



Smithsonian
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**Oral history interview with Tom Jancar, 2017
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Thomas Jancar on June 23, 2017. The interview took place at Pomona College in Claremont, CA, and was conducted by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Thomas Jancar and Hunter Drohojowska-Philp have reviewed the transcript. Their corrections and emendations appear below in brackets with initials. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Tom Jancar. It's good to get together with you here in Claremont, and this is Hunter Drohojowska-Philp interviewing Tom Jancar at an office, really a studio space, lent to us by Claremont College.

TOM JANCAR: Pomona College.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I mean Pomona College, sorry. The art department of Pomona College, in—

TOM JANCAR: Claremont, California.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —Claremont, California, on June 23rd, 2017, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, card number one. And, Tom, I've just known you for such a long time, but there are lots of details I don't know, so we'll get to some of those. And here—

TOM JANCAR: That's a list of dates, basically.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and you're so organized, and—but you're going to have to still say some of these things out loud—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, of course.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —which is, when and where were you born?

TOM JANCAR: Okay. I'm Thomas John Jancar—that's my full name—and I was born in Pasadena, California, November 9th, 1950.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what did your parents do?

TOM JANCAR: My father was a naval aviator in World War II, and he actually was highly decorated. He was aboard the *Lexington*, and he was a fighter bomber pilot, and he received two Navy Crosses and a Silver Star for sinking a carrier. And—so, he was out of the Navy by then, and he was working for the Youth Authority. California Youth Authority was where he worked.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—and what was his name?

TOM JANCAR: His name was Arnost Jancar.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: A-R-N-O-S-T?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. This is how you spell it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Ah. And your mother's name?

TOM JANCAR: My mother's name was Mildred, and her maiden name was Olson, O-L-S-O-N.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now tell me your father's background, that he had such an interesting name.

TOM JANCAR: My father—both of his parents were from the Czech Republic, and they had immigrated to America, and his father—my grandfather—had come first, and then he had sent back home for a wife. So, basically, my grandmother was a mail-order bride, and they were living in Butte, Montana, because my grandfather was a silver miner in the Anaconda Silver Mine in Butte, Montana. So, it was like, really, the frontier, you know, in those days, almost, so to speak. And—so, anyway, he sent—he was there for a while, and then he sent for my grandmother, and they later decided to move to the Pasadena area, because they had heard that a new racetrack was opening there, which was Santa Anita. And so, they decided to open a feed store that would supply the racehorses with feed, and other things.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: This is such an old California story. I mean, there aren't that many people, really, who have any—that makes you a third-generation Californian.

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Well, my father was actually born in—in Montana—in Butte, Montana.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Second generation.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: A lot of history there.

TOM JANCAR: —and there's a lot—you know, now there's a lot of people that have grandparents that were immigrants, but of my generation there's not a lot. So, anyway, consequently, my—both my grandmother and my grandfather were, you know, of a different world than my world. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And your father was influenced by that?

TOM JANCAR: He was influenced by that, but he was really more of an American, you know, because he had gone to school here, you know, had grown up here. Mostly he grew up in Southern California. I think that he was probably maybe six or seven years old when he left Butte, Montana.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And, you were—were either Arnost or Mildred interested in the visual arts at all, or creative?

TOM JANCAR: He—my father was not. He was actually interested in science, and he had gone to Whittier College and he had studied entomology, but he decided not to do that because it wasn't very practical. He needed to earn a living. And my mother, though, was a—she had come to Pasadena from Nebraska, and she was born in a small town in northeastern Nebraska called Maskell, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Could you spell it?

TOM JANCAR: M-A-S-K-E-L-L. And it's very small, it has maybe only 50 inhabitants today, and didn't—maybe in the time she lived there it might have had 150, and they were all Scandinavians. It was a really closed, tight-knit community. They were not allowed to go visit the Irish or anybody else. They were all on their—they were farmers, and my [mother's –T J] grandfather was—his name was Axel Olson, and he was an immigrant from Sweden, and he had—he had come during the times when you could get land for free, you know, during the 1860s. And so, he had come there when it was the prairie, basically. And anyway, so, my mother had left home when she was about 18 or 19 years old, because the Depression had come, and it—they couldn't feed all of the children, basically. And so, she volunteered to leave home, and she went with a friend to Chicago. And so, they started to study culture more, and my mother did become very interested in the arts. And, she then had left Chicago because she had heard in San Marino there was lots of opportunities for au pairs, and so she became one. And so, that's how she got—became associated with the Pasadena area. Anyway, so consequently, she used to go to other kinds of, like, cultural events. She would go to the—what was then the Pasadena Art Museum, you know, which was in what—I think what we now know as the building that was the Pacific Asia Cultural Museum. So, anyway—so, she became a Sunday painter, and consequently, because of that—I don't know if this is skipping ahead too much, but when I was probably, like, in middle school, we used to go to the Art Walks on La Cienega. And so, I was exposed to, like, people, you know, that I had not known before, like Feitelson and people like that, and Helen Lundeberg. And they would be at the gallery and you could talk to them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That would be Lorser Feitelson?

TOM JANCAR: Lorser Feitelson, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And Helen Lundeberg.

TOM JANCAR: Helen Lundeberg. And also, my dad's brother—my dad had a younger brother, two years younger than him—became a high school art teacher, and was very interested in art, and he consequently had an influence on me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what was his name?

TOM JANCAR: His name was John Jancar. And oddly, one of the people that I showed, Judith Linhares, actually, was a student of his in the 1950s at [. . . Mira Costa –T J] High School [in Manhattan Beach, California –T J], where he taught.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Amazing, right?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, it was amazing, because she said you got the same name, but, you know, it's a really weird name.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Just to back up before middle school, because I think it's important. Do you have siblings?

TOM JANCAR: Yes. I have a sister. She's two-and-a-half years younger than myself. She's a clinical nurse, and she lives in Mill Valley.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what is her name?

TOM JANCAR: Nancy Jancar.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And other siblings?

TOM JANCAR: No, that's it. Just one.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—sorry—she's two-and-a-half years younger?

TOM JANCAR: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you—you were born in Pasadena. Where did you go to school?

TOM JANCAR: Well, I went to—went to elementary school, my first elementary school, in Altadena. We lived in Altadena, and then after that we moved to La Habra.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And I should ask you the name of that school.

TOM JANCAR: Arthur Noyes Elementary School. And I won't remember all these schools that—[laughs]—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And then after that, you went to—

TOM JANCAR: After that we moved to La Habra, California, and there I spent—well, I have it written down here—I spent seven years there. It was from 1956 to 1963. And I—so, I went mostly to elementary school in La Habra.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And do you remember that one?

TOM JANCAR: El Cerrito, I believe, was the name of it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And then we get into the big leagues. Then you moved to Costa Mesa.

TOM JANCAR: Then we moved to Costa Mesa in 1963, and I went to junior high and high school in Costa Mesa.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: 1963 to 1969, and Costa Mesa. And where did you go to junior high?

TOM JANCAR: I went to junior high at a really odd-named high—junior high school. It was called Tewinkle Junior High School.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How do you spell it?

TOM JANCAR: T-E-W-I-N-K-L-E.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] That's a great name, you're right.

TOM JANCAR: Tewinkle Junior High. Apparently, that was the name of some important founder of Costa Mesa.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Aha. And then what high school did you go to?

TOM JANCAR: I went to Estancia High School. E-S-T-A-N-C-I-A. In Costa Mesa.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now here—now, just to—before we quite get to the high school time. As you're going through elementary school in Altadena and then La Habra, are you—did you have any interest in the visual arts, or creativity?

TOM JANCAR: I don't know if I could say it, per se—my dad and I would build things in the garage—do things like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Like what?

TOM JANCAR: We would build things for the house. You know, little, you know, home projects that would have to do with, like, furnishings, or, like, repair of the house—things like that. So, my dad was greatly into building stuff, you know? He wasn't a contractor, but he was very knowledgeable, and so we had always built things, so I—I attribute some of that to making art. We didn't have art classes per se, you know, in school, that I remember. I remember watching other kids draw and thinking, gosh, they can really draw and I can't. Like, how come? What's the difference, you know? And most of us had had no lessons formally or anything like that, so, I think more it developed when we started to attend exhibitions in L.A. and Pasadena area with my mother, and that was probably more at the time of junior high and late elementary school. I remember going to the Pasadena Art Museum when it first opened.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How old—well, let's see, how—

TOM JANCAR: I don't remember that year.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How old would—do you think you were?

TOM JANCAR: I was probably in junior high, I would think. It's—I remember seeing the Bauhaus show there, and that was my first exposure to the Bauhaus. I had never heard of the Bauhaus before that. And then we would go to the County Museum of Art, and I remember also we would go to the County Museum of Art when it was in the building in Exposition Park, when the art was just sort of mixed in with the minerals, and the fossils, and stuff like that. So, that all became kind of part of the art experience for me. And then we would travel some places. We would go to San Francisco and see some things.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, do you remember—actually, the—when the County Museum—L.A. County Museum of—I think it's History, Science, and Art at that time—they're a—they had a lot of memorable exhibitions—could—at that time. I mean, they had your exhibitions of some European artists and some modern artists.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you remember any of those?

TOM JANCAR: No, but in later years I remember reading about them, because I—later on—and not to jump ahead, but I started to study the history of photography in Los Angeles, you know, in detail, and I went around and would record interviews with people who were Pictorialist photographers. And this was about the time that Dennis Reed was doing the same thing, and that's about the time I met Dennis. And so, at that time I came to realize that, yes, as you said, all of these important exhibitions had taken place there, but they were always kind of wrapped up in the—the general museum environment. They weren't isolated as modern art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, no, no, they were—it was—they were trying to get past

that somehow. But, back to you in high school. So, here you are in this—I mean, Costa Mesa in the 1960s was probably a pretty dreamy time and place to go to high school.

TOM JANCAR: Well, it was actually a really interesting experience, because we had moved there from La Habra, and La Habra had some hills behind it, and so as a kid I would hike in the hills up there with my friends. And in those days, nobody was afraid about their children, pretty much, and we could be gone for four or five hours, you know, just doing our own thing. But when I moved to Costa Mesa, it was, like, a shock. There was, like, no hills, except you could see Saddleback Mountain in the distance. But the great substitute was the beach, and so, consequently I became a surfer and all that stuff, you know, that surrounded the beach. I got a sailboat, and—so, there was a lot of activity that was about the beach. But it was still a pretty isolated, small place. This was before South Coast Plaza was built, and I believe the 405 Freeway was being developed, and it ended right at Harbor Boulevard. And so, we would ride our bicycles on the freeway, actually, when it was under construction.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: But there weren't as many people there then, and there was a lot of farms that surrounded it. And—but I do remember back in elementary school, to—and I think this has to do with art—is, I remember being on the playground in elementary school, and a kid had a transistor radio. And my cousins, who had—who lived in San Gabriel, were kind of vaguely into folk music and stuff like that, and so I was kind of getting into that and understanding that. But this kid had the transistor radio, right? And on the transistor radio comes on "Surfin' USA" by the Beach Boys. Now, this is before the Beatles, and so, it—to me, that was like the click of modernism. You know? It was kind of like, wow, this stuff is really different. It's really changing stuff, and it's really going to make a big difference, you know? And so, that I do remember as a defining point, if you could call that art. I guess you would.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it's also—it's—here it is—it's exactly about where you lived.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. It's about where I lived and where I moved to, sort of, and—and I actually believe that music actually precedes art—you know, visual arts—you know, in its development. I've seen it happen over and over again, and I've seen music always be the forerunner. And so, I believe that that was an important moment for me, because it made things seem like they were modern. Before that it was always kind of—everything was the same old world, you know, that was, like—that was my parents' world.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I understand that. And, it sounds like your parents at this point had become, if not prosperous, comfortable?

TOM JANCAR: They were middle class. My mother did not work. My dad did not want her to work, which was kind of old-fashioned, and he probably should have let her work. And so—but she was, you know, a homemaker, and that's probably why she took up painting. And she was actually a very good colorist, and a very good abstract painter, and—but she would dabble in different styles, so it was always very interesting because, like, one moment we would have Symbolist paintings in the house, next minute we would have Abstract Expressionist paintings, or even figurative paintings, sometimes. So, I think she never really quite understood what her—her vision was, but she was very facile. So, it made me appreciate painting and the quality of it. And I do believe that was a big influence.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And did you ever paint with her?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, I think she would do, like, little painting things for me and my sister. Set up little watercolor things, you know. But—I never really felt like I was that interested in art, and even all through high school I got guitars, the whole thing, right, and had bands, and all that in high school. And so that was—again, music was still more interesting to me than art, even though I was starting to understand the art world more because I had attended these exhibitions, you know. And, so, that helped me understand the bigger picture.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you were—what kind of music were you playing?

TOM JANCAR: I was playing rock music, basically influenced by, you know, much of the rock music of the '60s, like, especially, with the emergence of Cream. And that kind of era. I mean, I attended concerts, I saw all those people. I saw the Animals, I saw, you know, the Beatles, I saw Cream, you know. I saw many bands. And then there was a little venue down in Huntington Beach that we used to go to called the Golden Bear, which was sort of like the Troubadour, and a lot of bands would play there. You know, I would see The Byrds there probably every month. And so, it was—so, I had a great exposure to that stuff, and then, meanwhile—you know, consequently, meanwhile, I was becoming more and more aware of the art world. But, so, the music world was just dominant, you know, and that was—and it was part of pop culture, whereas the art world was sort of this high culture thing that I was only just getting exposed to. And when I went to high school, we were classified as either college prep or not by testing, and I was considered to be college prep, so we were not allowed to take art classes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: So, we had to take serious classes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's funny.

TOM JANCAR: And I don't even know—I think at my high school it probably wasn't much of an art program. I—you know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What were you supposed to be prepping for, then, when you went to college?

TOM JANCAR: That's a good question. I think we were supposed to just be prepping for liberal arts college, you know, because there was no specific emphasis that I remember. And actually I wanted to get out of high school as fast as possible, and so I did graduate half a year early.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And why did you want to get out?

TOM JANCAR: I didn't like the environment. The high school was a brand-new high school. It was the first high school in our area that had an open architecture, where the rooms did not have doors and you could hear everything that was going on, and it seemed very prison-like. And then, when I graduated, I was very happy to go to college. I was—I was actually—I actually thought I really hated school, and then once I got to college it was a whole other world. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, great. And where did you first go to college?

TOM JANCAR: I went to UC Irvine and to Orange Coast College.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: At the same time?

TOM JANCAR: At the same time, because Orange Coast College was only maybe a mile away, and I could take classes virtually for free, and they had great programs. And I did take my first art history class at Orange Coast College, and it was—it was really a big influence on me. Huge.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And who took—who taught that?

TOM JANCAR: Tom Garver.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, Tom Garver.

TOM JANCAR: And I had never had a class from anybody that was, like, a professional like that, you know? They had always just been teachers. Teacher-teachers, right? And this—he was the director of the Newport Harbor Art Museum at that time, and this was like—people were struggling in the class. Like, you know, they couldn't do it, they couldn't remember things. And everything, I could remember, and it was like—to me, it was like this new opportunity, where, wow, I can really do all this really easily. You know? So—and—and also, he was really interesting, you know, so that was—that was a big influence. And so, I do think that was a big turning point for me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, he was also a modernist, right?

TOM JANCAR: He was a modernist, yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, he wasn't—he wasn't in—he must have been teaching you about a newer kind of art.

TOM JANCAR: Right, right, he was. And also, my interest in photography was growing at that time, and Orange Coast College had a photography department which was headed by John Upton.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: John Upton?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, John Upton. And they had lots of money, it seemed as though, because the facilities were really great, and also they had initiated a film program where I started to take filmmaking classes. And we would have a lot of guest lecturers, too, of people, like, now, that—you know, that are famous. You know, like—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Such as?

TOM JANCAR: Like Robert Frank, you know, and—Shulman, Julius Shulman. I can't remember all of them. There was a lot of them, and it was sort of normal, and they were not considered—they—I mean, I would read about their stuff in books, but I—but they really weren't famous in the sense of notoriety, and also financial success.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative], yeah. No, not for a long time.

TOM JANCAR: Not for a long time. Yeah, photography was really considered a second-rate art at that time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But you understood it as art?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, I did, I think, you know, and I grew to understand it as art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And—

TOM JANCAR: Because of my interest, also, in art history, I sort of started to do something that I think really did help me a lot in studying art history, is—I would go to the library a lot, and I would just read about stuff. I would just study stuff on my own. Had nothing to do with what I was told to study. And I did that all the way through college, and so I actually learned a lot about other disciplines, like architecture and other art-related fields: architecture, and design, and such. And I think that actually broadened my scope about understanding the art world, and also understanding the nuances of what some people might consider minor art, you know, or art that wasn't popular at the time. I remember I took a class in 19th-century painting, and it was an art history class, but it was taught by a guy who was actually—I don't even know his name or anything, but he was very interested in the financial market—like an auction market. And he would talk about the value of the paintings, which was really different for an art history class for me at the time. And he would show us paintings by these—that are now well-known 19th-century painters, which were then obscure painters, and he would talk about how this market would be expanding and this stuff is considered to be mostly bad taste nowadays, but that would change. And so, he—that was kind of like a precursor to Postmodernism, you know, where all of a sudden, artists that were rejected because they weren't popular any more, or didn't fit into the realm of the Clement Greenberg world, were—might be—something different might be about them someday. So, anyway, that was a big influence on me, too. And that was probably how I got to start to thinking about becoming a dealer.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] But that would have been very early.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, it was pretty early. I wasn't really—it wasn't formed, for me, to be—wanting to be an art dealer at that time, and I had no awareness of it except for, like, this kind of—this introduction. And so, I figure, it was interesting to me, and so, therefore, I do think that that was something of a link.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's interesting—just to back up a little bit. When you're at Orange Coast College, you're studying those things. What are you studying simultaneously at UC Irvine?

TOM JANCAR: Art history. Art history was my undergraduate degree.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But Tom Garver is at Orange Coast.

TOM JANCAR: Orange Coast College.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And who was teaching at UC Irvine at that time?

TOM JANCAR: I can't remember their names, to be honest with you. They were art history people, they were not—art history department. I could look them up, but I don't remember their names.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, for—Irvine at that time is so important, because, I mean, Barbara Rose taught there—

TOM JANCAR: But she wasn't teaching in the art history department. See, it was—the structure, the way—the way it was structured was that it was—art history was in the art department. It was not a separate department, but they had their own separate faculty. And so, Barbara Rose would not teach art history classes. She would teach art-history-related classes—now, there was one that was very famous there, that I was influenced a lot by, and that was Phil Leider. You know, and he had just come there from, you know, exiting *Artforum*. He was the founding editor of *Artforum*, as

you know, right? So anyway, he—he was pretty new there, and his classes were really different, like —

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But was he teaching in art history?

TOM JANCAR: He was—yes. He was teaching in art history.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. And, but—if you were—just to be clear, if you were studying art history at UC Irvine—you know, the sort of well-known artists and lecturers who came into the school—because it's really well-known in the '70s for having this—all these incredible people come to talk there, but they were all in the art department?

TOM JANCAR: They were all in the art department, and—and, you know, like, Barbara Rose did the Duchamp Festival and all that stuff. That was happening there, but it was all part of the art department.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Interesting. But were you exposed to it, even though—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah. I was exposed to it, and actually, when I was—I was taking art classes simultaneous, and so, I was—I wanted to get a degree that was in studio art and art history, but they would not let me choose both, so I had to choose one degree. So, I figured if I was going to possibly be teaching at some point, the art history degree might be more valuable to me. So, I—that's why I chose the art history degree, even though I had enough units for both. So, I—I guess now, they would have allowed it, because the art history department is separate from the art department.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, yeah, probably, but—so, you're studying art history, and then you've got Phil Leider, and is he the only teacher that really made an impact on you?

TOM JANCAR: He's the only one that really made an impact on me. Like, mostly, the art history that I was studying that interested me was my own research that I was doing in the library on my own. Mostly, other classes were, like, your standard Renaissance stuff, you know, and—you know, like—you know, none of it was modern art history, except for Phil Leider.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, and he was always very interested in photography.

TOM JANCAR: Yes, and—and he was also—had these weird twists about how he would approach things, you know? He would show—have a lecture, say, about Caravaggio, and compare his life to Frank Sinatra. And he would have two screens running at the same time, right? Of projections, like, this is Sinatra. This is Caravaggio.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Fantastic.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, so, but—and also, consequently, he was really popular. You know, these were giant lecture halls that were full of people from all other parts of the campus, just because he was so entertaining.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, also, by that time—this is the 1970s, and his work with *Artforum* was sort of, you know, legendary.

TOM JANCAR: Legendary, but I did hear from Hal Glicksman a funny story about him, that he had been brought to UC Irvine, you know, and in those days, apparently, it wasn't clear about tenure or

anything like that. And he was living in San Francisco, and he would fly into Orange County Airport—it was before it was called John Wayne Airport, now. Anyway, he would fly into Orange County Airport and he would sleep in his office during the week. He didn't stay in a hotel, or motel, or anything like that. He would sleep in his office, and then he would do his lectures, and he'd fly back home. And apparently, according to Hal Glicksman, he didn't know that he had any sort of job security. He thought that he could just be let go at any time. And so, I guess he went to the dean, and the dean had to tell him that everything would be okay, you know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] Well, especially, I mean, if you've got—you've got—that—as we know, that was a pretty much a golden year for tenure and salaries at UCI.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It was such a golden time.

TOM JANCAR: Well, there was a lot of—there was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You had Craig—must have had Craig Kauffman there?

TOM JANCAR: Yes, Craig Kauffman was there. Tony DeLap was the—the department chair, and they didn't rotate the department chair. I think he was there as chair for a long time. John Mason was there. John Paul Jones was there. There were guests, you know—guests like Sol LeWitt. Jack Tworkov was a guest there. Many of them, and then as—as students, I became friends at that time with Tom Jimmerson, and also with Phil Tippett and Kim Hubbard.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Tom Jimmerson was a student with you?

TOM JANCAR: Was a student, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—and who was the other one?

TOM JANCAR: Phil Tippett. And Phil Tippett went on to work for Lucasfilm and developed most of the early creatures for Star Wars, and actually exited the art world.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: T-I-P-P-E-T?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. [Tippett –TJ]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And then what was the other one?

TOM JANCAR: And Kim Hubbard.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: A name that's familiar, tell me about that.

TOM JANCAR: Painter. She was a painter. She and Phil were a couple, and so I became friendly with them, and then there was another one named Jane Reynolds, who was an artist, who probably made the first stuffed animals that I ever saw. This was before Mike Kelley. And—so, anyway, I became friendly with these people, and consequently we all ended up living in downtown Santa Ana, because we didn't have student housing, you know, like, when I went to graduate school. There was no—I'm skipping ahead a bit here, but—so, there wasn't any of the studios provided for graduate students. You just simply were—you were one or you weren't. And so, we ended up getting studio spaces in downtown Santa Ana because the rent was really cheap. It was really

depressed, and there was nobody living there in these old buildings, basically. And so, I had a studio right next to Tom Jimmerson's studio, and these were, like, little, tiny, old 1920s offices. I think we may have paid 25 or 50 dollars a month for them. So, that was a big introduction to me, to the art world of how to live as a bohemian, and especially how other artists had lived. Meanwhile, Craig Kauffman and Tony DeLap, they had, sort of, new houses that they had built, you know. Craig had built one in Laguna Canyon, and Tony in Corona del Mar. And—but actually, at that time the art world was changing a lot, and Tony and Craig to me were like the father types. And their art was—even though it was part of Minimalism—Minimalism was a big influence, but creeping in really quickly was Conceptual art, and when I had first seen *The Dematerialization of the Art Object*, the Lucy Lippard book, I was, like, really sucked in, basically, and, you know, started to read *Art and Project* and lots of other things at that time. But it mostly revolved around the library.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you were an early adapter of Conceptual art, but you were in school from '69 to '70—

TOM JANCAR: —[7]6.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —[7]6. So really, Conceptual art is what is really flourishing in the '70s.

TOM JANCAR: Was flourishing and developing at that time. But when I first was in school, it was not that evident. It became more and more evident, and even though there had been the trappings of Conceptual art and documentation of it in Europe, it was slow to reach us because it all had to come through publications, and—but that's why the library was so valuable to me, and really, the bookstores did not stock that kind of thing as they would now.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] So, in the library in Santa—at Orange—at Orange Coast College—

TOM JANCAR: Orange Coast, and also UC Irvine.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —you would find what? Would you find magazines published in —?

TOM JANCAR: Magazines, mostly.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mostly magazines, published in Europe.

TOM JANCAR: Magazines, mostly, that were—and also, I would get them through—like, through UCI Gallery. They got a lot of publications through there.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, who was running the UCI Gallery at the time?

TOM JANCAR: Hal Glicksman was.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It was at that time. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And what shows did he do there that you remember, if any? Because he was doing some interesting shows even then—I think—

TOM JANCAR: I don't—I don't really remember the shows that he did, because there was a lot of student shows, you know, and there was, like, shows that he did do. I do remember he had a lot of people come in to talk, and I do remember going to see William Wegman's videotapes for the first

time. I had never seen them. I had never seen any photographs of them or anything, and we just sat in the middle of the gallery floor, and there was maybe 10 students and Wegman, and he had the monitor, and we just watched the videos. And I remember having a similar experience going to Morgan Thomas's gallery and sitting on the floor with Ilene Segalove, watching her videotapes with only two or three other people.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you go back that far with Ilene Segalove?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, and I did not know her really, then, you know what I mean? So, there was exposure through these people who would come and go, and visit the school, and I think that was the biggest exposure. I remember more of Hal's—actually—exhibitions at Otis.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, to back up just a second. You said you did these interviews with photographers: What years were you doing those?

TOM JANCAR: I was doing those, like in the late '70s, even into '81.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, this is after—this is while you were still a—a student.

TOM JANCAR: Late '70s, yeah, and—because I was doing research—see, I—my interest had been sparked into other realms of art, other than what was modern at the time. I was really interested in what preceded modernism, like, I was interested in Pictorialist photography. And I would collect books, like the *Annual of Pictorialist Photographers*, because I could get them at bookstores really cheap. And they would publish an annual every year, and it had the addresses and phone numbers of all of these photographers in it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, how funny.

TOM JANCAR: And so, I would—even though it was years later, I would write them letters, and ask if I could come and talk to them, and just visit. And, you know, nine times out of ten, it wasn't correct—you know, that wasn't where they lived any more, or they weren't alive—but I was able to visit, like, Japanese Pictorialists, like Hiromu Kira, and other, you know, like, Pictorialist photographers that were mostly, you know, Los-Angeles-oriented. And so, that was really interesting, and I was entertaining the—you know, writing something about it—writing a book or, you know, something about it at the time, but I—mainly, when my gallery came into existence in the 1980s, I stopped doing that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, where do—

TOM JANCAR: But I was collecting photography, also.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What happened to those interviews?

TOM JANCAR: I don't know. They're just—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, no.

TOM JANCAR: —you know, there was—they weren't recorded, like this is. They were just, like, talks, and many times they would result in me buying a photograph from them. And so, that was—that was how I had started to form a collection of photography. And I was interested in collecting photography at that time because photography was very affordable.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] What do you—when you say very affordable, how much were these prints, generally?

TOM JANCAR: Oh, I would pay, like, maybe \$25 for them, or \$10, and I even would go to auctions—the Sotheby's auctions that were by where CBS studios was, by Farmer's Market—and there I bought a Man Ray Rayogram for \$450. So, you know, it was a poor man's world of collecting art. So, all of a sudden, I had this kind of vision that I could be an art collector, and so, I became one, actually, you know, like, after that. But I didn't—and also, I felt it was, like, kind of part of the undertaking of my interest in photography to collect it because it was affordable at the time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Sure. And were you working? How—where did your—disposable income come from?

TOM JANCAR: Well, I was working at—well, first of all, when I left—when I left UC Irvine—when I graduated—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: When you graduated with an undergraduate degree?

TOM JANCAR: And then I went on for a graduate degree.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So your—did you graduate with a BA?

TOM JANCAR: I graduated with a BA in Art History, a—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: BA in Art History from UCI.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, that was—a BA, UCI, in 1974, and then I immediately went into a graduate program in studio art, because I had enough units in studio art, so I applied to that program and was accepted.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: At UCI?

TOM JANCAR: At UCI. And I was making films and videotapes, mostly, and other conceptual-based work, some painting—some sort of appropriated painting work.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And you graduated with an MFA what year?

TOM JANCAR: In 1976. And while I was at UCI as a graduate student, I was—I was part of the—I was a teaching assistant. I was teaching assistant to Bas Jan Ader, and so, during that period of time I was paid, you know, and because my overhead was really low—you know, I was paying nothing—almost nothing—for rent, you know, so I was able to survive off that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, what was it like being the teaching assistant to Bas Jan Ader?

TOM JANCAR: At first, I did—I did not know who he was, okay? And—but then, you know, I was looking again at *Dematerialization of the Art Object*, and there are his images in there, right? There wasn't much else about him in there except the work *I'm Too Sad to Tell You*. And other than that, you know, I started to learn more about him. He was—he was very reserved, you know—I don't know if you ever met him, but—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I never met him.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. He was very quiet, and—but he was—he always impressed me a whole bunch, even though, at times, I had problems with his work—that I didn't really fully appreciate his work, I think. And that was the case with most of us, because he was not so much a Minimalist in the way that we were trained to be as students, because we had come out of this whole, you know, thing of LeWitt, and even Tony DeLap, and other California Minimalists, you know? So, this guy was different, you know? This was, like, exposure to a different kind of artist than I had ever experienced before. And also, his persona was, like, very impressive to me, because he—his clothes were always the same. They were always these navy-blue outfits that were always the same. He must have had 10 shirts that were the same and 10 pants that were the same. And, so, he had this whole style built around him, and he was sort of, like, you know—he was different than Craig, you know? Craig Kauffman was, like, kind of goofy. Bas was not goofy, and that was really impressive to me. You know, like, all of a sudden, this whole intellectual artist persona was presented to me, and to me, that was, like, really where I wanted to go.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And also, he represented a European view, perhaps?

TOM JANCAR: Yes, yes, but he was also very—had his foot in both America and Europe, because he had been here for quite a while and he was married to Mary Sue Ader, his wife, who was American, and—but he had—he come—he was here. He went to graduate school in Claremont, and he actually did some of his better-known works here in Claremont. The one is *All My Clothes*, where he's on the roof of his house. He has all of his clothes on the roof—that's down here on Indian Hill Boulevard—and also where he falls off the roof of his house. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what about the—where—where is Chris Burden during all of this? You must have—did you—were you aware of his work?

TOM JANCAR: I actually do remember seeing—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because he was also in Santa Ana, right?

TOM JANCAR: Chris Burden was—well, there was a studio, or gallery space, you know—what was it called?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: F 22 [F Space]?

TOM JANCAR: F 22, yeah. Wasn't it an industrial space? And I guess it was actually started someplace else by Jean St. Pierre?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm, Jean St. Pierre.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. And that's where Chris Burden did *Shoot* and many other works, right?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I wondered if you knew him at that point.

TOM JANCAR: I did not know him, but I did remember the first time I ever saw him, and it was at the UC Irvine gallery, and it was a piece that I don't know if I've ever seen documented, but it—I'm sure it is. He was riding his bicycle through the gallery continuously, through—for the duration of the exhibition. So, he would ride in the front door, ride out the back door, and ride in the front door, again, and again, and again. There was also another piece that I remember he did there that was a loaded revolver that was placed on a pedestal in the gallery, and that was all that it was. He was

actually in the classes before me. He was there before me, but he was a peer of Richard Newton's, and Richard and him were good friends, and I later became, you know, more associated with Richard, because of showing his work.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And at the time, just to be—was his work—did you have any sense that his work was going to be important at the time that it was used for these wacky performances? Wacky sounds like the wrong word—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, I know what you're saying.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —these performances that were so unusual.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. I think, you know, to crank back what I thought about it at that time—and I think that most of us thought the same way, and it's hard to believe nowadays—but I think, because I was making videotapes, okay, and I knew that there was going to be an exhibition called the Southland Video Anthology at Long Beach, and it was—David Ross was the curator. And I knew about that, and so I wrote to him and said that I wanted to have him look at my videotapes. And he agreed to do it, but he asked me if I was a student. He asked me if I was a student, still in school, and I lied and I said I wasn't. It was not valuable to be a student at—or to be an emerging artist in those days, and actually, the goal was to try to get to be 40 years old so you could be considered mature enough to be considered someone that someone might pay attention to. And so, there was—I believe that this was widespread, that the feeling was widespread, that most of us felt like, even though Chris was doing this work—and quickly, later—years later—few years later, I realized it was important work, but at the time I think we just thought it was just work that would come and go, and that would be it. And so, I think that—that was a huge difference between how people perceive art nowadays. I think when artists go to school nowadays, they have hope that they will actually, you know, try to make something of themselves. We had no hope at all, or very little. We would—we would maybe be able to get a teaching gig and that would be it, you know?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, did you have any hope or thought of selling your work?

TOM JANCAR: No. There was no hope of selling it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Were there any galleries—

TOM JANCAR: —that were doing that?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that were—do you remember any galleries of importance at that time that had an impact on you when you—you would have been younger when you went to the La Cienega Art Walks, but what were the first galleries that made an impact on you?

TOM JANCAR: Well, the La Cienega Art Walks didn't—the galleries, per se, I didn't really pay that much attention to, other than they—what they were showing. Like, I probably went to Ferus Gallery, but I had no awareness of it and probably didn't—nothing clicked. But the one that clicked was Claire Copley Gallery. And, yes, I felt it was clear that what Claire was doing was really important, because it matched up with everything, with what I would read about.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what year do you think you first went there?

TOM JANCAR: I don't know, you know, '70s. You know, mid-'70s.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But when you were a student?

TOM JANCAR: When I was a student, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you would come from Santa Ana, Irvine, and come up to L.A., and you would go—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, we would make long day trips to L.A.—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and go see things?

TOM JANCAR: Yes, yeah. They would be kind of these marathon trips where we would go to hit all the museums and all the galleries that we wanted to. There was only a handful of galleries that we would go to, we would go to Riko Mizuno and Claire Copley, and later, to Morgan Thomas Gallery and Thomas Lewallen Gallery. But Claire was the one that really—it seemed really clear what she was doing was important. It was different, and to me, it was, like, unknown how she could ever sell any of this stuff, and I think in reality she probably didn't sell much of it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And what shows made an impression there?

TOM JANCAR: I saw Joseph Kosuth's show there, I saw Lawrence Weiner, I saw Michael Asher, I saw almost every show that Claire did, and they all made an impression on me. And the size of the space impressed me. It didn't have to—because I had gone to Ace Gallery, you know, and this is before Gagosian, you know, and Ace Gallery was—you know, Doug Christmas was really the pioneer of the big white space, you know? And that was, like, an impressive architectural thing, you know, to see these giant Richard Serras in there, and—so, that stuff was a very important influence on me, but Claire's was—like, all of a sudden, it was still part of this, the artist as an intellectual, not the artist as making enormous works that were—nor were the works necessarily pretty. And a lot of it was not painting-based. Claire did show Harriet Korman, which I was always impressed with, and I did later on show her work in my later incarnation. But so, that was, like—between that—between Claire Copley, Bas Jan Ader, other people that would come and go—and I met Bill Leavitt about that time—it was a—I realized that the art world was this—could be this really more of an intellectual endeavor, that was really drawing me in, you know, at that time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Could—did Bill Leavitt show at Claire Copley?

TOM JANCAR: No, I don't think so. I don't think so.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did you meet him—

TOM JANCAR: I met him through Bas. Bas and Bill were best friends. And actually, Bill had discouraged Bas from going on the sailing adventure. You know, he thought that was the stupidest thing that he could do, you know, and I think he became quite angry with him that he went on that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And was—well, anyway, stay where we are a little bit. You graduate from—with your MFA, and you—you start working at the Bowers Museum.

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Well, actually, I started teaching before that. I started to do—there was no possibility of a full-time teaching position, but I knew that if I could write curriculum I could get part-time teaching jobs at community colleges. And so, I just wrote curriculum for, like, film history classes, and photography, and other art-related classes, and most of the time, if I had enough of an enrollment, I could have the class. So, I had—but sometimes I had, like, three classes per semester.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Where would you teach?

TOM JANCAR: Orange Coast College, Coastline Community College, and—and another one that was attached to Fullerton Community College, which I don't remember. Had a different name.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And do you have any awareness at this time of the evolution of CalArts and its own Conceptual program that's evolving up there in Valencia?

TOM JANCAR: Yes, yes. All of the—almost the entire time I was at UC Irvine, we understood that CalArts was sort of, you know, our counterpart, and there was a lot of—we knew about what they were doing and we knew about the artists that were there. I became more connected with the CalArts people after I opened my gallery, or right before I opened my gallery—first gallery. But back to the Bas Jan Ader thing, there was some other things that were influential that maybe are not quite that well-known about Bas, is that Bas was really interested in Modernist architecture, and particularly De Stijl architecture, because that was his whole—you know, he was very interested in Mondrian, of course. Anyway, he had built himself a studio which was in a business building which was close to Guitar Center, which was, like, on the corner of Gardner and Sunset Boulevard, and the people that lived there, it was sort of like a mini UC Irvine. Like, it was—Phil Tippett was there, Kim Hubbard was there, Tom Jimmerson was there, Jane Reynolds, and Bas Jan Ader. They were all in the same building, and Tom Jimmerson and Phil Tippett had built a studio for Bas, but it was—it was like nothing I had ever seen before. You went in the door from the regular old office hallway and entered this totally white, minimalist world, you know, of, like, a minimalist kitchen, minimalist place to sleep, and one main room. And to me, this was, like—this was modernist, and, you know, this was, like, you know, truly, like, a modern way to live, you know, and I'd seen these things in design magazines and stuff like that, but I never knew anybody that actually had one. And so, Tom Jimmerson—and I want to go into more on Tom Jimmerson, too, because it's a very important connection—he was working for Doug Christmas full-time at this time. And he was basically the preparator for Ace Gallery. He was preparator, you know, of the galleries here in L.A. and also in Vancouver. And he would fly back and forth. But also, he and I became—because we had studios right next to each other in Santa Ana, we used to talk a lot about art and architecture and all things related. And so I became very good friends with him. And consequently he started building other things for other—other people, other than Doug Christmas. So—and one of the things they built was this studio for Bas, you know, he and Phil Tippett. And this was just, like, part-time construction work type kind of thing. But basically, to make a long story short, my connection to Tom basically led to the—my idea to form Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery. It did not have anything to do with Richard Kuhlenschmidt. Tom and I were actually going to start a gallery, on our own. And we just didn't—it didn't really gel about where and when to do it, or any of those kind of things. And I don't know if you want me to go into this, at this point.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Sure.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you know, you're in a—you're working at the Bowers Museum, fairly quickly here.

TOM JANCAR: Okay. Sure. Anyway, so Tom and I are like talking about all this stuff about art. And then I would work with him, sometimes, at Ace Gallery. Because I needed extra work. And he—we would do construction work together in the gallery. And there was this thing—because of Light and Space art—you know, there was a lot of people that were artists that were making things that we had—artists—other artists, student types like us—to build them. And so we learned a lot of these

building skills by building other people's artworks. And I even remember working on a Sol LeWitt drawing that was down in Venice somewhere. I don't even remember where it was. Anyway—so, consequently, with the interest in art, the growing interest in architecture, growing interest in, you know, kind of early International Style architecture and then seeing Bas's studio, which was a manifestation of that, and working with Tom Jimmerson—I became more and more interested in those things. And then I noticed that there was a job at Bowers Museum, which was to be like a preparator, you know, an assistant preparator at Bowers Museum. And Richard Kuhlenschmidt was working there also, in the same position, at the time. And so he and I became friends, at that time. And—because he was—had been studying photography at Cal State Fullerton, I believe, with people like Darryl Curran and whoever was there at that time. He was not versed in Conceptual art. He had come from the photography world. He was—and—but that was okay for me, because I was really interested in that subject also. And so he and I would talk a lot about that stuff. And we would talk about music and design and things like that. And his wife, at that time—they're divorced now, but—I can't remember what—oh, her real name was Stephanie. But she had called herself Madonna. This is before the emergence of Madonna that we know. Anyway, so she was in a rock band. And she was Madonna, in a rock band. And Richard also was in a rock band. And so that was a—[the]—world of the emergence of New Wave music. And the—you know, this is later than punk, but—anyway. So, he—consequently, Richard and I were friends. And we had this kind of mutual friendship, based upon these things that were sort of about the art world. And his wife, Madonna, was working in the Los Altos Apartments building. And she was an assistant to some rock person. Now, I'm not certain. I want to say it wasn't really a rock person—I think it was John Prine.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] I think you might be right.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. I'm pretty sure. It sounds right to me. And she was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's what I remember—

TOM JANCAR: —she was like his one-person office. And they had a little office upstairs in the Los Altos Apartments buildings. And she actually—so since she was working in that building, she knew about what spaces were for rent there. And Richard and her were actually living in another location in Hollywood. And then they eventually moved to the Los Altos Apartments building, about the time that—she had discovered that there was this storage space in the Los Altos Apartments building that would be for rent. And, so Richard and I rented the storage space. And it was just a tiny little room, as you remember. And, I can't remember what we paid for it. It was probably under \$100. And we renovated it, per my design, which was based upon Bas Jan Ader's studio.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh! I see. I didn't know that.

TOM JANCAR: And that's where the aesthetic for Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery came from. That's why I bring up the Bas Jan Ader connection and the design of his studio.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Ah, I never knew that. That's very interesting.

TOM JANCAR: Because when you entered the Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery—it was basically just a room. But the essence of what made it seem more special, was that—the elements that I had learned from Bas, which was, like, when you enter the space, you should never enter directly into open space. So that—I designed a wall that was a baffle, which covered the door. So you would enter and there would be the name of the artist, on the wall. And you had to turn left and turn right again, to actually enter the tiny space. And the entry space had a dropped ceiling, which made it even seem bigger, once you got into the main space. So it was micro-architecture, made to seem

more large and actually seem more legitimate. And so the design allowed that to happen, I believe. And also, the lighting was very minimal. It was based upon Bauhaus lighting designs that I had seen, which were these strip fluorescents, that were mounted up at the ceiling, which were basically derived from, not Bauhaus, but more De Stijl, which was derived from Gerrit Rietveld. And, so, anyway, I believed that was an important element to Jancar/Kuhlen Schmidt Gallery. Because we weren't just a funky little garage shop. We actually looked slick, even though we were tiny. And I don't know—you may know more the history of it. But I kind of believe we were the first—one of the first micro-galleries. And many followed later, you know. So size wasn't going to be a restriction to what we showed.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: To what extent—so, what was the first show?

TOM JANCAR: At Jancar/Kuhlen Schmidt?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, wait. Let's just have the conversation about starting the gallery.

TOM JANCAR: Well, these are—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you and—

TOM JANCAR: —these are all the exhibitions at the Jancar/Kuhlen Schmidt.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —so you—you and Richard are preparators at this—

TOM JANCAR: Oh, yeah. Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —assistant preparators at the gallery— Bowers, and you decide to open this gallery. But you're not quitting your jobs yet. You're just going to—do this on weekends or something?

TOM JANCAR: What happened—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So—

TOM JANCAR: —I'll tell you what—about that—was that—okay. We—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I don't mean to put words in your mouth.

TOM JANCAR: No, no, no. That's okay. We go—we got the space. Okay? And it's actually got a really good story. And we got the space. And it was—they just told us it would have a lot of junk in it and we could throw it all away, it's—and it didn't belong to anybody. It had been storage, basically, and it was abandoned storage. And so we went into the space. And we threw all this stuff away that was—and we made many trips to the dumpster. And one of the things taken out of the [space –TJ]—and Richard had thrown it in the dumpster. And it was on its back, laying in the dumpster. It was a piece of plywood. And on the back of it, it said, "John McCracken."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: So I grabbed it out of the dumpster. And we took it back into the gallery. And we consequently kept it, because I knew what it was. And it was a McCracken wall-hanging piece. It wasn't a slab. It was a black-and-white-swirled wall-hanging piece.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Fantastic!

TOM JANCAR: So that was—that was kind of like a sign or something. I don't know. Anyway, so we got the space. And, we basically—I did the design. And then we just got all this drywall and stuff and built the space. And then we decided, who should we show? And—because this was a whim, to start this gallery. I mean, it was kind of like—I just said, "Well, maybe we should start a gallery." And he goes, "Okay." And so we start a gallery, right? It wasn't like—you know, it had been calculated with Tom Jimmerson before, but that wasn't going to happen, you know. So consequently, with this guy, it was easy to make it happen, because he was so agreeable. Right? Anyway, so, the first show was Kim Hubbard, who—who I had mentioned before, who was just a colleague from student times at UC Irvine.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Is she—?

TOM JANCAR: And she—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I thought—

TOM JANCAR: —she was a painter.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Tell me what kind of painting she did.

TOM JANCAR: She did paintings that were symbolic kind of paintings, that were imagery, but they were based upon, kind of Inca-like imagery that was derived from folk art, basically. And then other ones were actually totally abstract. So they were very minimal, very flat. And you can see them on my website. Anyway, so back to who did we show, you know. So this is, like, kind of, like—we've got a gallery. We're open. We're showing people, you know. And actually, there's not very many people that, like, had a gallery like us, at that time. Claire Copley was out of business. And basically—I think she had gone out of business at that time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, you—

TOM JANCAR: This is 1980.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —you were open in 1980, and it's—as you remember, the 1970s, there was a terrible recession—

TOM JANCAR: Yes. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that caused most of the galleries to close.

TOM JANCAR: Yes. And I think that that was still evident by 1980. I remember the economy was not good. Probably during the whole duration of Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, the economy was not well. And it consequently made it very difficult for us to sell anything. So—I don't know how to—how to phrase this exactly but, simultaneous to us opening this gallery, Tom Jimmerson had told me about this guy, downtown L.A., who was actually doing shows in his loft. And his name was David Amico. And David was actually doing shows of people that he had met when—I believe he had gone to Hunter College, and he had connected to these East Coast people, which, many of them we now know as the Pictures Generation. But at that time they didn't have a—there were not any collective consciousness about them being a group, other than they were boyfriend, or girlfriend, or whatever. Right? And, so David—Tom said, "Well, you should talk to David about who to show. Because he's showing all these people and bringing them here."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Wasn't he just showing paintings, painters?

TOM JANCAR: No!

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: No. He showed Richard Prince.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I don't remember that part. Okay. So—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. He showed Richard Prince. He showed Louise Lawler. He showed Sherrie Levine, Jenny Holzer, Peter Nadin, many other people. And also he was showing Jane Reynolds, who I mentioned earlier. Now, Jane also knew a lot of these people, too.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you remember where the loft was? I can't remember the—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. It was on Los Angeles, across—maybe it's not Los Angeles Street—it was across from the Los Angeles Theater. And this is, like, the really early days of [downtown –TJ]—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I remember the—where this is, on—

TOM JANCAR: It was a big high-rise type deal. David was way up high. And I remember he had windows that opened out. You pushed them out. You could literally fall out of the building.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And it was really cheap, like super, super cheap. Anyway, so David was—really preceded us in showing these people, that later became Pictures people. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But you also showed David.

TOM JANCAR: That's—yes. And I showed David. And I think he's in here. Paul Tzanetopoulos was another fellow UC Irvine student. And then here's David—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: David's like—

TOM JANCAR: —the third show.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —your third show. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

TOM JANCAR: And so, by the time—by that time, Richard and I were connected with David. And he was basically introducing us to these other people, who we would later show. And they actually, for the most part, had no place to show. This is before Metro Pictures. And so it was pretty easy. And, they—they were not big names at that time. And the Richard Prince show that we did, we did not sell one—one work.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I'm very sorry about that.

TOM JANCAR: [They laugh.] Very sorry too. But if we bought the whole show, it probably would have cost us maybe \$1,000, or \$1,500 for the entire show, net.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And it made such an impact. It was this—I remember it so clearly, and remember I reviewed it. But I remember it so clearly, even now, that—walking in and

seeing those photographs of like the three models looking the same direction—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —or wristwatches—

TOM JANCAR: Looking left.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and just, how it just was so striking, even then, that this was something different—

TOM JANCAR: Really different.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and even different from Conceptual art.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: There was just something—was moving in a different direction.

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Yeah. That was true.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you could feel that. But I had forgotten about Amico being the—the liaison there between the two of you.

TOM JANCAR: He was definitely—should be credited, as a very important liaison. Without him, we would have never shown these people.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, did you know—did you know Helene Winer? Wasn't she —?

TOM JANCAR: No, not officially. You know, people would come to our openings, as you remember —like a lot of people would come and I'd meet a lot of people, but they didn't click as real famous people then, because they were kind of not, at that time, that well known.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, she was the—wasn't she curator at Claremont—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —at that time?

TOM JANCAR: Yes, at the museum here. Yeah, she was—she was fired from this museum.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I think you might be right.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because she—she—but she—I was wondering if she—

TOM JANCAR: Somebody urinated on the floor, or something like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: She must have—who was that—I remember this story. But she —basically, she—I was wondering if she had come to your gallery, if you remember her going to the gallery—

TOM JANCAR: I don't remember—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —coming to your gallery.

TOM JANCAR: —her coming to the gallery. But, see, I don't remember everyone that would come. Like, Leo Castelli's wife came to the gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Would that be Barbara?

TOM JANCAR: No. Sonnabend—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Ileana Sonnabend.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah. She would come to the gallery sometimes. James Rosenquist used to come to the gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, your openings were legendary. Right?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah! But—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I don't know why. But everybody used to go.

TOM JANCAR: I don't know why either.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: You know, oddly—this should be noted too. Because, you know, the whole notion about hipsters or hipness, that wasn't something that affected us that much. You know, like, we were working in the daytime, doing construction work. You know, we built Larry Gagosian's first gallery. You know, we worked for Jean Milant. We built Koplan Gallery, Mixografia Gallery. We—this was all part of how Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt was supported. It was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because you were doing preparatory work for other galleries.

TOM JANCAR: We weren't doing preparatory work. We would do construction work.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Construction work.

TOM JANCAR: We were pounding nails. And we would sweat and work and do hard work, in order to have this Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And that—

TOM JANCAR: And that was all through Tom—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and Richard did that, too?

TOM JANCAR: Richard had joined us, yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you and Richard were building these places together.

TOM JANCAR: No. It was Tom Jimmerson who was the lead, building these places. And he had hired us to work with him.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see.

TOM JANCAR: Okay? And the people that were working with him were myself, other fellow UC Irvine students, which were Mike Lawrence—I don't know if you want to note all these but, Tom Colgrove—these were all UC Irvine art students—Nick Blake and myself. And then we brought Richard in with us, because—that was kind of to help him survive, you know, along with us. Right? Because none of us had a real job. We were all working doing this construction work. We were paid quite well, compared to having a regular day job of another type. So—we had no benefits. But we were young and kind of stupid.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So when you started showing your—these people, what did you respond to, when you looked at the work of, say, Richard Prince or even David Amico, at this time, Lena Rivkin? I'm just running a few names—Louise Lawler's basically your sixth show.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. Well, basically—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What were you responding to, when you saw those people's work?

TOM JANCAR: —well—it was more like gut feeling. And this is how I've always run a gallery. And it's probably not the best business model. But it was kind of like, I want to show what I like. And that was—that was pretty much it, in a nutshell. It wasn't like—I mean, I have another story about that. We would have people come visit us in the gallery, and kind of like—kind of want to show, you know, and show us things. And that was a—that was interesting. Because we had Edmund Teske come and show us his photographs, you know, and stuff like that. And we actually thought he was a—street person. [They laugh.] And then, we had Mike Kelley come and visit us, too. And Mike Kelley was also—almost seemed like a homeless person.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And he sat on the floor and he showed us his stuffed animals, which he brought in a plastic bag. And we did not like his stuffed animals. Now, I did not know anything about Mike Kelley's work, at that time. If I had seen other work, at that time, we probably would have shown him. But we consequently told him that we weren't interested, which is like a kind of a unbelievable story, but it's true, you know, sort of embarrassing, actually.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it's a little bit different from what you were showing. I mean, what you were showing is so—is really based in Conceptual art and photography, almost all of it.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. And I think that we were leaning that way because that was the experience that I had, you know? But also, rapidly unfolding was Postmodernism, you know, which was people like Mike Kelley—which we probably would have been open to showing, but he only showed us these few stuffed animals. And because we had known Jane Reynolds and she had made stuffed animals before, we thought, oh, this is a rehash of the same kind of stuff, even though her work is probably not known, to this day, you know, about—but—yeah. So again, it was—yeah—we were leaning towards the purist, you know, Conceptual bent.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So in this—so from 1980 to '82, you have the gallery at 4121 Wilshire Boulevard.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—

TOM JANCAR: It's all the same location.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —Jerry Brane and the *Thrift Store Paintings*.

TOM JANCAR: That should be noted, I think. Like the *Thrift Store Paintings*—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's in 1981.

TOM JANCAR: —show, was a wild win. Both Richard and I had collected thrift store paintings. Because both of us were denizens of the thrift stores. We would go to thrift stores all the time. And so we thought, why not have a thrift store painting show, just as a lark, sort of thing. And this is before Jim Shaw. And actually, we're falsely credited, in some documents, as showing Jim Shaw's collection, but—which we never did. We never even knew Jim Shaw. I know him now. But I didn't know him at the time. Anyway, so we did show the—these thrift store paintings, which we collected ourselves, and basically hung them salon style. And we sold probably 75 percent of the show, which was the biggest—[they laugh]—sellout we had ever had, probably because they were so cheap that people thought—people really loved the show. And I don't really know who it went on to influence, or if it did or it didn't. But I think it was one of the first thrift store painting shows.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And when you were talking about sales as a good thing, were you—because you were open for two years. You showed Morgan Thomas.

TOM JANCAR: Morgan Thomas we showed, because—she was an artist. But I had known her as a dealer. And actually, she was more of an artist than she was a dealer, I think, you know, and I became—we became quite friendly with her. And, she was married to Jim Butler, at that time. And so we would go to their house a lot. And, she was quite a different world for us. Because all of our shows that we did at Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt were budget shows. Like, basically, all these cards are the same. They were all printed the same way, there was never an image on them in order to keep costs down. We did not serve any food at our openings. We only had plain-wrap beer, which we bought at Ralph's. And even that was in limited quantity.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: But when we got to Morgan Thomas, she—we did the same thing, but she bought fancy food for our openings. And all of a sudden, we were—we were in a different world, right? You know, with this person who was connected to a very wealthy attorney. Anyway.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: We might mention here—as well, that she—that Jim Butler had been married to Eugenia Butler—

TOM JANCAR: Exactly.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —who was, of course a terribly important—

TOM JANCAR: Exactly.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —person in LA.'s history, for showing the progenitors, and early conceptual and—

TOM JANCAR: That's true.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and—and—art. So—

TOM JANCAR: We—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —connection continues.

TOM JANCAR: —the connection continues. And we—and it was a small world, as you know. Like, you know—it was a pretty small world, in L.A., in the art world, in those days.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And only—only 10 years has elapsed. This is 1981. And, you know, Eugenia Butler was still in operation, I think, in '71—

TOM JANCAR: I think so.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —like, 10 years difference.

TOM JANCAR: So, you know, I don't know if I felt it so much then, but later on I felt like we were carrying the torch for some of those people, who had broken the ground for us. And I think it's really important to credit them, you know, not just what we did. And what we did—what Richard and I did and what Richard did later had a lot to do with the connectivity to other people, like to Tom Jimmerson and—and these other people, which is—and Amico and others. So it wasn't like we were great visionaries, that were able to just pick these important artists out of the air.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No. You knew the context.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. We knew the context.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You had context.

TOM JANCAR: And we knew—and it was through the people we had known, who recommended people to us.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you show Richard Prince, here, in the '80—and then again in '80—

TOM JANCAR: We only showed Richard Prince one time. This is the final show.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I thought you had two shows. I thought you had two. I thought you had the fire paintings, as well as the—

TOM JANCAR: No. Richard later showed Richard Prince. He showed almost everybody that we showed, later on. And then he would show other people, that he added to his roster. So basically, his roster—the springboard of his roster came out of what we had done, the groundwork with Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You showed William Leavitt—

TOM JANCAR: William Leavitt.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in cooperation with Larry Gagosian Gallery.

TOM JANCAR: That's because—Leavitt had shown with Gagosian. And Gagosian—we knew Gagosian, you know, because we had built his gallery, on Almont, the first gallery—physical, you

know, brick-and-mortar gallery he had.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The first building, the first—

TOM JANCAR: Building.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Before that, he had been on La Cienega. And before that, he'd been on Westwood.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: His first fancy—

TOM JANCAR: First fancy one.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —fancy, big gallery.

TOM JANCAR: First fancy big one. And Leavitt, I believe—I think his first show was David Salle. And, oddly, David Salle was Ilene Segalove's boyfriend—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, how funny.

TOM JANCAR: —you know. So—anyway. But he was also showing Leavitt, at that time. And Larry actually had really good taste, you know? He was—he was really—could pick things out, you know —

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, yeah!

TOM JANCAR: —had good taste.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

TOM JANCAR: And a lot of people don't credit him with that. They—you know—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Larry Gagosian had fantastic taste.

TOM JANCAR: —yeah—I mean, a lot of people think that he is just this evil—you know. And, for us, he was an introduction into a whole other ball of wax—right? You know. He was a guy that didn't pay his bills. You know, you had to hunt him down to get paid. But he sort of thought that we were kind of like, you know, like he would treat us like children, you know, like, "I'll show you guys how to do this," you know, or that kind of thing, right? And he would come to our shows and—but, you know, he was okay with us showing Leavitt, as long as we gave him credit, you know. So—[They laugh.] So that was—that was interesting, you know. And he wasn't as big then as he—as he is, you know, now, that—you know, he was starting out also.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, yeah. He was starting out —he had a big vision, for sure.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And, he certainly showed—and he showed Chris Burden, from the very beginning, you know.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And it's—people don't give him credit for being where he was so early, you know? Basquiat, Salle, all these people, he showed them very early.

TOM JANCAR: Absolutely.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And it sounds like a done deal now, but it really was very amazing at the time.

TOM JANCAR: No, even for payment, I would trade him things. Like, I have a—a Lichtenstein print that I traded for, instead of getting money. And I have Bernd and Hilla Becher photographs. So he was—he was an influential person, even on us also. But also I had met, at that time, Peter Bartlett. Because Peter Bartlett was working for Larry.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Ah! Peter Bartlett.

TOM JANCAR: He was—he was Gagolian's assistant. At the same time, Connie Lewallen was associated with him. But I think both Peter and Connie had loaned Larry—money. So, anyway, that was an introduction to those people, you know, that were doing other things. So—I think another thing to note about the art world, at that time—and you may not have felt this, because you were reviewing people in different galleries around town—doing different things, but, for us, for Richard and I, mostly, like—the people that we knew were mostly just centered in the center part of town or in Hollywood. We didn't even know people downtown, except David Amico. There was many other people, painters especially, that were operating downtown, later on that I learned about, that we never even had any exposure to. So geographically, I believe, in those days, there was a—a regionalism, within the city.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, I think that's probably true. I don't know if there were any galleries downtown.

TOM JANCAR: There was the—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: There was like—there were like—

TOM JANCAR: —Neil Ovsey or somebody like that. Do you know who I'm talking about? There was —

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Neil Ovsey was—

TOM JANCAR: Wasn't he downtown?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —originally, he was not. Originally, he was in the Valley. But—really, the important galleries, you know—also—let's not even go too much further. But, I mean, if you think about it, Rosamund Felsen was on La Cienega.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Then, as now, it was always better—[laughs]—to be in the middle of town. I mean, it's really—it was so hard—

TOM JANCAR: I think so too.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —for people to get around in L.A., even in 1980. It was hard for

people to get around in L.A., but not like now.

TOM JANCAR: Well, I think when Jean Milant moved down there, you know, it made somewhat of a difference. And—but he was on Western before that, I think.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah! Yeah.

TOM JANCAR: And—yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He was in Hollywood. And so, you were—so Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt existed from 1980 to 1982, and then what happens?

TOM JANCAR: Well, let me just do one more thing—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: —on Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt. We also had an introduction to this painter named Jerry Brane, who calls himself Gerard Brane now. Anyway, he was living in a building on—that's torn down. It was a brick building. It was on Hoover and Washington, I believe, which was on the fringes of downtown. And in his same building, lived Guy de Cointet. And, so that's when I started to learn about Guy de Cointet. And I remember going to Rosamund Felsen Gallery. And, I went there just to look at his show. And there was a bunch of Guy de Cointets, in frames, drawings, you know, leaning against the wall. And I asked her about them. And for some reason, it just instinctually clicked and, so, I bought one. And I paid \$400 for it, which was more than I had ever paid for anything, at that time. And I'm very glad I bought it. But, anyway—so I became more aware of those kind of people. I never had the opportunity to show him but—which is unfortunate.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, I think he died, right?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. He was one of the first people to die from AIDS, that we knew about.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, was it AIDS?

TOM JANCAR: It was AIDS.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It was AIDS.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But he died, well, probably right after that—he died early.

TOM JANCAR: Very—very early. I remember people saying that his doctors didn't know why he died. It was really, really early, and real fast.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] It was very fast. I remember that.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I hadn't heard that was the cause. But, yeah. So he died—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But anyway, you liked the work. You responded to the work—

TOM JANCAR: Oh—oh, yeah, very much so. And Jerry Brane was actually, like, helpful to us. He actually even gave us money. Like, he gave us \$1,000, at one point, just as a gift, you know, just because we were doing the right thing. His paintings were actually selling to fashion designers in New York City, which was really odd. He had a really sort of niche market, where he could sell to them—they would come to his studio and just buy paintings.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He was a good painter back then.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, very much so. And, anyway, so he was a, you know, important contact too. So I just wanted to reiterate that many of the things that Richard and I did and what Richard did later, also, came from these kind of contacts.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And what was the connection to Louise Lawler? How did you happen to do that show?

TOM JANCAR: Through David Amico.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Again.

TOM JANCAR: And I think, at one point, David Amico and Louise were a couple, long, long before. But he had maintained contact with her.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—

TOM JANCAR: And also, she was, you know, she was really friendly with Sherrie Levine. And Sherrie Levine was at CalArts, at that time. And I was making these kind of loosely appropriated paintings. And I remember Sherrie Levine was making paintings—starting to make, you know, paintings, or—that were appropriated. And she, I remember, said, "Well, maybe we should make some Mondrians together." And I thought, well, no, I don't really want to do that. Because I didn't really want to make art with other people, you know. So—I didn't tell her that, but—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: So this is another—this is another faux pas.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I think that Kuhlenschmidt said in his interview that Louise provided a lot of the introductions to people in New York.

TOM JANCAR: That's not true.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That might be for him later. That might be a later connection.

TOM JANCAR: That was later. That was later. Yeah. The initial introductions all came from Amico.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Now, let's see. Let's—

TOM JANCAR: We would have not even known who Louise was, at all.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Was she not at CalArts? Yeah.

TOM JANCAR: No, she wasn't at CalArts.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Wasn't at CalArts.

TOM JANCAR: No. I don't think she ever did—I don't know. I don't really know if she ever taught. But I don't think so.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did you know about—

TOM JANCAR: I think she was working for Castelli, in New York, as a—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: She was—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —definitely.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So let's go back to the breakup.

TOM JANCAR: Oh, okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you're '80—1980 to '82. You have fought the good fight. You're not selling any work.

TOM JANCAR: We're not selling any work. We sold, I think, one Louise piece. And we sold some thrift store paintings. We may have sold a few other things, but nothing to speak of. Everything is being—all the financial end of it is being generated by our construction work. And so, about that time, my wife becomes pregnant with our child.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, let's talk about that. I haven't even talked about your personal life.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Who were you—who are you married to, and—?

TOM JANCAR: Okay. I was married to—Jean Pruitt was her name.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How do you spell that?

TOM JANCAR: P-R-U-I-T-T.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: U-I-T-T. And first name is Jean?

TOM JANCAR: Jean, J-E-A-N.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And what year did you get married?

TOM JANCAR: We got married in '77, I think. This is terrible. This maybe shouldn't go on the record. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What does she do? Was she in the art world?

TOM JANCAR: She was an arts student at UC Irvine. And so, she became a—actually, an architectural model maker, for Ladd, Kelsey & Woodard, which is a—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: For Ladd—

TOM JANCAR: —Kelsey & Woodard, which is an architectural firm, in Newport Beach. Anyway, so at—by 1980, she's pregnant. And in 1981, [our] daughter was born. And her name is Ava Jancar.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: A-V-A?

TOM JANCAR: A-V-A. And she was born. And so, simultaneously, I have my gallery. By—you know, and by other times of the day, I'm doing construction work. So I've got this kind of weird, duality life, you know?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And where are you living?

TOM JANCAR: I'm living in Park La Brea, lived on the thirteenth floor of a high-rise in Park La Brea. And my daughter was the only child in the building, when she's born. [They laugh.] Because we were living in a—they had a building for people with families, but we didn't really want to live there. And so we lived in the other one. So she was the only child in the building. So consequently, at this—for me, personally, I was beginning to realize that—well, you know, we're not really going to sell anything, probably. We're not going to do too well.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And doing construction work isn't going to cut it, you know. I'm going to get tired of this. And we're working too hard. And it's dangerous, et cetera. And my wife wants to move back to Orange County, you know, and raise our child. So I basically agreed, you know, and said, you know, that's what we should do, we should do the right thing, you know? And, I spent the next 24 years of my life doing the right thing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what was that?

TOM JANCAR: Well, basically, we moved back to Orange County. And I continued to do construction work for a while. And simultaneously, I started to take architectural drafting classes. Because I had developed this interest in architecture. And I got a job working for Buffums department stores, for their corporate office in Long Beach, drawing [and designing what –T J] they call store fixtures, they are like the actual things that the garments hang on—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: —or casework and things like that. And I really never knew this world existed, you know, until—and I applied for the job. And it was like, I was learning drawing, but I was good enough at it that I could do that job. And then I learned a lot, doing the job. And it was my first introduction to retail—the retail world and the architecture that supported the retail world. And so I consequently went on to work in that environment, building bigger and bigger things.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Were you working for Buffums the whole time?

TOM JANCAR: I worked for Buffums for a couple of years. And then I went to work for J.C. Penney Company. And J.C. Penney had a regional office in Buena Park. And that's where I worked. And it was quite a big step up for me, you know, as all of a sudden, I had a real corporate-world job. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: With a salary.

TOM JANCAR: —with a salary and benefits and the whole thing. And I was legit, right? And it was a good company to work for. They were—they were making a lot of money and we were building a lot of buildings very rapidly. So it was kind of like I was building this huge portfolio, and lots of knowledge—I was getting a lot of knowledge. And so I just basically did that, for—I worked for them, I think, for 10 years. And then they took our office and relocated it to Plano, Texas, which is a suburb of Dallas. And they offered to move me, you know, offered all kinds of benefits. And I just couldn't—I had bought a house here, in Irvine. And I just did not want to relocate to Texas, even though I would get a bigger house. I knew that it would be very hard for me to come back to the real estate market in California.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

TOM JANCAR: So, basically decided to leave J.C. Penney. And I got severance. And then I went to work for Home Depot. And Home Depot had a regional office also, which was in Orange. And basically, I did the same thing for Home Depot. I worked for them building new stores and—remodels, multimillion-dollar projects, like. It was all about nothing that had to do with the art world. And so, for many, many years, I talked to no one at work about the art world. They didn't know what I had done. And I never talked to them about it. And it was just—I guess I was fine with it. And—but then, it got to be time, as time went on doing all that—and my daughter got old enough and she went through college.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Where did your daughter go to college?

TOM JANCAR: She went to UCLA. And she got a degree in art history.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: Everything—I told—always told my daughter, "Don't get involved in the art world." And every time I would say that, it was only more temptation. And so I guess it was not so much what I said, but what I did. Like, because I would take her around to all these art shows and stuff like that, and exhibitions.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, in your spare time, when you weren't working, you still went to art exhibitions?

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Yes. And I still maintained, in the back of my mind, that I wanted to have a gallery again. But I still—I couldn't quite justify it, when she was in college still. But once she got out of college, it became more real to me that I really wanted to have a gallery, and I had kind of, like, not finished what I started out to do, that I had stopped.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And were you married all this time. Did you—

TOM JANCAR: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —stay married?

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Yes. I'm still married, at that time. And anyway—so I just decided that I can afford to do it, you know—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, before we get—

TOM JANCAR: —like to have another gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —before we get to that, let's—

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —let's talk about the closure of—

TOM JANCAR: Sure, sure.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —Kuhlenschmidt.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because I know you want your version clarified about how this closure took place.

TOM JANCAR: Okay. The closure was mutually agreed. Okay? And we both basically decided that this was not going to work. And there's a document—I have a copy of it somewhere—where I had filled out this document, and had Richard and I both sign it, which basically stated that Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery would not be reopened in—in the same space as—as we had occupied. And he had agreed—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Why did you do that?

TOM JANCAR: Because—I think what the—the idea was that I didn't want any confusion about—that, if he opened another gallery, that it would be basically blended into his new gallery. And I just wanted it to be autonomous. I wanted what we had done together to be a defining moment. And I felt that was the best way to do it. Otherwise, I felt the temptation might be too great, on his part, to go ahead and just reopen the gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] So are you saying he did not want to close the gallery?

TOM JANCAR: I think, in fact, maybe he did not want to close the gallery. And I think, by his actions, that probably proved out to be true.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And—because it had become a big part of his social life. His marriage was failing. And it was his world, you know? And it probably—it also had become a world that he didn't know that well, as well as I did. Because he hadn't lived it, like, before the gallery, like I did. And so it was new to him and it was developing and, you know, so—and I don't really hold it against him for doing that. I think I did, at that time. But now I don't. And I think it was good that he went on and tried to like, you know, at least give more chance to these people, you know? And which he did. But I think his gallery, the Richard Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, was much an emulation of the Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, with some add-ons, you know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, yeah. And he reopened in Los Altos, the Los Altos building.

TOM JANCAR: Yes, he did.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So was that—if he signed a document—he moved to a different space?

TOM JANCAR: He moved to a different space. And I think that, in his mind, that was legitimate.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: So that was—you know, I guess that was legitimate. So—I just didn't want it to be like, all of a sudden, I'm gone and then this whole thing's going on exactly the same. Right? And, so that was it. And it was—for me, it was a big deal, because I was ending it. I wasn't going to continue it, at that point. And I guess I did maybe have some premonition that he would want to continue.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Why don't we stop there and take, just —

TOM JANCAR: A break?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —just a little momentary break, anyway.

TOM JANCAR: Sure.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And then we'll—just hang on. Let's—

[END OF CARD ONE.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: This is Hunter Drohojowska-Philp, interviewing Tom Jancar, at the Pomona—[laughs]—

TOM JANCAR: Pomona College.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —Pomona College art gallery, in Claremont, California, on June 23rd, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, card number two. So, Tom, before we stopped for lunch, we were talking about your working—taking a break from being an art dealer, for a while. And then, for reasons—all sorts of reasons, you decided to go back to it, by opening the Thomas Jancar Gallery, in Chinatown. And you opened that in 2006.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, that's correct.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What were—what were the—was the process by which you decided to return to that crazy occupation?

TOM JANCAR: That's a good point. Because I actually left a very—pretty stable corporate job, you know, to return. And people were shocked that I had done it. And I think it was a combination of years and years of wanting to do it, and not for any good financial reasons. Because I was well aware of the hurdles that I would come across. And so it was just—it was one of those things that I guess I never—I have always had trouble doing, but I—I think that people want to do. They want to do things that are important to them in their life. And that was something I wanted to do. And even—I was even willing to bear the consequences of failure. And so I decided to do it. I actually just quit my job, and actually just went—and I was looking for a gallery already, when I was working. And I located a space. It was on Wilshire Boulevard. And it was only, like, three or four blocks away from Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt's location. And that was important to me, because that was referential. And I wanted it to be somewhat referential to the former gallery's location. And it was a really old building.

It was—it was not as old as the Los Altos building, but pretty old, 1929.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And what was the address?

TOM JANCAR: It was 41—no, wait a minute—40—oh. I don't know. I have to look it up.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It was—but it was Wilshire.

TOM JANCAR: Wilshire—Wilshire and St. Andrews. [3875 Wilshire Blvd. –TJ]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. Anyway, it was in a high-rise. And there was a little space that was on the top floor, that had fantastic views, all across mid-Wilshire. And so I thought, this is the space. And it was really in bad shape. And so I spent about, oh, three months working on it, and finally got it in good shape. And then I kind of knew about my programming, basically what I wanted to do. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What was the rent there?

TOM JANCAR: The rent was \$469, which was really reasonable.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah. How big was it?

TOM JANCAR: It was only about, maybe, 350 square feet, very small. But again, it was an emulation of the original space, you know, or a reiteration. And it was—we also had access to the roof. So that was kind of like really great for openings. People could go on the roof, and have these great views. A lot of people thought it was a detraction from the art, actually, because the views were better than the art—which was not the case.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: But, anyway. Anyway, within going back into the business, I knew not to expect too much. But the economy was better than it had been when I had been with Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt. And so—and there was a lot of people that were doing really well. But I also took on kind of a—a difficult task, and that was that I really felt that female artists should—had been underrepresented, you know, in the art world—and that I was going to sort of concentrate on that as best I could. And I still was going to show things that I wanted to show. But I actually came to—by looking around, realized that actually, like, a lot of work that I was seeing was being made by females. And so that became a—kind of known, you know? And I kind of built a whole program around that. And I think I was one of the few galleries, not just in Los Angeles, but almost anywhere, that had a greater percentage of female artists than male artists.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Good!

TOM JANCAR: And so that was—that was the big deal. And Micol Hebron, one of my artists, has gone on, later, to do a whole program based on that, which was a percentage of artists in—that are either male or female, in many galleries, all across America or the world.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Tracking how many women are shown—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —how many women are sold, and so forth.

TOM JANCAR: The Gallery Tally Project. Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: So in doing that, I kind of learned a lot about the gender differences in the art world and what people thought about it. And, to me, before, gender wasn't a big deal. I had shown female and male artists before equally. And I had never really thought about gender as being an issue. And this—this time, it was—I was more aware of it. But I wasn't like really pushing that we had less males. But I think that it was the thrust of what I was doing with Jancar Gallery. And so I think, for most of my programming, it continued that way, where males were—it was more like token males were involved. [They laugh.] So that was kind of a—I felt, a noble cause.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Who do you consider the most—the artist—the most prominent or notable artist you showed, during that period, between 2006 and 2015?

TOM JANCAR: Well, probably the one that was most notable, I thought, that had been overlooked a lot, that was an important artist, is Ilene Segalove. And from talking to other people, too, I came to understand that she was like really a female artist that was really the bridge to—from Conceptual artists to Pictures Generation artists. She was somewhere in between there. And she'd sort of been forgotten, in that process of the—but in her day, when she was younger, she was very well-known, and very recognized. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And during lunch, you were saying she was David Amico—she and David Amico—

TOM JANCAR: David Salle.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —David Salle—she and David Salle were partners.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, they were. They were boyfriend and girlfriend. And that was when he was at CalArts. And she would go to CalArts and audit classes. A lot of people think Ilene went to CalArts. But she didn't. She would just go there. And she was just friends of the people there. And she would sit in on the classes. And, so as Salle, you know, was planning to move to New York City, and I think it was with James Welling and maybe somebody else—I can't remember exactly. And so I saw a lot of his correspondence with Ilene. Because she kept all this stuff. And he was saying to—trying to convince Ilene that she should go to New York with him, to become a painter. Because he was going to become a painter, you know. Previous to that, he wasn't. He was a conceptual artist, using photography mostly. And so, he was trying to convince Ilene to come with him, and they would—could join forces and become this new wave of painters that would emerge from New York City. And he said that he was all lined up with a dealer, and her name was Mary Boone. And sure enough, you know, that's what happened. But Ilene didn't go. She was very resistant to using other people's suggestions. Frank Gehry had also, earlier, tried to get Ilene to become an architect. And that's when Frank Gehry was not an architect, and he was just going to school, you know. So she had had plenty of opportunity from guys telling her what to do—that—and I think she maybe didn't like that idea. Anyway. So, I believe that she is one of the people that I helped to resurrect. I don't know. That might not be—very—the—that puts a lot of—gives me a lot of credit and not them, which isn't really true, because it's really a partnership. Because when I first contacted Ilene, she didn't know who I was. And—but she knew after I described. And she said that she had all of her work in boxes, that had come from a retrospective that she had had in Laguna Beach, in the '90s. And so, sure enough, when I got there, everything was in boxes. Nothing had been taken out. And she said that she was just going to get rid of it all pretty soon and, if we could do something with it, she would

entertain—she said, "Just get rid of it. Whatever you want to—" You know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Had she stopped making art, and just—?

TOM JANCAR: No, no. She was still making art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah?

TOM JANCAR: But she had had a brief hiatus, like—because she actually went into writing books. And one of her books was called *Tell*—what was it called? *List Me—List Me* [*List Your Self*, 1996]. And she wrote it with one of—you know Bob and Bob? One of them, she wrote it with. And it was basically a way to just make lists about yourself and then kind of psychoanalyze yourself, by making lists. And it became a bestseller. And so she was very, you know, like, "This is —" You know, "I'm outta the art world."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: "I'm an author." Right? So she did that for quite a while, actually. And then I think she would edit other people's books, which I think she still does. And anyway, so she was really agreeable to work with. And I just kept telling her that her work was more valuable than she thought it was. Because she was just really on the verge of throwing things away. And sure enough, we were able to keep raising her prices, you know. And we sold lots and lots of her work to museums.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, that's good. How many—you gave her a few shows, quite a few shows.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, quite a few shows—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How many?

TOM JANCAR: —maybe three or four, at least, maybe more than that. And so, you know, I went on to try to do things with other people, in similar ways.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, how long were you in the St. Andrews place—

TOM JANCAR: I was there for—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —before you moved to Chinatown?

TOM JANCAR: —two years—two years. And then I moved to Chinatown. Because Roger Herman, who—I had shown his work and known him for a long time, he had a gallery space in Chinatown, called Black Dragon Society. And he was going to vacate it. He didn't want to be there and do that anymore. Anyway, he was in partnership with a few other people. And so he said, "Do you want the space?" And I just said, "Yeah, sure. That'd be great," you know. And so basically I took over the space and just made a few minor changes to it. But it was—it was ready to go. So. That was a—that was a good move, although I think, in retrospect, I think I did fine on Wilshire, you know, I didn't need the bigger space, necessarily. But it was always more tempting to have more space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It wasn't that big. [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, it wasn't that big. But it had a basement. Did you go to the basement?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Of the Black Dragon space?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, I don't remember the basement—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. I had a full basement, which I did exhibitions in also.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Then I must have gone down there. Because I went to a lot—quite a few of your shows—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —Roger's shows, in fact, Roger Herman. You showed him then as well.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. I showed him. I showed his paintings of the '80s, which was like a really great show, I thought. You know, like the—the paintings were fantastic. And actually—another person not appreciated as fully as should be.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I agree.

TOM JANCAR: You know? I—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Were you able to—just out of curiosity, were you able to sell any of Roger's work?

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Yes—not as much as Ilene, but still sold a good number of pieces. Then, you know, I worked with other people, like Susan Mogul, you know? Like, people had kind of forgotten about her. And I worked with Robert Cumming.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes. I saw those shows.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. It was really interesting. I think Robert Cumming is probably one of the greatest living photographers, even if you could call him a photographer. I don't prefer to do that. But—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, I think of him as a conceptual photographer—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —like James Welling, maybe. I don't know.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He's—he was always—he does seem to be a little—you were finding people who had been—I would say, who had sort of fallen through the cracks.

TOM JANCAR: And that was part of the goal also, was to do—to help these people—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

TOM JANCAR: —if possible, and—because they had been a big influence on me. I remember seeing Robert Cumming's work at the Newport Harbor Art Museum, when I took a class from Tom Garver at Orange Coast College. And there was work of Lewis Baltz, Robert Cumming, and somebody else. But I can't remember who it was. And I thought Robert Cumming's were just amazing, you know? It's like, fantastic artist, right?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

TOM JANCAR: And, so anyway, that was—and then there was other—many other people that I tried to work with, and some with more success than others, that were from another era. And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And who were some of the other highlights, in your opinion?

TOM JANCAR: Well, oddly enough, one of them was Annie Sprinkle. And she was, like, such an odd artist. Because, like, she had been known—got all of her notoriety from being a porn star, basically, but had morphed herself into being an artist. And I came to realize, after looking at her body of work, that she was an artist all along. And so, I did a show that was kind of of her and her partner, but basically it was a chronology, you know, that showed all of her work, that goes way back in time. I worked with Hildegarde Duane. That was somebody else. There was many, many people. But then I was also trying to pair up, whenever possible, an artist from the older era with a newer-era artist, that might have some sort of symbiotic relationship, or some similarity. And so that's why I did, like, a show of Ilene Segalove with Micol Hebron. And so, that was interesting. The artists didn't always like it. But I did. So. Anyway.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Who were some of the younger artists you showed, apart from Micol?

TOM JANCAR: Let me—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because we were talking earlier about like, you know, we really have—we came up in L.A. in a rather exceptional time, that sort of late-'70s, early-'80s period, which was so feverish in the development of our artists here. We remember it fondly. And then—but, to reach out and find younger artists, we were talking about—

TOM JANCAR: And sort of—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —the challenge of bringing your attention, but all of your knowledge, to a younger generation and who attracts your interest.

TOM JANCAR: Have to reboot.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: Can you stop—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

TOM JANCAR: —we just stop for a minute? I have to—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: We can just talk—talk with answers directly. You could just sort

of say—what I'll ask you in the meantime—we'll go back to that question.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In the meantime, tell me about the traffic of people coming to your gallery in Chinatown. Did you have—

TOM JANCAR: More traffic—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —very many visitors?

TOM JANCAR: You know, I don't think I had, percentage-wise, that many more visitors in Chinatown than on Wilshire, in the high-rise. Because Wilshire, on the high-rise, was a destination, whereas Chinatown tended to be like—people would come to go to all the galleries, and so they would just float from one gallery to another. But the ones that came on Wilshire were specifically coming to me. And so I think the quality of the visitor was different than the Chinatown experience. Sometimes Chinatown openings would be enormous. Other times, there wouldn't be very many people at all.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, we talked about the difference in dealing now, and I said that I wondered if people were actually buying art on the internet. And you said you thought not, you thought that people were still basically interested in buying art that they have seen in person.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. I think, from my experience, that's the case. Now, I'm sure that there could be a whole world that exists out there that I don't know anything about. But it's been my experience that the people that buy art, they have to like it and be connected to it, like, by their own wishes. I really don't think you can sell art to people. I don't think you can shove art down somebody's throat, like, that they don't like. They have to really be drawn to it themselves. And that's been my experience with museum curators also, or museum people that are buying art for the institutions. They usually really, really like the work, or—and they're not going to buy it just out of principle, usually—so—and I think that's fine. I think that's maybe the way it should be.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

TOM JANCAR: That's why it's hard for me to believe that somebody says—maybe a friend tells somebody to go buy something, and then they should go to an internet—or web site and then make the purchase. Now, I know that exists, because there is people that buy paintings because they're told to go buy the Gerhard Richter painting, because it's a really good investment. But for the level that I was on, you know, as a dealer and the kind of work that I was selling, I don't think that would work. They either have to have the connectivity and the personal desire and wish to own that thing—and want to have it. For example, like, at one opening, where—it was an Ilene Segalove opening. Like we're there, you know, and crowd's coming in and everything. And this woman comes up and says, "That piece over there, what do I need to do to buy it?" And I said, "Well, all you need to do is write me a check," you know?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And she says, "Well, I don't have a checkbook." And I said, "Well, I don't take credit cards." And she said, "Well, what do I do?" And anyway, so I had an assistant, who was sitting next to me. And the assistant says, "You know, it's funny. You sort of look like Drew Barrymore." And she says—and the woman says, "That's because that's who I am." [They laugh.] And, so, anyway, she bought this—this—this Segalove work. Eventually we worked it out, how to buy it. But she bought

the Segalove work, you know. And this was about the time that she was making some film about her relationship with her mother or something. And, so—and this was a work that Ilene had done, with her mother holding works of art—and there was a photo—that Ilene had made as a child and commenting on them, you know. So that was like a really good example of what I'm talking about, where there's the personal connection to the work and that was what drives the sale. And I think it's—for me, it's almost always been like that. And so I haven't had to beg people. And whenever I have tried to convince somebody that they should buy something that they don't want to, it never works.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] And what's the most expensive piece that you were able to sell, in your last—the last incarnation of your gallery?

TOM JANCAR: I think the most expensive piece was a Segalove piece. And it was \$60,000. Yeah. So, yeah. And I kept raising the prices. And the early work is rare, and they're unique. And they're—we made editions of the work, also. So, as the gallery, I decided, you know, like we should make editions, to help more people have the work. And actually, a lot of institutions did buy the editions. And we kept a really low, you know, edition number. And so that helped to promote, like, certain works that were really famous, of hers.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, you were going to talk about some of the younger artists that you showed—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —younger generation, that you showed.

TOM JANCAR: I was going to try to bring up a list, then we could go through them, if you like. Can I just take a minute?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Not everybody, but just a few people who come to mind.

[Audio break.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So some of the younger artists you chose—because we were talking about the way in which you look—who were some of the younger—

TOM JANCAR: And there's—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —people you mentioned?

TOM JANCAR: —well, one of my main younger artists, that I did concentrate on a lot, was Micol Hebron. And when I first heard about Micol, I only heard that she was, like, a teacher. And she had actually contacted me, because she was interested in buying a Susan Mogul work. And I actually didn't know that much about her work, but I started to learn more about her work. And I realized that she was, like, really an interesting and important artist—and remains so to this day—and really prolific. And so, I thought that she was a perfect example of a counterpart to some of these people, like Ilene Segalove. And, then I did find some—I did show the work of Judith Linhares, who's a painter from New York City, who's not actually from New York City. She's actually from Redondo Beach. And my uncle had been her high school art teacher. And she had moved to the Bay Area and became a—one of the better known painters that was in the first "*Bad*" *Painting* show, the Marcia Tucker show. And so, I actually started a relationship with her about showing her work,

which was really interesting, and like, really—just to see her work go way back in time, and just real breadth of the work actually propelled me to look for younger artists that were working similarly. And one of them that was working similarly was Jasmine Little. And, she was like an undergraduate out of UCLA and has only recently, I think, got a master's degree from a university in Chicago—not Chicago—Colorado. Sorry. Anyway, so I showed her work with Judith Linhares's and with another, male artist, Cyril Kuhn, who—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How do you spell that?

TOM JANCAR: That's C-Y-R-I-L K-U-H-N. And, Cyril was a painter also. So all three of them were painters. And yet they all had this sort of—a wacky sort of bad-painting aesthetic. And so, I proceeded to do quite a few other shows like that, that would—played older and younger artists off of each other.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Were you finding the whole enterprise of doing this to be intellectually rewarding?

TOM JANCAR: It was intellectually rewarding. And sometimes it was beneficial to the younger artist more than the older artist. But that was kind of the idea. It was kind of the idea that the more established artist would give some momentum to the younger artist. Because we're also—we're following—falling into this period of time when the recession was back.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And the whole emerging-artist thing was disappearing. And so, really, the—all of the call that we had to actually purchase work was mostly being generated by institutions that wanted the work of the well-known artist. And that was the case with Robert Cumming also, where I had many people—I sold a lot of his work and many people wanted it who had already known about him.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Well, yeah. He's a well-known figure. And the people you showed were well-known figures. I mean, it wasn't like you were showing people who were—had a certain kind of name recognition within a knowledgeable clientele.

TOM JANCAR: Right, right. Yes. That was—that was intentional. It was intentional to like do that, you know, to actually get people that actually had name recognition and had a track record, had success, that had sort of fallen between the cracks a bit, and we're going to—I was going to help them, you know, reemerge. And, also, in that reemergence, we would be able to introduce outside—visitors to the gallery to younger artists, who they didn't know about. So consequently, many of the museums came to see people like Micol's work, who would have never seen it. So that was an important part of the venture, I think, that was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what did it do for you, to have this gallery for those years? Like what did it do for you, personally?

TOM JANCAR: Personally, it was the fulfillment of, like, a—sort of a previous dream, that—to continue the gallery. I realized, as I was doing it, that it had to be—manifest in a different way, that it had to not be the same as—as Jancar/Kuhlschmidt was. And I was okay with that. And it was just going to be like a new venture, basically. But for me, personally, also, it had a lot to do with that I was going to continue to do what I had interrupted before and sort of, selflessly—you know, I had said, you know, "I'm going to become a normal person, live a normal life, and have normal things for

my family." And so that's what I did. And that's—once I got to the point where I didn't need to do that anymore, then I could reemerge in this—in this new incantation. And actually, when my gallery started again, I was really surprised how many people remembered that I had had a gallery previously. That was something I didn't realize would happen. Because a long time had passed. You know, it had been, like, 20-some years that I'd been away from it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And during this time, personally, you must have—you got divorced?

TOM JANCAR: Yes. [Technically separated, in my mind divorced. –T J]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what year did that take place?

TOM JANCAR: It happened really recently.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, okay. So it wasn't—you didn't get divorced before this gallery venture.

TOM JANCAR: [Separated. –T J] No, no, no.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. And was your wife supportive in the—?

TOM JANCAR: My wife was supportive of the gallery to a certain extent, you know. In times like when it was stressed, she would talk bad of it. But mostly, she was supportive.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And so, financially, did it do okay? Did you break even?

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Yes. That was the really odd part about it, was that Jancar Gallery was very different than Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, financially. You know, Jancar Gallery actually made money, and it actually generated successful sales, whereas Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt was—it was rare or none at all.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, times have—had changed, as well.

TOM JANCAR: Times had changed. Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And we did—do have—as you said, there's more support for these historically important artists.

TOM JANCAR: Right. Exactly.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now you chose these people, obviously, as an extension of your interest in Conceptual art and photographic art.

TOM JANCAR: Sometimes, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Am I correct in that?

TOM JANCAR: That's correct. But I also have a connection to painting. And many of the artists I showed initially, within the first couple of years at Jancar Gallery, were painters. And a good example would be Harriet Korman, who was a painter that Claire Copley had shown. And—but she was also, like, a painter—or is a painter that actually did always have affiliation with Conceptual

artists, much in the same way as Sol LeWitt did, you know. So, I think that—I've always had like a strong interest in painting, you know, because, like I told you before in the interview, my mother was a painter. And so, I had looked at painting a lot, and really started to know and learn more about it, early on, and became a great appreciator of painting.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And did you ever return to making your own art?

TOM JANCAR: No, I never returned to making my own art, although I—in the '80s, from maybe '79 to '83, I was actively making art, at the same time as I had Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery. And mostly it was appropriated, loosely-appropriated paintings by famous painters of the past, anywhere from Kirchner to Watteau to whomever. And, so—there's an example of one of them here. I can show it to you.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And do you still have that? Did you try to sell it? Or did it all just remain in your own private—?

TOM JANCAR: I have mostly—I mostly have it. And then, a few people that I know have—have some of it too, that were gifts. I never made a career out of it, you know. I never had any financial success with my own work.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And when you had—when you said that you wanted to return—you had this normal life for, like, 20-some-odd years, and you went back to this—what is different in running a gallery from having a life with a job and raising a child, and all that? What's different about it, for you personally?

TOM JANCAR: Oh. The big difference was the paycheck. [They laugh.] The big difference was the paycheck. Because, like, when you're running your own business, you know, it's just all about, like, where—where's the money going to come from, how am I going to get this done. And also, it's a—you know, it's an almost 24-7 endeavor, you know. I would spend all my time, you know, doing these things, preparing things, doing emails, correspondence, et cetera, you know, like. Also, initially starting the gallery, again, was a very interesting prospect. Because I was actually deluged by many submissions by artists. And when I first started doing it, I used to try to look at all of them. And it was overwhelming, and a big—and it wasted a lot of my time. And so I became more callous, and decided that I was simply going to make the decisions I wanted to make and not be as open-minded as I intended to be, when I first started up again.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] It's hard not to want to do favors for people.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. And it was hard not to try to do the right thing for people, you know. And, you know—and being discriminatory is all about what a dealer does.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's a good place for us to talk about dealers. You said during the break that you wanted to give—take some time to talk about the importance of dealers and their role.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And I think that's very true in Los Angeles, actually. Because for many—not now—but, for many years, there wasn't much institutional support.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. And I think, like, dealers—a lot of people don't realize what dealers do to

support artists. Like, many, many times, for myself, my own situation, anyway, and I'm sure it's true of everyone else—dealers will spend many hours with individual artists, to hone their skills. And that doesn't mean that the artists aren't talented, or gifted, or are doing the right thing or having the right ideas. They many times don't hear a voice that's actually critical enough in a way that makes sense to where their art is going. And I think that I come from an era where criticality was everything, like, you know. And it was, like, when I went to art school, it was brutal. It was—it wasn't like, you know, political correctness, or being nice to—people would cry at critiques.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: Like—and when I could bring some of that to the—some of these artists, you know, either established or not, that was helpful to them, even if they didn't like it sometimes. And, I also think that it was particularly valuable in working with artists that were established, that didn't really particularly differentiate between—quality between work. They just simply had bodies of work. And—so coming to show their work was a good way of critically sorting it out, and actually inserting my voice into what they were doing. And I think a good dealer will insert their voice. And I think that's probably always been the case. And that's why I think being a dealer is also a creative process. And that's probably why I've never been, as a dealer, motivated to make art anymore, because my creative outlet is by being a dealer, and by inserting myself into their process—or the process, which has to do with the institution of showing your work.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And, you—and you got—your gallery was well received.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I mean, you—think you got a lot of critical support.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah. I got a lot of critical support, and a lot of good reviews—I was—you know? And it could have easily gone the other way, you know. Because, now—at the time I had Jancar Gallery, as opposed to Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, there was way many more galleries, much more competition, and more people, you know, clamoring for spots to show, too, you know. So that's another thing that maybe should be talked about, is the growth of the art market has not kept pace with the growth of the amount of artists that are being produced by the schools that they go to. Like, we have millions of artists, compared to only a few thousand institutions that actually can show their work, be they galleries or museums or whatever. And that's a big failing on somebody's part. And I don't know where to put that failing, other than on the actual schools that promote these programs that produce the artists. And I would not want to be an artist today. You know, the chances are—of success are very low, because the competition is so extremely high.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because when—there are more galleries—there are more galleries in—on one street in Chinatown now than there were in the entire city of Los Angeles—[laughs]—when you started Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt.

TOM JANCAR: Exactly, exactly.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And L.A. isn't even considered the center of the art world—although we think it is. But it has become a sort of an enormous universe, compared to—a universe unto itself—compared to when we started, now—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah. That's a whole other subject, you know. Los Angeles—the development of Los Angeles has been a very strange ride. It's—you know, from the old days, in the

'80s, to now, you would think there would be significant leaps and bounds of difference. But there really isn't as much as you think, compared to how many participants there are. There's so many artists and so many dealers. But percentage-wise, it's not that different than it was in the '80s. And so, I wonder, you know—like, in the '80s, I remember when MOCA was going to open. Everybody was—oh, this was going to, you know, change the face of the art world in Los Angeles. Everything—the demographics would change. L.A. would be elevated, you know, to like, you know, a premier space in the world. Right? It didn't happen. You know, sure, it helped, years later. And the development of downtown Los Angeles happened years later.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Decades later. [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: Decades later. Yeah. So now we're seeing progress, but it took a long time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, it sounds like it was very enjoyable for you. Why did you close in 2015?

TOM JANCAR: I closed because, after thinking and working for a long time on it, I just sort of realized that the gallery had run its course, that we actually—you know, that I had accomplished what I had wanted to accomplish, and, if I was to go on with it, it would just be more of the same, probably, and—or I would have to reinvent it. And it seemed like a better notion just to close it and sort of lock it into a period of time, just as I had done before with Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt. And oddly, when Richard and I closed Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt, there wasn't a—much understanding on either of our part that anything would come of this, that it would be pretty much—you know, that that was—we might have just as well been a flash in the pan, and no one would be asking us about any of this stuff, ever. And, then there was—I don't know when it appeared. But it appeared in the early 2000s. There was a listing of the most important shows, in *Artforum*. And Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt's shows—two of them were listed. And I think that's when I began to realize that we had actually, you know, gotten a name for ourselves. And then I come to do this other endeavor, called Jancar Gallery, which seems as though maybe, by closing it, it might lock it into a period of time which would be appreciated more than just running on and on and on. And I've witnessed other galleries that have run for a long time, like Jean Milant's Cirrus Gallery. And I often wonder if Jean has gotten the due recognition that he deserves. Because as far as I know, he's like the longest-running dealer in Los Angeles, and of great importance. Yet you talk to many people, many young people, they don't even know anything about it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: For the record, we did—I did do an—

TOM JANCAR: I know you did. Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —an interview with him for the Archives. [Laughs.] And we—

TOM JANCAR: And that's good.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and we've asked him for his papers. So—

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah. That's great.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, he's—but you're right. Cirrus is one that has not—is not very well known for importance—of its importance.

TOM JANCAR: Fantastic gallery! Like, all this fantastic art has gone through there, you know. It's just amazing. But, anyway. So, that was kind of like—I just sort of felt like it was like a song that was

over with, you know, maybe this was—had been sung out the way it should be, and it would be better just to close it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, then what do you do now? Because now it's 2017. So you've been closed for a couple of years, more or less. What are—how are you spending your time?

TOM JANCAR: Well, I spend my time traveling, a bit, you know, locally, mostly. I have a house in the desert, in Borrego Springs, California. And so I go there quite a bit. And I do gardening. And I'm cooking. And I do many other things like that, that—and then I've been working on the Archives of American Art.

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you have a girlfriend.

TOM JANCAR: I have a girlfriend.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what is your girlfriend's name?

TOM JANCAR: Her name is Tricia Avant.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yvonne.

TOM JANCAR: Avant.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: A—

TOM JANCAR: A-V-A-N-T.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And she's in the art world.

TOM JANCAR: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What does she—?

TOM JANCAR: She works at Pomona College. And we both live in Ontario, California.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you work together? Do you live together?

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, we live together.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And, what is her position here, again?

TOM JANCAR: She's the gallery coordinator for the art department at Pomona College.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How long have you two been together?

TOM JANCAR: We've been together for almost six years.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah. So it's a serious relationship.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you don't find yourself involved in doing private dealing?

TOM JANCAR: No, not at the moment. I've entertained notions of it. But it's been my experience usually, when people are dealing privately, it's sort of like being a consultant. It's maybe a euphemism for being unemployed. [They laugh.] So, I'm old enough that I feel like I can do this right now. And—but I do get bored, sometimes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And, so you didn't stockpile—there's no inventory. There's no inventory of rare work by any of these people that you take—

TOM JANCAR: Have shown?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that you take out of the basement, and put up for auction, once in a while?

TOM JANCAR: I could do that. I have never done that. I do have an inventory. I do have—I do have work by almost—most artists that I've shown, including back into the Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt time. Because I was pretty active about acquiring work from whomever, just for my own personal collection. But I've never sold much of it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] So there's a Jancar collection awaiting somewhere—

TOM JANCAR: Yes. Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —[laughs] awaiting a location. All right.

TOM JANCAR: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, that's good. Someone's going to read this and say, "Aha!"

TOM JANCAR: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Maybe that's the case, right?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Maybe that's the case. And then, when you closed your gallery, did the artists who you had worked so hard with—were they able to find representation elsewhere?

TOM JANCAR: I'm not certain. I think most of them, that's not the case, you know. And, I don't know if they're actively seeking representation. You know, they've gone on to do other projects, like—Irene Segalove, I still do get references—you know, I get inquiries about. And, Micol Hebron has really, actively, you know, created a whole other level to her work, that really has nothing to do with, like, making work that would be sold in a gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

TOM JANCAR: And I think, many of them, that that's the case. But—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, is there anything you'd like to add, that I haven't asked you? Any more resentment—any resentments you'd like to air? [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: Resentments!

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Anyone hasn't paid their bills to you? Oh, I know a funny story—

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —I want to ask you.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I want to ask you to clarify a story that I did come across, in the papers that you've donated to the archives.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I saw something about a canceled check and David Askevold.

TOM JANCAR: Oh—oh, yeah, yeah. That's an interesting story.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And I couldn't quite make sense of what that story was.

TOM JANCAR: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So—

TOM JANCAR: That's a—that's definitely an interesting story. I showed David Askevold's work with Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt. And David Askevold had been an—brought in as a visiting faculty at UC Irvine. And that's how I had met him. And—and I really like his work. And Richard and I showed his work. And—but the stipulation—and we never did this with anybody else. But Askevold, he was really poor and he needed money, like, to print his work, to print his photographs. And so he said he needed \$800. Well, to Richard and I, \$800 was a lot of money. And, so—but we agreed to give him the money. And, so—but—early on, we came to find out that he was basically drinking the money away, that he was buying Hennessy, you know, by the bottle, one bottle after another. And his thirst for cognac was bigger than his thirst for art-making, at that time. And so, consequently, it irritated me a lot that we had worked so hard for this money, and then he was squandering it as if we were wealthy people that could just easily, you know, give him the money and forget about it. So, I made him sign a document that stated that if he did not pay us, that he would have to pay us in artwork. And so, anyway, he did—he went on back to Nova Scotia, to College of Art and Design there. And he wrote us a check for the amount. And I think it was for half the amount. It might have been for \$400. Anyway, we received the check and the check bounced.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: And that's what you saw, was the bounced check. And, sure enough, he didn't have the money. And I don't know what he was thinking by even writing the check. But anyway—so consequently, when he came back to Los Angeles—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

TOM JANCAR: —Richard and I visited him and we got artwork. And so I have quite a few pieces of David Askevold. And I'm sure Richard does too. So—but that was fine. Because actually, we got something out of it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And I have to say the—that's probably worth more than \$800.

TOM JANCAR: It's probably worth more than the \$800, yeah. And it's a good story.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It is a good story. And I wanted to clarify. Is there anything—are

there any other stories like that?

TOM JANCAR: Gosh. Not that I can think of right now. There's—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, you did a good job.

TOM JANCAR: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You did a very good job pulling together your archive material and a very good job of remembering a lot of details.

TOM JANCAR: Okay. Thank you.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nothing—nothing else comes to mind?

TOM JANCAR: Not this case. Maybe later.

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Thank you so much for your time, Tom Jancar.

TOM JANCAR: Thank you.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And, thank you for supporting the oral history program of the Archives of American Art.

TOM JANCAR: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]