about the future and easier to talk about the past. At the same time, your future brings the past forward.

ELEANOR MOTY: Isn't that so?

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, I wonder if you're interested in investigating new technologies for your work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I am fascinated by what's being done with computer-generated imagery and CAD/CAM and [3D printing –EM].

[...–EM]

ELEANOR MOTY: I find it interesting, but it bothers me that it's all white. Right now, that's considered the finished product, and I don't want it to be.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, with the sintering in metal, are you excited that some of the machining can actually occur in metal?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, that's pretty amazing. Richard Mawdsley is definitely doing that.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: But it doesn't fit me at all.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] You like the—

ELEANOR MOTY: I admire the people who do it. I'm not in the least bit interested in doing it. I think that it's slow in people pushing it beyond what it does. But on the other hand, to use it in the medical field to make hip sockets and so on—

SHARON CHURCH: It's amazing.

ELEANOR MOTY: Totally amazing, and so much of it is used scientifically in a very important way, but I think that, as seen on TV, little machines that you can make keychains [with–EM], "yuck."

SHARON CHURCH: It seems to be leading to something else, but you are really interested in something else—

ELEANOR MOTY: I still, yeah—

SHARON CHURCH: —the hand—

ELEANOR MOTY: —and we're part of a dying breed. I think that we're the dinosaurs, Sharon. I'm seeing programs moving further and further away from that, from hands-on, and I'm really glad not to have to be involved in that aspect of teaching any longer. Fred and I really, were hands-on people.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: It would really be difficult for me to be teaching now because that's what students need to get into industry, and—

SHARON CHURCH: Well, they need it to get a job—

ELEANOR MOTY: That's exactly right.

SHARON CHURCH: —to fit into the world.

ELEANOR MOTY: We really did make an attempt throughout our teaching to, you know, be able to teach things that would viable, to pull out a design and follow through with your aesthetic—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —but now it's a different situation with some of that technology used in place of the hand techniques.

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: So, it doesn't fit me.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you've defined technology as different from process, and I think you think of technology—correct me if I'm wrong—about something that's new, that's leading to the future. It might be connected to the computer, and that the processes that you employ are largely rooted in —

ELEANOR MOTY: Tradition.

SHARON CHURCH: —tradition.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], because I don't think of niello as technology. That's just traditional technique. I think electroforming is technology, the photo etching I did was technology, sintering and vacuumforming and vapor deposition—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and certainly what's being done with computer is technology. Even chemical milling and milling, that's technological stuff. What's possible for me to do on the computer in terms of record-keeping and archival things and correspondence, and the way that you can do research, is phenomenal.

SHARON CHURCH: We're sitting in your office today, and we have two gigantic computers with fabulous screen-savers, and clearly you are using this to great advantage.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, gosh. Absolutely. Especially looking forward to the idea of doing a book, I have so much already on the computer that will be of [help –EM] to me in doing that.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: But I think that the whole aspect of research and getting information is amazing. [When –EM] I taught in 2001, [cell –EM] phones and research on [via the cell phone –EM] wasn't

really possible.

SHARON CHURCH: No.

ELEANOR MOTY: And now, Pete Jagoda is still teaching, and he said, "You know, I will struggle with a name," and I'm saying, I have to remember to bring in slides of so-and-so's work," and he said, "Before I finished the sentence—

SHARON CHURCH: They've got it.

ELEANOR MOTY: —they've got the [cell –EM] phone, and they're saying, "You mean this work?" and he said, "The first time it happened, I was kind of just reeling back," and I thought, "Yeah, that is amazing." If you can't figure out [how –EM] to open a tool, you know, you've got a craftsman mat knife that's kind of space age, and you're saying, "How do I change the blades of this?" and you're trying to figure it out, and you can't find the way, we just go to the computer—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —and you put in the model number, blink, it's right there.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Or how to clean a pearl, or how to take the paint off the back of a rhinestone.

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.] Off a rhinestone.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, anything like that is right there. Getting a phone number. Who uses a phone book anymore?

SHARON CHURCH: No. I think you're correct, and my own interests fall along with yours. I think technology's wonderful, but I like the warmth that the hand gives work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, no one else can do what we do.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Oh—

ELEANOR MOTY: A lot of people can do what a computer can do—

SHARON CHURCH: Can—maybe that's something to talk about. I remember, I think it was Myra Mimplitsch-Gray, who said, "Why would I want to make anything that I do look or be easy?"

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, good point.

SHARON CHURCH: Because we do struggle to acquire the skills that we have, and we're proud of them.

ELEANOR MOTY: Right. Right.

SHARON CHURCH: That's back to that empowerment.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, each time we lose one of our heroes or friends—you know, when John Paul Miller passed on, I thought, "Oh, you know, just think of all that skill, that artistic development, that person who's gone." In the end they always say "it's like losing a library each time a person passes

on."

SHARON CHURCH: That's right.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, all that information is gone.

SHARON CHURCH: Forever.

ELEANOR MOTY: You can leave behind books and things like that, but it's not the same. So, I think that, that's what makes us so unique in doing things by hand, and hand work has had a bad reputation. I think this whole idea of quote-unquote crafting has brought a bad reputation to what we do. But if there really is skill involved and it's bringing out your personality, I guess that's fine.

SHARON CHURCH: One of the things I wanted to say that you reminded me of when you were talking about the crystals is that I think some of those crystals are cut in a way that evidences technological development.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm. [Affirmative.] Interesting.

SHARON CHURCH: And that allows us to maybe see into them even better.

ELEANOR MOTY: Are you talking about the Munsteiner stones?

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, I am.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, they're still doing the one-offs by hand although they have purchased a machine that cuts and replicates when they're doing mosaics and things like that to incredible tolerance. But the pieces that I'm buying are done in the traditional way.

SHARON CHURCH: Done by hand.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], also on the stones.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's an important thing to say because I did not know that.

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: They do not replicate the stones. I mean, each one is different material and usually a different size. I don't know that they have—that you can get repeats of stones. Maybe a gem—

SHARON CHURCH: I'm not thinking of it as a repetitive thing, but I'm thinking about some of those tiny cuts on the back of the stones—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, the zig-zags.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes, that you can see beautifully from the front.

ELEANOR MOTY: Mm. [Affirmative.] Yes, that's hand-cut.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay.

ELEANOR MOTY: If I'm working on it, and I'm looking at them very intimately and closely, and I can see that erratic angle, not parallel.

SHARON CHURCH: Not parallel.

ELEANOR MOTY: They're a little bit erratic, which appeals to me—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —because that means it's hand-cut, and it's the touch of the maker, and that I use in my own—when I translate those little zig-zags across the back, I use the same intent in repeating them.

SHARON CHURCH: When we're looking for the touch of the maker, we're looking for individuality—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: —character.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: And so, is there some need in you to resist the kind of universalism that is contained within this computer technology?

ELEANOR MOTY: And not only the computer technology. I steer away from simple faceted stones as a major piece. You know, this brings to mind, as well, getting back to the Munsteiner stones, one of the first years that Bernd Munsteiner's stones were being sold at the gem show. The following year, he came back, and low and behold, the Chinese had replicated his cuts, and you could go to those booths, and it was like a folio

with plastic pages that coins are put into, so it was page after page: Citrine, amethyst, aquamarine —

SHARON CHURCH: Same cuts?

ELEANOR MOTY: —topaz. All the same shape and the same cut, and it was just disgusting because you looked at them, you knew these were not Munsteiners because they didn't have that care and that extra touch and the perfection, and then they were all the same. You know, they had zig-zags across the back—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —but they were all the same shapes, so that if you were a manufacturer, and you were making pendants, you could make 800 pendants with that.

SHARON CHURCH: And pop those stones in.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: So, you're resisting that commonality.

ELEANOR MOTY: Absolutely. I think so much of what we see is that.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: Do you remember when you used to order a car?

SHARON CHURCH: I was just thinking that.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you ordered the interior and the color—

SHARON CHURCH: Colors, right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —the combinations, and you had to wait six weeks—

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —or more for it to be made. And now, you take what you get, what's on the lot.
[Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: People don't even understand when you talk about that time.

ELEANOR MOTY: No, it seems silly. Like, "Why would you do that?"

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: And you had to pay extra if you wanted air conditioning or whatever it was.
[Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: No, I—

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, everything is just really regimented for manufacture.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: There's a sameness.

SHARON CHURCH: And so, your—your position is to stay true to yourself and put yourself into your work and have that be emblematic of your—who you are.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], the last of the dying breed.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah, well, maybe not. I think that when we're thinking about the future, there will always be those renegades.

ELEANOR MOTY: I think so, too. I think that's what an artist is, typically, a renegade.

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, an artist is a non-conformist.

SHARON CHURCH: That's right. So that's what you're talking about?

ELEANOR MOTY: Truly, and I don't feel the need to—I don't feel the pressure, I don't feel the need to [switch –EM] to different techniques or technology.

SHARON CHURCH: You want—you feel you have developed your vocabulary, an identity through

your work—

ELEANOR MOTY: True, and I hope to have—[yes –EM], that's important, Sharon, because I have always attempted to have an identity that people look at a piece and they say, "Oh, that's an Eleanor Moty."

SHARON CHURCH: It couldn't be anybody else.

ELEANOR MOTY: I mean, isn't that why we do it as artists? I mean, we really do intend for our name to go with the design. It's part of the importance of the work.

SHARON CHURCH: Is that why you do everything? Just about everything?

[Cross talk.]

ELEANOR MOTY: No, I do everything because I know I can do it better than I've been able to get it done so far.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that there's also—it's hard for me to have an assistant—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: —because I want to do the carving and the discovering that goes along with the struggle.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. And sometimes, it takes more time to teach the assistant or direct the assistant than you can do it yourself.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, they have to depend on you.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's it a different mindset, isn't it, Sharon—

SHARON CHURCH: Yes.

ELEANOR MOTY: —to be able to do that? And I admire the people. I mean, they're very smart to have assistants because it saves them, especially from the tedium. But I don't—I mean, I would love to have someone who can clean my pieces for me—

SHARON CHURCH: [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: —because that's the worst, but I don't know that I would wish that on anyone else. [Laughs.]

SHARON CHURCH: Well, and they might put little digs and grooves into your pieces—

ELEANOR MOTY: And then they'd say, "Oh, I think I can do this better on the flex shaft," and then really put digs into it.

SHARON CHURCH: Right. [Laughs.]

ELEANOR MOTY: It's sort of like the—the beginning student, who, you know, you're saying, "Okay, you've got this cylindrical box, and now you're going to cut it in the middle to put the flange in so it's a friction fit, and you're going to use the saw and work all the way around it." And then, you go away

and they're working alone, and they say, "Ah, I'm just going to put it through the band saw," and you come back to this collapsed piece, and your heart is thumping because you're saying, "Thank god they didn't cut their fingers off."

SHARON CHURCH: Right. Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: Right? Anyhow, there you are, because the band saw collapses the piece, and it's such a dangerous thing, but somehow it didn't occur to you that maybe they would do that, to tell them not to.

SHARON CHURCH: So, you're talking about two, kind of, different things. In your role as teacher, you feel a need to prepare students to fit in.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes, though I don't know about "fit in."

SHARON CHURCH: No?

ELEANOR MOTY: No. Not helping fit in.

SHARON CHURCH: Are you teaching artists?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. So then you are teaching them to find their personal voice.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's right.

SHARON CHURCH: And you're leading by example?

ELEANOR MOTY: Yes.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay. So looking back, what advice would you give to that student now who wants to make things in metal?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I'm so far removed from teaching, having been away from it since 2001, that the student personality is different. It's hard for me to place myself in the mindset of today's student because they are so involved with technology.

SHARON CHURCH: Mm-hmm [Affirmative.] Yes, they grow up on it.

ELEANOR MOTY: iPhones, they have blogs, FaceTime, YouTube, all of that. So, I don't think I'm good at giving them advice, but I would say it's—whatever direction you intend to take, try to gather as much information as you can. Be the Renaissance person even if you [don't –EM] think that you're going to need that information, like maybe machining or doing casting, at least have some sense of it because you never know when you're going to have a commission or whatever to have to put that information together. And that was how I learned in order to teach, but I think that it's necessary not just to teach. I think that you really need to gain that information or have the resource to know where to get that information so that you have this broad base of factual image and experience. Always be open to that, and also take advantage of presentations, lecturers, exhibitions. Don't say, "Oh, no, I have to study for exam. I don't want to go to that lecture." Try to find a way to get to the lecture. How many times have we badgered students to get to what we know was going to be a mind-bending presentation? Take advantage of so many of those outside

activities—

SHARON CHURCH: Right.

ELEANOR MOTY: —that are offered to students in college or university or art school. And, also, um, really get to know who your friends are, your colleagues, your working companions. Get to know your faculty so that when it's time to get a letter of recommendation, you're not up in the air. You've made one-on-one contact with faculty to have some reference so that they can write a letter for you. Be conscientious in thanking them. You will be remembered if you actually send them a note, or even if it's an email, and say, "Thank you for doing that for me, and taking the time, and I really appreciate your help." Stay in touch with your colleagues, too, because those are your opportunities for the future to have shows, or be included in events.

SHARON CHURCH: So it comes back to interpersonal relationships.

ELEANOR MOTY: I think it's important. Do not think that you are going to be working solitary. Really stay connected, and really help one another.

SHARON CHURCH: I so think that this field, jewelry specifically, is a very intimate, personal art form.

ELEANOR MOTY: One of the things that my students often said, especially the undergrads coming in as beginners, they said, "It is such a pleasure coming into this studio because everyone is so helpful and friendly, and we don't have that in any other studio course."

SHARON CHURCH: Interesting.

ELEANOR MOTY: You know, the advanced students oversee the shop. Even though they're not paid, they're always watchful. If they see a beginner when professors are not there, struggling or doing something wrong, they step in and say, "Don't do that," or "here's how to do it." Or they will help the person. They were always very generous, and that was an attitude that Fred expected our people to have, and we also expected them to all pull together in cleaning the studio and maintaining it—

SHARON CHURCH: [Yes –EM].

ELEANOR MOTY: —watching out for things.

SHARON CHURCH: Again, community.

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: Shifting a little bit to your own art, what do you think has been your greatest contribution as an artist to the field?

ELEANOR MOTY: Probably the students that I've developed and guided.

SHARON CHURCH: So that's in the teaching realm, but what about your art?

ELEANOR MOTY: My own work? I think that work that I did, especially in photo etching, was really important.

SHARON CHURCH: It was.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because it became production work for people. You could now mass produce things and have things photo-chemically milled. A lot of people followed from that, so I think that was probably the most important aspect of my work.

SHARON CHURCH: How about in the world of art? You know, "Eleanor Moty is unique because"—

ELEANOR MOTY: As I say, I just haven't ever put myself in the world of art. I've just always seen myself in this small circle, this small realm. Occasionally, people say, "Well, you sound like someone famous," and I said, "Only"—and I think it was Arline who said this—"Only among a small circle of friends," and that's how I think of myself. I don't know of myself in that realm of art.

SHARON CHURCH: But, like, I can understand that because the work is small, it's intimate—

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM].

SHARON CHURCH: —it doesn't get out too much, but—

ELEANOR MOTY: It's not seen in the big realm. It's seen in a very limited audience.

SHARON CHURCH: Well, when we walk through museums, we see very important works of jewelry as exemplary of their time and their culture, and I think that your work, also, represents a certain time and a certain culture. Certainly, we can compare it to the Steven Holl architecture, so I think it would be very like you to push this off, but I'm going to make you stay on this. Your work has its role, its position, within the panoply of art.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, I think of my work as being architectonic, and it's—it has a presence that could be a big presence even though it's intimate. In other words, the images, the proportions, the surfaces could translate big.

[END OF TRACK.]

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, this is Sharon Church again, and I'm talking with Eleanor Moty about her work and about how it has a position within the panoply of art today.

ELEANOR MOTY: I think it would be interesting if someday someone came across an image and just assumed it was an architectural panel on a wall. Wouldn't that be interesting, if someone didn't even think about what the materials were but saw it as an installation?

SHARON CHURCH: But what about the jewelry aspect?

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, that's a given, but I don't know—

SHARON CHURCH: People think they know what jewelry is, and they stumble on your work, and they're suddenly questioning what it might be.

ELEANOR MOTY: It takes a careful eye, though, to really look into the stone and look into the surfaces to see how complex the pieces are.

SHARON CHURCH: That's true, and yet you persist in making this work.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], because there is an audience who is willing to take the time to look. I hope that my pieces hold their strength in terms of the art world in being good compositions and just be appealing as an artistic expression.

SHARON CHURCH: Certainly—

ELEANOR MOTY: Even though they're really—we use a word again and again—quiet. They are quiet pieces, and they don't have anything to do with social commentary, political narrative, edginess, transient— they are statements, but they are really subtle statements. It's like a poem. They really are like a poem. You have to put some time into it to really get the essence of [it. –EM]

SHARON CHURCH: So there is a kind of personal musing that goes on when one looks at the work. Right now, we're living in a time of big—

ELEANOR MOTY: Yeah.

SHARON CHURCH: —and you're choosing to work small.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM], well, it's sort of like, pay attention to the details.

SHARON CHURCH: Yeah.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's really bringing the individual back to, "Hey, don't just look at this flashy car, come back in here and look at this hummingbird. Look at this nest. Look at this piece of cloth. Look at this embroidery." Whatever it might be, to come back and to pay attention to all of these fabulous things that are in your environment.

SHARON CHURCH: So not only has your work become quiet but it almost induces a kind of meditation or quiet response in the viewer.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's a good way of putting it, Sharon. We were looking at cacti yesterday, and when you have agaves, [with leaves that –EM] come off the center growth, they open up, and the pattern of the leaf is almost like roller printing on each leaf. And it's so subtle and so beautiful in this blue-grey, and those are the kinds of things you want to take notice of. That is so special, and those are the kinds of things that we emulate as artists, and they are around us every day in nature.

SHARON CHURCH: So you're about slowing us down, seeing, the pause, reflect, think about this, touch it, hold it, wear it.

ELEANOR MOTY: That's an excellent way of putting it because that really is the essence of it.

SHARON CHURCH: I think that's an important thing to do, as well, of course. So, when you think about your public, what do you see as your most important work. Of all of the things you've made, is there one piece? Is it *The Portrait Mirror*?

ELEANOR MOTY: *The Portrait Mirror*, most definitely. That's a very significant piece, and it resides in the Racine Art Museum. It was purchased by Karen Johnson Boyd soon after I made it. It was made in 1969, and it was really the culmination of a lot of things. It had a portrait of me photo-electroplated on a polished piece of silver so that you would first see your—perhaps, your own reflection in this polished silver, but then, "Oh, there's an image already there." And then, the other side of it is a regular mirror, and it's got a wood handle. And the other piece—that was the first, and *The Landscape Handbag*.

SHARON CHURCH: So, in some ways, we're talking about the same thing—

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, there's one more.

SHARON CHURCH: Okay, please.

ELEANOR MOTY: Because those are both photo pieces, but then I would say that *Columnar Brooch*.

SHARON CHURCH: And that's moving into the crystal work.

ELEANOR MOTY: Stones and the clean lines and the essence of something. The essence. So, those three pieces are really important pieces. And I've kept some others for my collection, but those do not exist in my collection.

SHARON CHURCH: I think you're seeing what you said a little bit ago about gazing at the work and then reflecting on who you are and how this work is reaching you. I'm glad that you picked the *Columnar Brooch* because that is the direction in which you are going. Again, it's very like you to not put yourself forward, but as important as the mirror and the handbag were, I think this recent work is important, as well.

ELEANOR MOTY: Well, it's—I'm enjoying it.

SHARON CHURCH: But it's more than that. It demands so much of the viewer.

ELEANOR MOTY: True.

SHARON CHURCH: It's—and it doesn't hit you over the head with technical expertise. It delivers that information very quietly.

ELEANOR MOTY: But, you know, it also demands a lot of me.

SHARON CHURCH: It's very hard to make.

ELEANOR MOTY: It's really pulling out the essence of my aesthetic, you know, down to the bare bones. It's not overdone. It's not necessarily luscious, too obnoxious, you know? Like too much? I really try to pare it down to the essence, but it's really speaking loud words in what I'm trying to say.

SHARON CHURCH: So are these brooches emblematic of who you are?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think it brings together a lot of who I am, [yes –EM] because it goes back to my whole being of—being brought up on a farm and being aware of landscape and watching the subtlety of nature. Not having the distraction of a busy social life, having a lot of serenity in my life growing up. Sometimes it wasn't so great. I mean, I really wished that I'd had access to the things my friends did, but I think that it made me who I am, and it made me more self-sufficient at an early age, and it taught me to just go after what I wanted, however I did it, on my own. Yeah, so I think that it brings it all together, and I would be interested in seeing if anyone else can do the things that I do.

SHARON CHURCH: I bet not.

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't think so.

SHARON CHURCH: So is your greatest accomplishment the fact that you've been able to distill everything into the work that you're currently involved with?

ELEANOR MOTY: I don't think it's my greatest accomplishment, but it feels like an accomplishment, not the greatest, but it feels like I've been successful in just sort of distilling all of that into these pieces.

SHARON CHURCH: What is your greatest accomplishment?

ELEANOR MOTY: I think my teaching, and, also, the friendships that I've gained. When I think back on what my—how my life started, in a rural area, and to the connections that I've made in the course of my life and the people I've encountered, I am astonished. I came from a very simple life and parents who led a simple life, and I still am comfortable with all of that, but I have to pinch myself sometimes to realize the circle of friends that I've [had –EM], and the places I've seen and the travel that I've done, it's remarkable. I'm very fortunate to have an incredible family. I look at my nieces and nephews and my grandnieces and nephews, the lives they are [developing –EM], and I think, "Man, what a good life this has been."

SHARON CHURCH: Being with you, I would say that's an accurate assessment of who you are, how much you enjoy your family and your friends. That's been a constant part of our dialogue.

ELEANOR MOTY: It comes first. Really, it does. It comes first and foremost.

SHARON CHURCH: So, people. People.

ELEANOR MOTY: [Yes –EM]. If somebody needs me, I'm there. I mean, I've been a caregiver numerous times, and everything else goes by the wayside while I'm focused on that. People are most important, and I think anyone would agree to that.

SHARON CHURCH: I don't know. I think that's part of who you are.

ELEANOR MOTY: I hope so.

SHARON CHURCH: Thank you very much, Eleanor. Is there anything you want to add to this?

ELEANOR MOTY: Oh, it's been a pleasure. I'm so pleased that you are doing this with me, Sharon.

SHARON CHURCH: It's been a treat. As I said, I've learned a great deal.

ELEANOR MOTY: Thank you.

SHARON CHURCH: Thank you. Goodbye.

[END OF TRACK.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]