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Oral history interview with Hanford Yang,
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Hanford Yang on October 28 and December 16, 2016. The interview took place in New Jersey; the first session took place in a restaurant and the second session was conducted over the telephone. The interview was conducted by Judith Stein for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution and the Center for the History of Collecting in America at the Frick Art Reference Library of The Frick Collection

Hanford Yang, with help from Frank Born, and Judith Stein 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

JUDITH STEIN: Hanford, good afternoon.

HANFORD YANG: Hi. Thank you.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, and I'm so glad to be able to talk to you. It's Friday, October 28, 2016. So, one of the things I wanted to ask you about is, you were born in—

HANFORD YANG: I was born in Shanghai, China.

JUDITH STEIN: In Shanghai, in 1920—

HANFORD YANG: '29.

JUDITH STEIN: —1929. Yeah. And tell me something about your family—were you an only child?

HANFORD YANG: No, I was one of the 40th—

JUDITH STEIN: The four-oh?

HANFORD YANG: One of the 40th children.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Wow, okay. And tell me about your parents.

HANFORD YANG: Okay. My father is a huge man, a big man, in China. He was one of the last warlords. For some reference, there's a book written—I forget the author's name now—and it's, the name is *[The] Sand Pebble[s]* [by Richard McKenna]. And then later on made a movie—American made a movie out of it—it's called *[The] Sand Pebble[s]*. And a very famous actor played the part of one of the main parts. But in there, besides love story which they made up, but there's an episode—main story—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —of the Sand Pebble. It's the American after the Opium War.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: The American opened up several ports—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —for international groups. So, one of the American riverboats—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —went to Wanxian [ph], which is in China

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and my father was stationed there at the time. And the speedboat of the American navy capsized many—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —fishermen's boats.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —so my father told them to stop, and they didn't. So, my father on the upper part of the hill gunned down one of the boats.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: That was in the 1920s.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: That was unheard of. So, later on they had to apologize, the Americans. But most of it is in a novel called *Sand Pebble*, which they made a movie out of it.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: Now, my father has many concubines—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —besides my mother. We had 40 children all together, and my father treat us very, very strictly—just like the army.

JUDITH STEIN: And were—at this point, had—were you Christian converts, or were you Buddhists?

HANFORD YANG: No, I have no religion, even today.

JUDITH STEIN: And your parents, did they have religion?

HANFORD YANG: No, no. They had no religion. My father's very much against Buddhism—

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: —and he actually, unfortunately, ruined many, many of the antiquity of the Buddha's.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He just asked the soldiers to smash them, because he wanted to be absolutely modern—

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: —of China.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Now, much, much later, my sister of my own mother married to Chiang Kai-shek's nephew—Chiang Kai-shek's sister's son—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —so that drew my family very close to Chiang Kai-shek.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So, when Chiang Kai-shek moved to Taiwan—and my father was with him later on—supposedly, I'm not sure, it was the very last plane—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —in China and Chiang Kai-shek sent over from Taiwan to take my father and my mother and some of the children, not all, to Taiwan. And a group, a big group, remained in China, the children—

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: —remained in China—later suffered greatly by the Communists.

JUDITH STEIN: Wow. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: And I was one of the lucky ones. Actually, by a very unfortunate affair—

JUDITH STEIN: [Side conversation.] Yeah, it's doing just fine.

HANFORD YANG: —my sister's, my sister married to Chiang Kai-shek's nephew—he was an airplane pilot for Chiang Kai-shek, was gunned down by the Communists.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: Oh, yeah. So, my sister immediately became a widow at 20 years old, or 22 years old. So, Chiang Kai-shek thought that my sister was too young just to be a widow, so sent her to America to study, to educate herself. And then, because my sister's too young, and I was to accompany—to send along—to America —

JUDITH STEIN: Okay. Ah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and one year later, the Communists took over China.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay. So this was 1947.

HANFORD YANG: 1947.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. And so, you were born in Shanghai

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: —in 1929, and went to Taiwan in 19—

HANFORD YANG: I did not went to Taiwan.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, you stayed in Shanghai. [Cross talk.] I see.

HANFORD YANG: And I went to America—and came to America with my sister—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —from Shanghai.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, okay. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: I was one of the very lucky ones.

JUDITH STEIN: Lucky, lucky—yes. So that brings you to the United States.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: And where did you land, what were you doing?

HANFORD YANG: Okay. Now, my sister was admitted in Boston University.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It's in the East. My father thought that the East Coast—I was 17 years old—may be too wild for me. So he sent me to Portland, Oregon—a tiny university; there were priests and students—it's called Portland University.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I studied there. And my father, besides being a governor of Sichuan —later on, but of course [appointed -HY/FB/JS] to a mayor of Chungking.

JUDITH STEIN: [Side conversation.] Okay, we're back on. So, you're in Portland, Oregon.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, and to a Catholic school, thinking they can be more strict to me, now—on me. So I stayed there and studied business, because my father also has a bank in China.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So, hopefully, I will take over the bank. So, I graduated from Portland. And then, one day I got acceptance from University of Pennsylvania to Wharton School to study, to continue the education.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure. One question before we leave that part of your life. Was your mother's feet bound, or—

HANFORD YANG: My mother's feet were a revolutionary feet.

JUDITH STEIN: So they were unbound. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: That means bound, and unbound.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh. She had to go through the unbound—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, through the very, very—

JUDITH STEIN: Very, very painful

HANFORD YANG: Yes. And my father—my mother never walked quickly and freely—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-mm [negative].

HANFORD YANG: —because her feet was bound, and released.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, thank you. Okay. So you arrive in Philadelphia—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —in, for the—at the Wharton School—

HANFORD YANG: Wharton School.

JUDITH STEIN: —and what was the curriculum like? Were you taking—you were taking finance—

HANFORD YANG: I was taking finance, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —but did you take other courses, as well?

HANFORD YANG: Well, I was walking—arrived on the campus two weeks earlier, so, for the Wharton School. One night I walked around the campus and I saw a building lit, brightly lit. I went in—it was the architecture school, and it had graduate students' work on the wall. And I saw it, and I thought, "Oh my God, this is what I want to be. I don't want to be a businessman." And by that time my father lost the bank anyway.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Sure.

HANFORD YANG: So for very selfish reason, so I went to—and then the next day I went to the Dean of the School of Architecture, who was also brand-new there that semester—

JUDITH STEIN: And he was—

HANFORD YANG: —from Harvard.

JUDITH STEIN: Right. And what was his name?

HANFORD YANG: His name is—Perk—

JUDITH STEIN: G. Holmes Perkins.

HANFORD YANG: G. Holmes Perkins, yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. I met him when he was 95.

HANFORD YANG: Ooh. Yes. He helped me so much.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, that's good.

HANFORD YANG: Was just school begin—school begins just next day.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: So I went there. I said, "I want to transfer. I don't want to be in Wharton School. I want to be in architecture." He said, "No, no. That's impossible. Wharton School has—all the classes have enough students.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So the freshmen will be two classes, and they are all filled up."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative]

HANFORD YANG: So I sit in front of his office, and don't move.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: Until he got so tired of me, and then he asked me in. I said, "I really want to be in architecture school." So he admitted, and then one of the two classes has one more student.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, it was 21 students, instead of 20 students. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: That's how I started the School of Architecture.

JUDITH STEIN: And in the School of Architecture, who were the teachers you studied with?

HANFORD YANG: It was the golden day, the golden period of University of Pennsylvania Architecture School, and all the great people were brought in—either for short, one semester, or for longer period—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —by G. Holmes Perkins. The famous Dean. Fortunately, all were my students—my teachers, okay, including Louis Kahn—

JUDITH STEIN: Louis Kahn. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Then Paul Rudolph—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —then [Robert] Venturi—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, and then—he was here for a while. He finally went to Australia because he built a building there—[Romaldo] Giurgola. [Later he became Dean of Columbia. -HY/FB]

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, of course. Sure.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So they were all my teachers. So, I absorbed all their knowledge.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, what an extraordinary, lucky man. Again. Again.

HANFORD YANG: Exactly, exactly. And also, one of the school competitions I won award there, okay. And then—

JUDITH STEIN: So, you were in at the UPenn for two years—what—

HANFORD YANG: No, I went there—should be five years—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I went there four years.

JUDITH STEIN: You went four years.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So—and that was when you arrived in, what—what? Do you remember the years that you were in school?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, I wrote it for you. Yeah, this is [inaudible].

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, so you—so, you were at Penn between '50 and '54.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: And did you interact with the city at all? Did you have—because Philadelphia was under, you know—I don't know if Ed Bacon had come on the scene—

HANFORD YANG: Yes, exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: —yet—and it was a city in transition.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, so much, so much. Yes, I did. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yes, I did. And the most fortunate thing is I worked part-time for Louis Kahn, and mostly in the evenings, because in the daytime I worked for a commercial architect.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And at night I would go there for free—work there with Louis Kahn.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Sure yeah, and was that in his office on 16th Street?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes. That was it, that was it, and the table was still there. When I saw—the son made the movie—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, Nathaniel Kahn's *My Architect*—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —you saw the, you saw it. So, then you decided to go to MIT—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —Massachusetts Institute of Technology. And so you arrived in Boston, and was your sister still there, or had she already—

HANFORD YANG: No, my sister left already.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then she decided she didn't like—I think she was studying history or something—and then she came to New York to study the fashion in Parsons School.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, so—

HANFORD YANG: I went there by myself.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay. So you're in Boston, and what was it like to be at MIT in the mid-'50s?

HANFORD YANG: Well, it is the same story as I admitted in the Architecture School of Pennsylvania.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I decide—I had very upset day with Vincent Kling—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —with the Kling. So the next day I just quit, and picked up—

JUDITH STEIN: So you were working for Kling in Philadelphia.

HANFORD YANG: In front of—I graduated.

JUDITH STEIN: After you graduated.

HANFORD YANG: After I graduated.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Okay.

HANFORD YANG: And the work there—because they asked me to do some stupid working drawings—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and unfortunately, is an elevation—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and there were about five pages of the building—they're all grids, like this—almost look alike. And I was slaved—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: And one day he came in. He says, "You are the laziest one. How come every time I pass your table it's the same drawing?" There are five drawings, and, you know, because they're all the same—just grids, you know. Like that. Next day I quit; I just left.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. I can understand that.

HANFORD YANG: I left, and I just picked up my, you know, my belongings.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It was very small, just a little suitcase. So I hop on a plane. In those days, commuting to Boston from New York is \$20.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: So I just hop on the plane and went to MIT. And then I say, "I want to see the dean." Again, I was waiting for a long time. The secretary was very nice—later on, Belluschi married her [laughs]. And that secretary was beautiful and very nice, so she let me in to see Belluschi, who is dean.

JUDITH STEIN: And, yeah, what was his first name?

HANFORD YANG: Pietro. Yeah, Pietro Belluschi.

JUDITH STEIN: Pietro. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And Belluschi [had] just judged an architectural competition. It's called "Old Age Home"—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and he picked me as the first prize.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: I didn't notice that. I went there, I said, "I'm Hanford Yang." "You're Hanford Yang?" "Yeah." Like that. I say, "I want to come to School of Architecture." He said, "No, no, no, no. The graduate school is all filled up." But then I just said, "I came all the way. I really want to admitted—be admitted." And he let me in—again, that class has one more [laughs]. Has one more graduate student.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] You're a very persuasive man.

HANFORD YANG: That's what Pietro said. I was the most persuasive person.

JUDITH STEIN: Well?

HANFORD YANG: I'm—

JUDITH STEIN: It's served you well.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, but I'm far from there—from that, now.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. That was your younger self.

HANFORD YANG: Younger days.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, yes, yes.

HANFORD YANG: So, because of that winning of the competitions, after that I won many, many of them.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. So your thesis at—well, before I get to the thesis—you were interested in solar energy when you were at MIT.

HANFORD YANG: Exactly. Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: How did you get interested in solar energy?

HANFORD YANG: Well, there was—it was MIT, you know, at the time—that using fossil energy—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —you know, pollutes the air. Everybody was talking about it. And using the gas—when it would be completed, you know—depleted. So on and so forth. So there was a competition, again, in America. Then I'm right there—I just talked to [the professor doing research about solar energy -HY/FB/JS]—like that; it was so convenient, at the school.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Well, you were in the forefront of taking solar energy seriously, and understanding it—[Cross talk.]

HANFORD YANG: Exactly. I understand. Exactly. And I was one of the very first, just like that we're doing now, that's divided into smaller panel—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and then fix it on, instead of, previously, this thing is a huge panel, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. In the design I made that.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Wow.

HANFORD YANG: Then, of course, Pietro Belluschi was in the jury. [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. But he did say that it was a very, very, very good idea and deserved this.

JUDITH STEIN: So one of your professors at MIT—and I may be mangling his name here—is Kepes.

HANFORD YANG: Oh, [György] Kepes. I want to mention this very much.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay. So, tell—now he was a Hungarian-born architect who, in 1937—

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: —came to the U.S. and taught in the New Bauhaus, Chicago—

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes.

JUDITH STEIN: And then they brought him to MIT.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: You got there in 1954. Yeah, tell me how, what it was like to study with him.

HANFORD YANG: He was a very free-thinker.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He actually opened up a department of art. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. You have to do that research—I don't know whether that department still stays, or transformed to different ones. He made a lecture—I was so impressed—for the graduate school. And he said that most of the people don't understand art of the architect. They don't understand art—they think architecture is art. And he says architecture is not quite art because they worry about the safety, the convenience, and so forth and so on. So if you want to really see art, don't go to the—I said, "Don't,"—but [it is] not the best place to go to the museum, because the museum is a depository of the history.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So, if you go to the museum, you are just like to review of the history book of art. So, if you really want to know what's going on in art, you have to visit galleries. And I was fully shocked when I heard that, that he spoke like that. But later on, of course, become so popular and copied by so many people—oh, museum is a store, warehouse, is a storage, and so forth. But this is the first time—in the 1950s—and he spoke like that; really opened up my eyes.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So therefore I visit museum much less. Every time—as I said, you know, I'm traveling from Boston to New York for only \$20—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. So you—Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Go ahead

HANFORD YANG: So on weekends I would come down to New York and to visit galleries.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Okay. So, Eleanor Ward had a very prestigious gallery. Was that one you went to in the mid-'50s?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, but I also went to a much less popular one.

JUDITH STEIN: Which one?

HANFORD YANG: That is the Green Gallery—

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: —owned by Dick Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Well, we'll get to Dick in a minute. But, okay. So you're—yeah. So, you're there at MIT when Kepes publishes *The New Landscape in Art and Science*.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And he had a strong emphasis on visual perception.

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: And I think I see that in your—all aspects of your career.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes. All my life—yeah, yeah. Yes. But Kepes' art didn't influence me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. No, understood.

HANFORD YANG: Later on I grow to dislike it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: But what he said about visual—as a matter of fact, that was the name of the department. [Laughs.]. The Department of Visual Arts.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: So your master's thesis at MIT is actually [available -HY/FB/JS] on the internet. Did you know that? Your entire thesis.

HANFORD YANG: Oh my goodness.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh yes. Here is—you probably haven't—that is the first page of it.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Oh my goodness. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So I was so happy and surprised to see that the subject of your master's thesis was a gallery that Huntington Hartford, a philanthropist and collector, was planning for Columbus Circle. So, this is 1956.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And you proposed a design that involved three towers, as I understand it—interlocking towers.

HANFORD YANG: Exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: With the—what do you call them, on the outside—

HANFORD YANG: This is very old idea. But when I was doing my thesis, because the space is so small—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —so I put all the services—

JUDITH STEIN: The services. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —such as air conditioning, and water pipes, and heating pipes, and so on. All are on the surface, the art spaces. So left the center all become exhibition space.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: The story is—what you said is not quite complete.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah, okay.

HANFORD YANG: Huntington Hartford asked Pietro Belluschi—

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: —to design the museum for him.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, okay.

HANFORD YANG: Belluschi knows—or knew—how difficult Huntington Hartford is. So he gave—he called me up, you know. He called me in his office and then gave this to me—asked me to design it for him. For him, and for the—for Huntington Hartford. Not really give the project to me—

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: —but give it to me as a thesis to do.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Okay. So—

[Side conversation.]

HANFORD YANG: Leave it on?

JUDITH STEIN: I think we're doing okay.

HANFORD YANG: So, I finished the thesis. It was greatly admired by the school, and was awarded the prize—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: and offered me to travel around the globe. So when I was in China—not in China, in Hong Kong—I received a telegram saying that Huntington—Pietro Belluschi asked me to send the complete thesis to Huntington Hartford

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: because he didn't want to do it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So, he says, "This is my present for you." And Huntington Hartford saw the thesis and telegraphed me in Hong Kong, saying, "Come back right away. I want to build your museum."

JUDITH STEIN: Wow.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So, I said, "No, no, no. I have this commitment here"—I would spend the whole money. So I quickly travelled through the globe. But when I come back to New York, I only have one dollar in my pocket. [Laughs.] Yeah, like most people.

JUDITH STEIN: So did you go right from MIT into Edward Durell Stone's office?

HANFORD YANG: No, no, no. Again it was a very interesting story. When I graduated, and then to see what's finished, the museum as a thesis was finished.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: But while I was standing, you know, at the museum, to Huntington Hartford, Belluschi called me again and saying that there was an architect in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, okay, who is old now, needs a partner. So Belluschi says "Why don't you go there and take a look whether you like it," right. I was only like 22 years old. 22, 23 years old. And I went down there at the—but of course the other architect paid for it. I was poor as a church mouse in those days. And he saw me and needed me and showed the office and everything and—he has a private plane and flew me that day to Selveston or Alveston.

JUDITH STEIN: Galveston.

HANFORD YANG: Galveston. To see his project.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And also he says, "If you come, he has a commission to do a hospital," which was the joy it was published in one of the architectural magazines.

JUDITH STEIN: And what is the name of this fellow?

HANFORD YANG: It's A.S. Town.

JUDITH STEIN: A—

HANFORD YANG: —Hays Town, T-O-W-N.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: But of course this is now a long time ago.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: The property's not there.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: No, long gone.

JUDITH STEIN: Anyway.

HANFORD YANG: Anyway.

JUDITH STEIN: So you worked -

HANFORD YANG: At A. Hays Town.

JUDITH STEIN: Wait, so wait.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So then how did you get from the Baton Rouge to the A. HaysTown?

HANFORD YANG: Not Edward – no, no.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, so you're working for Mr. Town?

HANFORD YANG: Town. And then my mother had a heart attack, okay, in Taiwan. So I was working in A. Hays Town no more than two months, so I had to go to fly to Taiwan to see my mother.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then when I come back, I was in New York and then—by then, Huntington Hartford picked up a director for the newly existing museum already. His name is [Winslow] Ames.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I forgot his name now.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Ames. And he says, "Quit that job. There it's nothing—come here, be the big shot." So I, of course, I was at Grand Central. I quit the job only two months, and they spent—prepared everything for me to go there.

JUDITH STEIN: So you were hired at Stone's office?

HANFORD YANG: No. I wasn't.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, it was Hartford who brought you in?

HANFORD YANG: Hartford brought me in, and he says—to say that you'll be the architect in designing this museum. He likes it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: But I said, "No, I can't, I would just graduate from university. I am not an architect."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Okay. So Ames, this director says, "Well, why don't you find an architect that go with you?"

JUDITH STEIN: Oh okay.

HANFORD YANG: Go with you. So I interviewed many, many famous architects like Philip Johnson.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Later on you know I had become very, very friendly with him, and I went to his house and he showed me all his private collection and all that, yeah. And then went to I.M. Pei.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And Pei says "No, no, no, because if I do it, the museum will not be yours, you know, everybody will say I.M. Pei's." So then I went to—

JUDITH STEIN: Well that was very kind of him.

HANFORD YANG: Very kind of I.M. Pei.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely. Okay. Then after three, four architects, they all said no, no, no, the museum is so unique, you, you know, you have to find somebody just work—for the working joint and stamp it for you.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then little do I realize Ames met Edward Stone, okay. So brought us together through the Ames, through Ames.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And I said fine, you know, and I didn't realize—I was so young, I didn't realize, you know, the tricks they play, especially betrayal, you know. And so it says—

JUDITH STEIN: You mean taking credit for your work or no?

HANFORD YANG: No, not at all.

JUDITH STEIN: No.

HANFORD YANG: You hear the tragedy of it. So I was working in the office until he's a big man with a huge department.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: So it was assigned a few people to work with me, and then little do we realize he took my thesis program and to develop his own, okay. And then he persuade the director in I forget his first name. I think if you look deeply you'll find him.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure, no, not a problem.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And then Ames also talked to Huntington Hartford, who says through Edward Stone of course, says "This is a young guy's design, and it might not work. So why don't you as Edward Stone to propose another one." So of course he has 20 people and I have two people. Okay. And his presentation is like models and—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh of course.

HANFORD YANG: It's important and made a model and made the camera—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —you know, to go through those, and I made just a few meager perspective and joints.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. Well you're the visionary.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, and then of course I didn't know as—Huntington Hartford's like "Hanford, would you work with this design?" I was so mad, you know, in front of this rich guy, I said, "Go fuck yourself."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I said, "I'm not taking this, you know," as a—"Go to hell," I said.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I left.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then later on, much to my regret, of—with today's assets, okay. Later on he offered me money because he failed at—

JUDITH STEIN: You mean—Stone?

HANFORD YANG: No, no, no.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Ames you mean?

HANFORD YANG: No, Huntington Hartford.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Huntington Hartford, sorry.

HANFORD YANG: I met him very—I met him all the time.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I just called him, he'll say "Come in" like that. At 12:00, he's in pajamas. No wonder he fell off his work.

[They laugh.]

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: There is this silk robe and pajama, and I guess he want to pretend to be a—like the Playboy guy, you know.

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: But in any case, yeah. So, of course during the presentation, he picked Edward Stone, and I left, and I didn't accept Huntington Hartford's offer of money.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: If you really want to ask me today I would say "Give me the money," otherwise they'll sue you, you know.

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: But I was so innocent.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: And I could have used that money to buy Frank Stella and to buy a [Roy] Lichtenstein.

JUDITH STEIN: But did you—you got back into the project didn't you?

HANFORD YANG: I quit, no, I never did.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh okay.

HANFORD YANG: I never did, and then the—and then the newspaper was of course always—I mean the architectural magazine always in favor of me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So they published the story in a very, very, you know, around the way. But so they didn't know the perjury and the betrayal yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Uh-huh [affirmative]. Uh-huh [affirmative]. Wow. That's really something.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So where were you when you were designed the Pace Gallery? How did you get to design the Pace Gallery?

HANFORD YANG: Well, I was after I—after I quit, I mean, [inaudible], and I went to Boston and I was hired by Peterson [ph].

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And Peterson, I stayed there a long time, because Peterson later on came to New York again, and was the associate there. Yeah, it was the—yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And the Glimchers who are from Boston—were from Boston, yes.

HANFORD YANG: That's right. Okay. That goes the story.[Arne] Glimcher has a small gallery and the director was his mother.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And he's the salesman; the one who controls the galleries is his mother. And the wife was having babies then, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So the gallery is only about two blocks away from where I work for Peterson in Boston.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I—lunchtime I always walk around, and I saw his gallery, and I went down there. I've become very close to him—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —because he sort of likes architecture.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And I bought one of my first pieces from him.

JUDITH STEIN: From Arne Glimcher, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, from Glimcher. That was a Louise Nevelson.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh okay.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah. And the first piece I ever bought was a—was Chamberlain, John Chamberlain.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: And then John Chamberlain became my very, very good friend. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Okay. Well I'll get back to the collecting in just a second.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So—and so when he moved to New York, Glimcher, then you designed the gallery.

HANFORD YANG: New York, yeah, I designed his gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: And is that the gallery on east 57th Street or was it on—

HANFORD YANG: East on 57th.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, so they're still in that.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, but no it's completely—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh completely different.

HANFORD YANG: Completely changed.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. But so interesting that your—you were always had opportunities to think about art and architecture, the gallery and the design aspects of showing and displaying art, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: No, that's special.

HANFORD YANG: And that gives me the greatest opportunity; it wasn't from MIT and, you know, I never, never forgot, even today, to say that, you know, you must see the gallery, not only the museum—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —you know, to see what's going on today.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: But sort of the recent museum—I mean because you visit galleries, so that's how I'll get in

touch with the galleries, and I met a lot of people, Glimcher, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, oh see I understand that now, yeah. Right in Boston, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: To continue just for a moment more about your architecture career, you bought and designed a loft in SoHo.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, I did.

JUDITH STEIN: And that was given a lot of attention.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, indeed.

JUDITH STEIN: And so in the early-70s, SoHo was an area in transition. They—didn't they recently change the ruling so that you could live there? I mean it wasn't zoned commercial which would've been illegal to live there.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, that was—yeah, exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: But when it was made legal, then you—

HANFORD YANG: No I went there when it was illegal.

JUDITH STEIN: Illegal. Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Illegal. Because I was so involved with art there, it was a rather—I'll do it after, type it in. I was a very reputable person then of collect.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I knew all the artists, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, so yeah, so artists were living in SoHo, so you wanted to live in SoHo.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so I lived in SoHo.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, right. Whether it was legal or not.

HANFORD YANG: It was illegal then.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: But I was legal. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And then your loft became famous and people were using it, you know, for parties with—

HANFORD YANG: Oh all the time, yeah. Up to—including *Playboy* magazine.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I was published there.

JUDITH STEIN: You were published in *Playboy*.

HANFORD YANG: In *Playboy*, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Which was very well—had a big circulation, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. So when did you start teaching at Pratt [University]?

HANFORD YANG: I taught at Pratt while I was working actually at Skidmore, [Owings & Merrill].

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. One summer.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Before that I taught at City College.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Before I taught at City College. But then the dean of Pratt called me saying that "I see all your students winning all those architectural competitions. I'll give you double the salary if you come over to teach at Pratt." So I left. Why not, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: It's nice to be wanted, isn't it?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, right, right, right. So I was at Pratt and I thought that Pratt is such a free spirited school, you can do—the teacher can do anything, can say anything they want.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It's not like at City College, you know, because you cannot say—I cannot say—because we might not get endowment next year.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I was there for a long, long time.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So while we're talking about schooling, I want to just look back for a moment.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: You are a Chinese American.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: What was your experience in, you know, as a boy and as a teenager, you know, in a community where there were not that many Chinese Americans?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, I was welcomed on the outside. I know that [there were] places I wasn't welcome, I know. But of course the people that I associated [with] are very free spirited, you know, like artists.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, I mean, as an adult, but as a child did you have a problem?

HANFORD YANG: Like you mean when I went—maybe when I first came to China—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: —from China. Only once.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: My—long story again—my classmate was Italian and I was sitting by him, he was the football player. I think because of his last name, it's very much close to Yang: Y.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So we would sit next to each other, and he failed his English test. And I got the full—I got 100 percent marks. So he says, "Why don't you be—why don't you teach me the English?" You know, like that. So we get very familiar. Then Christmas time—he was from Bayonne, New Jersey—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He was driving all the way from the west coast to the east coast, very east coast, to spend Christmas. So he invited me to come to his family to spend Christmas. We get half the way like in Boise Idaho—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and Montana, that area, and they won't serve me. Yeah. Then, even then, they won't serve me. And then until the football player got mad, you know, and then go in there and sort his waiter out, and then was being treated for breakfast.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, wow.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And then of course I will tell you about Kusama and—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. So let's—we can switch, let's come forward out of that difficult time.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: To the '60s in New York.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Now you mentioned that you patronized Eleanor Ward's gallery, the Stable Gallery, and when I was reading Emile de Antonio said that it really was in an old stable and that when it rained and the wood got damp, you could smell horse piss [laughs] in the stable, but it was a very—so stable. And then Dick Bellamy opened his gallery in 1960.

HANFORD YANG: Dick Bellamy is the greatest. Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I was flying down. I was actually in—not in New York, I was in Boston.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And so I was in an award too.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And I flew down and I visited them and I—when you're going around too many and you realize who are the great museum—I mean galleries who are not so hot, you know like that.

JUDITH STEIN: And so you understood, you know, fairly soon that—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, very.

JUDITH STEIN: The Green Gallery was—

HANFORD YANG: Was *it*, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Was *it*. Now, how did you meet [Yayoi] Kusama? Was—did Dick have anything to do with it?

HANFORD YANG: Dick yes, but mostly from—through Donald Judd.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay. So how did you meet Donald Judd?

HANFORD YANG: I met Donald Judd through Dick Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: Okay. And he had—Donald Judd had a show and Dick Bellamy—but long before that, long before Donald Judd—

JUDITH STEIN: The—yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I already—Dick was already my friend.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Okay. Now Donald Judd had his first show in—

JUDITH STEIN: In the Green Gallery in '63.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yeah. And I went in to see it, and the first critique in *The New York Times* was very bad of Donald Judd—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —in saying that because all the objects were painted red—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —you know. So it was a—this is boring, and there's all squares and so on and so on. And I saw a tiny piece like this of Donald Judd in exhibition.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. About 20 inches.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah. I said "Dick, I like this one." He says "You can have it for \$100." I said, "Really?" He said, "Yes." So I took that piece. I said, "I want to meet the artist."

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: And he gave me the telephone number and he gave me the address, so I called him up, he said, "Come up," like that.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I went up there, this was on 16th Street.

JUDITH STEIN: 19th Street was it?

HANFORD YANG: 19th Street, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Fourth floor, fifth floor.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And I went there, it was you know dead winter, and he was so poor, they had a little hot thing, you had charcoal in it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. A heater, some sort of a heater.

HANFORD YANG: A heater, burning that for heat.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Okay. But by then he was married—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —to Judy somebody.

JUDITH STEIN: Was he married—he wasn't married to Julie was he?

HANFORD YANG: Julie, Julie, Julie, Julie. And did not have the baby yet. And then he went—Donald Judd was so humble then and I talked with, we talked about art, and he ended because he was graduated from Yale, he certainly knew a lot, you know, about architecture and intellectually, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure, sure.

HANFORD YANG: So after I bought a few pieces, and I also bought another few pieces through Dick Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, in the show.

JUDITH STEIN: So some of the Judd you bought from him directly?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And some you bought through Dick?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes. Not very much, yeah. But then he says, "I have a great friend on the third, second or third floor.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, near, in the building.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. [Her] name is Yayoi Kusama. I want you to meet her, okay."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I said, "All right." He said, "I'm undressed, I'm not dressed, I'm uncomfortable to go down. Why don't you go just knock on the door?" Okay. So I knock on the door, here [s]he comes, the great Kusama. Like a wild child, okay. It was a mess.

JUDITH STEIN: She was a mess?

HANFORD YANG: She was a mess.

JUDITH STEIN: You mean her hair or?

HANFORD YANG: Her hair, her dress, her whole appearance and everything, you know. Paint on her head and on her nose. But then he—she rented the rear part of the loft, the sun part is an architect's office.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So the real big portion, like two-thirds of the space, she rented.

JUDITH STEIN: Kusama.

HANFORD YANG: Kusama. She sleeps there, eats there, and do the art there.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: That was after, when I met her, she already finished the whole white paintings in the Brata Gallery [in the East Village. -HY/FB].

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, the *Infinity Nets* series.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah. She had already finished that. She was doing this phallic symbol work.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: And I saw a whole lot of—okay. I said oh, I said, "This is very repulsive, people might not like it." And she says, "Quite repulsive, I see all this at the seashore all the time, forms like that," you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Or the, what do you call this, broth. Like the muscles, the broth. Is in the sea all the time.

JUDITH STEIN: Seaweed, yeah, all of that.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, all the time like that. I said, "But did—but they're phallic symbols." [S]he says, "I must do what I want to do, and like that. So I don't care." And then Dick was going to have a one woman show in his gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So she was prepared as all day, all year for that show. She made a big couch, and I think the museum—the Museum of Modern art has it now.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then she has an easy chair. And then she has an ironing board, and also a big frame of mirror but without mirror.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It was all great stuff. And so she was very—then we became very good friends with Kusama.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And she would give me things, you know, like that. I've got—but mostly I bought for very, very reasonably priced.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. Let's just talk about the buying now.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: You were a young architect.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: And you had a limited budget.

HANFORD YANG: Little budget, yes.

JUDITH STEIN: But the gallery, the art dealers, you know, were—gave you special terms, did you buy on time, how did it work?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yes indeed. I was—I heard the rumor much later on saying I was the angel from China.

JUDITH STEIN: You were the angel from China?

HANFORD YANG: I was an angel from China. I would buy things.

JUDITH STEIN: That nobody else would.

HANFORD YANG: Nobody else bothered with it.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Can you imagine, I was like practically, I was the first guy to buy Donald Judd. Okay.

JUDITH STEIN: You made his first sale.

HANFORD YANG: Sale, first sale.

JUDITH STEIN: Well that's pretty extraordinary.

HANFORD YANG: I made the, yeah, I made the first sale of Chamberlain when Chamberlain was nothing.

JUDITH STEIN: Now how did you see Chamberlain's? Did you meet Chamberlain through Dick or?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Not Dick, but at Dick's gallery there was a piece there.

JUDITH STEIN: At the Green Gallery?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, at the Green Gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: And then he—

HANFORD YANG: He wasn't—don't forget, those artists, will leave, they come to visit—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —didn't wind up right away being signed up.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh no, I know. Chamberlain was not with Dick, they were just friends, yes.

HANFORD YANG: No, no, they were—they would leave pieces there—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —hopefully eventually be picked out of, you know, picked up or something like that. I went there, I saw this piece, and I bought it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: \$600.

JUDITH STEIN: Wow. So you had it.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: I found her—oh here we go.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: In 1965, you were interviewed, and you said some really amazing things. You were asked about collecting, and you said, "Contemporary works of art counterbalance the rational and regular life I lead as an architect."

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: So you really—these are the two sides of you.

HANFORD YANG: Very much. You know I think most architects are very square.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: They're boring people. Architects only talk to architects, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And outside of that, they know nothing. I would say 99 percent, I dare to say it, know nothing about art.

JUDITH STEIN: Well it's true of any of, you know, lawyers or doctors too.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah that's true. Okay. But if you talk to Philip Johnson, he's so aware of art, you know, without him, there's no half of a Museum of Modern Art. They're all—mostly his gifts.

JUDITH STEIN: Well the two of you are two of the rare people who had that vision.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Oh absolutely. I was lucky you know that I was able to collect through my persistence and also they both were so young, they were almost like taking care of me, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah. I see. Took you under their wing.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, like—[Claes] Oldenburg, he gave me things.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Oldenburg. Yeah, and Donald Judd gave me prints like that, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So oh there's so many, you know, they'd meet me. Another one is later on Calder who I think is the most underrated artist, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So—

[Audio break.]

JUDITH STEIN: You know—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: You respond to Judd.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: You respond to Kusama.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: To Oldenburg, to Chamberlain.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: This is a very diverse aesthetic you have.

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely, especially my experience with Andy Warhol.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay what is your—

HANFORD YANG: He was my best discover[y].

JUDITH STEIN: Really?

HANFORD YANG: Well, yeah I was unbelievably surprised that he would take me in under his wing, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He was showing four little paintings like this—like this, you know? Like—

JUDITH STEIN: About—

HANFORD YANG: Like 12 by 8.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Little canvases of his half-finished drawing of soup cans.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-Huh [affirmative]. Oh yes. I've seen—yeah.

HANFORD YANG: You've seen those tiny, little—it was—it was leaning against Eleanor Ward's wall.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, in Eleanor Ward's.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, Eleanor Ward's wall. So I said, "Who did that?"

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: [She] says, "Oh, I think you'll like him. He's a very amusing guy." I said, "Can I buy those things?" Eleanor Ward says, "Well, I haven't signed him up yet."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: "I'm not sure." And then she calls Andy Warhol—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and says that there's a young man, a young gentleman, a Chinese man wants to visit you.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So she was the one who introduced me to Andy Warhol.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, he was living at 80 some street and Lexington Avenue.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It was a brownstone. Yeah. We can use this?

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I walked in there and there was him, and we immediately get along well, especially he heard I'm an architect.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So he was beginning to paint those real serious soup cans.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: We're good.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. He was painting those real, real serious—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —big soup cans.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then I saw like medium size, two feet by maybe three feet, and that one is finished and I say, "Andy, and this is not big. Can I buy it today?" He said, "No, no. You cannot buy it because I already promised Irving Blum."

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. In California.

HANFORD YANG: In California.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: He says, "No, you cannot buy this, but if you really like my art, I'll paint you one in a few days, okay?" So that's the first we went—and I got along very well with him. And then he says, "Oh, if you like art that much, you must go see the"—oh gosh. This woman use wood blocks. Marisol.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Marisol.

HANFORD YANG: Okay.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure, sure.

HANFORD YANG: So Marisol was having a show at the Stable Gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. "So you must go visit it." Yeah. So I went there again, after Andy Warhol.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I went to see the Marisol. I thought it was very interesting, but there's no way I can collect it. Huge things of wooden planks, you know? And also I thought it was a little real.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know, I was brought up an architect, you know, there's always more aggressive thinking, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Rather than just a figure, yeah. Anyway, later on I also visited again. The next visit from Boston, I visited again and he says—I called him up and he kind of comes on, "Sure you can, but before you come, go to Chinatown and buy some dim sum for me."

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: That's Andy Warhol, this is the first visit. I say, "Sure." And I made a special trip to Chinatown and I bought him a box of it and I gave it to him and then he says—

JUDITH STEIN: So, you know, you mention Marisol. I noticed that you have several women artists in your collection.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yes. Oh yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Of course, Kusama and Rosalyn Drexler.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And Marjorie Strider.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: You were keeping your eyes set.

HANFORD YANG: I did, yeah, I did. I really—but some of them didn't—I don't know why. I think [inaudible] that Pace Gallery let Marjorie Strider go. And it also Pace Gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Yeah, she was—she is a marvelous artist.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, I had this wonderful Drexler work—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: and I think some museum has it now.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, she's having—her career is come back into a better visibility these days.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Yes. Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: And so pop art was figurative and you just said that you were prejudiced against figuration.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Right.

JUDITH STEIN: But you had Bob Beauchamp and you had pop artists, which you know—

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yes, I did.

JUDITH STEIN: Wesselmann and Rosenquist.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Oh yes.

JUDITH STEIN: So, how did you reconcile that?

HANFORD YANG: Well, because they're not quite figurative. They're figure but they're reinterpreted, okay?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Like especially Rosenquist or Wesselmann. They're so new—the idea—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: They would take portion of it and either enlarge it or shrink it, especially Rosenquist.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, this is true.

HANFORD YANG: His philosophy was really—he was a bill paint—billboard painter.

JUDITH STEIN: Exactly.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Yeah. And then when I visited Wesselmann—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —he was so poor and living in this little room flat in the edge of the village and [he was painting -HY/FB/JS] those great paintings.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: But I bought a painting from Dick, not from Wesselmann.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. So let's talk about your friendship with Dick Bellamy. When we spoke earlier you were talking to me about his philosophy of having, you know, that you shouldn't buy what you like. You should buy what, you know, you don't understand.

HANFORD YANG: Exactly. Exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: Could you talk a little about that?

HANFORD YANG: Well, that also is indirectly or directly from Dick's conversations because he was so advanced in—visually. So every time I go there, I always get out mad.

JUDITH STEIN: You would—sorry. You'd leave mad, you say?

HANFORD YANG: Every time I go there, I always was cheerful way. When I got up, always mad because I got through understand what the art is and when I come back next time, it's another unacceptable stuff.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: I was so mad. So finally he tells me, "Hanford, don't buy the things that pleases you because that's at your level, okay? Buy the things that disturbs you, okay? Or make you angry."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: "That's where you should learn." And I took that to heart. Yeah. Yeah. That's always my philosophy to life, and even today.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I always, you know—[if it's said] that people no good, I always experience myself and think about it—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —then I buy it or be friend with, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: So by 1968, Larry Aldrich gave you a show.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: And I—actually I have the catalog from this show.

HANFORD YANG: Oh, wow.

JUDITH STEIN: I have a photocopy of the catalog.

HANFORD YANG: Oh, yes. Wow.

JUDITH STEIN: And it's pretty extraordinary what, you know, the people you were collecting.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. So he described—Larry Aldrich, in his introduction to the catalog for *The Art of the 60's Hanford Yang Collection*, he said, "Your taste in collecting is uniquely uninhibited, sensitive, and personal." And so it's really quite an—the artists which most of which we've—the names you've already said as well as Chryssa, and Paul Thek, Paul Thek—really, that is cutting edge taste.

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And I was for a while very much impressed with Chryssa—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —until later she disliked me because she realized—well, not realized. I don't know this publically, sorry, but here she became very close to one of the girls—

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and abandoned me. [Laughs.] That's Chryssa. But I liked her work. Especially the one in the Museum of Modern Art.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. It's [one] you gave to them or—

HANFORD YANG: No, no. I didn't. It was the one—of the exhibits—

JUDITH STEIN: —oh, yes. I know which one.

HANFORD YANG: Exhibits the bill sign with the pope and the light turn off. Yeah. Like the light bulbs.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. So the year after you had this show with Aldrich, you lent a painting to the Whitney, then the annual and now the biennial, by Kenneth Showell who was a—S-H-O-W-E-L-L—

HANFORD YANG: Kenneth Showell.

JUDITH STEIN: He was a lyrical abstractionist and I was wondering—well, if you don't remember his work—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, I don't remember.

JUDITH STEIN: Again, it's the gears have changed and you are collecting a very different kind of art.

HANFORD YANG: I—absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: This is an artist who David Whitney showed. He had a short-lived gallery.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know—

JUDITH STEIN: And Dick was supportive of this artist, and I think Larry Aldrich also liked the lyrical abstractionists so.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

JUDITH STEIN: So I—yeah. That you liked Lichtenstein, I read. When you particularly—when you learned that he would listen to Anton Webern while he was painting.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, isn't it amazing? Yeah, yeah. Oh, Roy Lichtenstein was one of my favorite people besides his art, of course.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: He really, really, really liked me, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He let me design his studio—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —in the South Hampton or East Hampton, you know that?

JUDITH STEIN: No, no.

HANFORD YANG: No? I designed his gallery—or studio. The story goes like this. He called me up, says he heard about me, you know, Pace Gallery. So he says, "Can you design my studio in East Hampton?" So I said, "Sure." All he said is how big it is, you know, he want.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And of all the things, he needs a big door to let his paintings in and out.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So I designed him a modern, most ultra-modern space and then I present it to him and he says his head almost stop he was so surprised. He says, "No, no, no, no, I cannot take this." I said, "Roy, I spent almost a month to design this."

JUDITH STEIN: Why didn't he want to take it?

HANFORD YANG: No. He wants it, but township cannot accept—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, the town—I see.

HANFORD YANG: Anything except Victorian style or—

JUDITH STEIN: And he never told you that at the beginning.

HANFORD YANG: He never told me that. He never told me that. So therefore he asked me to redesign it. So he says it has to look like—all the town accepted is like a garage.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So my house and my garage. So the garage becomes studio. So I decide to design outside like a garage.

JUDITH STEIN: And inside.

HANFORD YANG: And inside is all hooks and things and so on. Anyway I decide I design the same but then it change so much that I refuse to be named—

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: —in publication because I wasn't that kind of architect.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So we've been talking for at least an hour now, and I haven't asked you about Bob Scull and the gallery. I mean, we know that in—the Green Gallery went from 1960 to 1965.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: And it's last year was 1964 to 1965. And in the fall of 1964, Dan Flavin had his debut with his neon sculpture—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. It's—no.

JUDITH STEIN: Now, you may not have—

HANFORD YANG: I bought it before that.

JUDITH STEIN: You bought a piece of neon before the show?

HANFORD YANG: Before the show in LaGuardia place.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, right.

HANFORD YANG: At the—it's a tiny little place.

JUDITH STEIN: From him directly?

HANFORD YANG: No, I found it—but yeah, practically, directly.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yes. And then he—and then I bought two pieces actually. One is a green box and with a corner cut off and with a red light.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh yes, I've seen pictures of that.

HANFORD YANG: And then the light blinks.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then I bought another one with three neons, but just very straightforward.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: One is more front and the two are in the back and the color lit up, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: You may not know, but Flavin in his journal was having a hard time with Dick because Dick was really—Scull had pulled out, his personal life was in disarray—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, right.

JUDITH STEIN: And he was drinking heavily.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And so he wasn't doing all the things he should have to support—

HANFORD YANG: Dick.

JUDITH STEIN: Flavin.

HANFORD YANG: Dan Flavin. Indeed.

JUDITH STEIN: So Flavin wrote in his diary and we only got to see this within the last couple of years, you know. It says, you know, "I'm going to have to call Hanford myself because I don't think Dick can even do this," you know, just to, you know. As if he had to take charge of some of the things that Dick should've been doing, but you just told me that you were close to him.

HANFORD YANG: I was very, very close to him until he was—and he would become very big of course.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Also very sick too. He and Donald Judd are like real buddies, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yes. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, they were.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, I will tell you this. The green box with a corner cut off—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: And a red blinking light—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and Donald Judd came to my—come into my place, walked—all the time I know that Donald Judd try to support me to have his art, you know, because he always enter sale for the price.

JUDITH STEIN: I'm sorry, just say that again.

HANFORD YANG: He already ask the gallery himself to lower the price.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: For me to buy it because he wants me—

JUDITH STEIN: I get it.

HANFORD YANG: —to have it.

JUDITH STEIN: I get. I get it.

HANFORD YANG: Now—

JUDITH STEIN: So you were to get a special price from the gallery.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, okay.

HANFORD YANG: Because he says—

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: And now this green box with a red light—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —was in my bedroom and there was a—so one time he was there, he says, "Hanford, I'm going to make an offer. I'll trade you with anything you want for this green box." I said, "No, no. I cannot do it. This is my favorite art." And Donald Judd says, "Well, you don't know how many years I was thinking about that piece." Yeah. I said—he says, "I'll do anything for you." I say, "All right, I want ten boxes of"—[Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: That was the trade.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh for goodness sakes.

HANFORD YANG: Can you imagine that? Yeah. He has the green box in his museum in the—

JUDITH STEIN: —in Texas.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, Texas.

JUDITH STEIN: And you had—

HANFORD YANG: [The stack of -HY/FB/JS] ten boxes.

JUDITH STEIN: The ten boxes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that was the trade. But of course the color's different. You know he made many.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, he did.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: But.

HANFORD YANG: But I won ten whole boxes.

JUDITH STEIN: Wow. [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, that was for one—that's where it started.

JUDITH STEIN: So was there—is there anybody that I've forgotten to ask you about?

HANFORD YANG: Well, I think you [asked me -HY/FB/JS] about Andy Warhol again. Andy Warhol later on sold me —and that was before he was in Stable Gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Before the show. So he promised me he'll give me a painting of a soup can.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He gave me a soup can with the labels peeled off.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: He only paint four of them. And I have one. Okay?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He practically gave it to me. \$500.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Wow, now—

HANFORD YANG: Okay, now want to hear more?

JUDITH STEIN: Sure, go, go. Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: And then he sort of liked me, you know, for some reason and just think I'm a boy wonder or something because all the artists would talk about what a person was there.

JUDITH STEIN: Well, and how unique you were.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah exactly. I don't want to say this.

[They laugh.]

JUDITH STEIN: You don't have to worry about being immodest.

HANFORD YANG: Anyway, later on he made movies, right?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He wants to make a movie with me and other people, okay?

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And nude and undressed.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, oh. You were to be naked.

HANFORD YANG: Fantastic movies.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Have you ever seen one?

JUDITH STEIN: Did you make the movie with him?

HANFORD YANG: I didn't because of that.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: I was too modest. Yeah. Because with all those people, you know, and so they take heroin shots in the arm.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh my goodness.

HANFORD YANG: And take pills. In the movie, they're doing that. But then I was interested, not that group. I was interested in that group, but not as much as his first group.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It's like his *Empire State Building 24 Hours [Empire]*. And I went there. I sit through eight hours, okay? What with total silence. Nothing, just with a building there and then you see all the lights going down one by one. And then it's just so like ten hours with nothing. [Laughs.] I mean now and then the airplanes go by.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then you see the light become lighter and lighter.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It's unbelievable. But the other daytime twelve hours I went home. I couldn't take it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then a bowl of mushroom [Eat]. He asked Rob "Bobby" Indiana to eat it one by one. A whole bowl of it. It was nothing, nothing like it.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, that—so Yoko Ono. Did you ever have any—did you path cross?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes. Yeah. I met [her] through one of the fancy parties.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And of course she's the—she pretend to be the most important one. With this typical hat. And the sunglasses.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: In the party. I met—her and I dislike her. Not only—not because of the person. I dislike her art enormously.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: When she had the show or a piece in really modern art—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —it's like a tree [*Wish Tree*] and the people can write anything hanging out on this tree and on the bottom is like a created by—the tree's created by Yoko Ono. And I wrote very bad review: "This is the most bad, the worst art I've ever seen." I put it there.

JUDITH STEIN: And you put it on the tree.

HANFORD YANG: She probably kept it.

JUDITH STEIN: She might have. Yes. Well, I think, you know, we've had a wonderful conversation. I've really enjoyed the reviewing some of these highlights of your life. So I think I'm going to thank you officially and we'll end.

HANFORD YANG: Okay, fine. But—

[END OF TRACK.]

JUDITH STEIN: Good morning—Hanford?

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Hi

JUDITH STEIN: Hi there, well this is Wednesday, December 14, and we are speaking by phone. I'm in Philadelphia; you are in Edison, New Jersey. Yeah and it's a continuation of really the wonderful conversation we had not so long ago—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —and when I learned some pretty amazing things about you, you're something, something of your early years and family and then about your years as a student and as an architect.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: We began to talk about your experiences as a collector, but it's that subject that I wanted to return to today.

HANFORD YANG: Alright.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah. So I, from what I understand, the very first work you bought, am I correct, was a Donald Judd?

HANFORD YANG: No.

JUDITH STEIN: No? Okay.

HANFORD YANG: No my very first collection is a Chamberlain, John Chamberlain.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh a John Chamberlain, okay, and where would you have seen the Chamberlain's work?

HANFORD YANG: I saw it in Martha Jackson [Gallery]. [The first work he bought of Chamberlain's was at Green Gallery, just there on loan from Chamberlain, and the second one he bought at Marth Jackson who then represented Chamberlain. He clarified this to me in a phone conversation on September 20, 2017. -FB]

JUDITH STEIN: In Martha Jackson, okay. So, yes, we'll return to Donald Judd in a minute, but [laughs].

HANFORD YANG: Of course.

JUDITH STEIN: But as we were discussing, we have this picture of this, of you as a young architect, who'd been inspired by the rather extraordinary Department of Visual Studies at MIT with Kepes and you were making these periodic visits to New York.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Starting in perhaps what, 1962 do you think?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, indeed.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And how did you decide which galleries to visit?

HANFORD YANG: Actually, I looked at the small galleries first.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I was—actually, in those days 57th Street was very, very popular street—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: —for the art.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So, I started from the like Sixth Avenue down—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —so I just looked at the art guide.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah and then just started [strolling -HY/FB/JS] through the whole area.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —so Green Gallery has to be one of the early galleries there—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —to go into, yeah, and then the next one is Wise, Wisemann I think.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh Howard Wise was at—

HANFORD YANG: Howard Wise [Gallery -HY/FB].

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. From there I'm going down to 5th Avenue—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and I think I end at Park Avenue.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. So, what—

HANFORD YANG: First, gallery—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Tibor de Nagy [Gallery] and, and Green Gallery.

JUDITH STEIN: So it was the Green Gallery and what was that first one you just said?

HANFORD YANG: Tibor de Nagy.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh Tibor, yeah, Tibor de Nagy. So—

HANFORD YANG: And Howard Wise.

JUDITH STEIN: And Howard Wise. So, when you went into these galleries, and you were seeing things that you didn't understand—that, well, what did you think of the things that you saw in these galleries?

HANFORD YANG: Well, I had this—I don't know who gave a talk at the time, I forgot who said it—but it started, and then later on I reinterpreted my way, that is if you first look at things, you immediately like it and chances are no good—they're not good. And the things that challenge you either makes you angry, or makes you detested—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —those are the ones that you should pay attention to.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, I think that was Richard Bellamy cause—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: When we talked before you mentioned that that really was his advice—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: That he had given you.

HANFORD YANG: That's right. That's advice I used.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh, really?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah because it just seems if you first liked it or you look at it, the chances are you'll enjoy it at the level you have now.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah.

HANFORD YANG: So, the things that you loved in it, that you thought you hated—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Then you despise it—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —the chances are they are the challenge that will bring you to a higher level.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: For instance, when I first saw Jasper John's *Flag*.

JUDITH STEIN: I'm sorry, when you first saw?

HANFORD YANG: First, I saw Jasper Johns.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Jasper Johns, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, the *Flag*.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I was so upset by him

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: I thought it was desecration of the American flag.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, oh desecration.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, I thought, so—so had I followed Bellamy's advice earlier I would have bought it.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Yes.

HANFORD YANG: So, I was so angry with it that I walked out, so I never had—just because [inaudible] early stuff.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure, oh interesting. That would have been probably at Castelli's that you would have seen the Jasper Johns. Yeah. Well—

HANFORD YANG: Indeed. That's where I saw Chamberlain.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah and then I managed—also, I was very angry with it because his automobile parts—

JUDITH STEIN: I see

HANFORD YANG: —that are hinged together, or welded together—

JUDITH STEIN: So, how did that change—how did your thinking about the Chamberlain change over time?

HANFORD YANG: Well, then I came back, talked to Dick Bellamy; I said, "I saw this piece of automobile parts, and I didn't like it." I wanted his opinion and he says, "Those are the things you should look into."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: "Look beyond the automobile parts. Look how they're molded and transformed and isn't it like abstract expressionism?"

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Ah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah. Then I immediately got it.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And I went there, I got the piece. I think it's called *Captain O'Hare* [*Captain O'Hay* is likely -FB], *Captain O'Hare*.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, *Captain O'Hare*.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I don't know who, I don't know, I don't have it now.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I don't [know] which museum I gave [it] to—

JUDITH STEIN: I'm sure whatever museum it is, they must feel lucky.

HANFORD YANG: Right.

JUDITH STEIN: So, when I mentioned Donald Judd earlier, and you had told me that in fact even though Judd was not the first piece you bought, but it was the first sale that Donald Judd ever made, is that correct?

HANFORD YANG: That's what the gallery informed me.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, it was only \$100. [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: For a Donald Judd about a foot and half long.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Parts of it—it's metal, and parts of it is wood.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And it's the idea later on developed into great stuff that Donald Judd made.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, it's a very simple two pieces sort of look good together, or glued together. One is a wood, red painted wood.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then the metal is painted purple.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, okay. And I think you bought that from Judd's first show at the Green Gallery, and you said it was not, it was in a back room, it wasn't in the main—

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: That's right because, because compared to his other stuff, this is like too— too unimportant—

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so he put it in the small room, and I walk around and I saw this piece. At the time it was very affordable price for then.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. You also owned a work that is more of an iconic piece of Donald Judd's that was—Dick showed for the first time in January 1963, it was the standing upright in the center of the room, two painted red-orange planks joined together with a black painted pipe.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: When did you acquire that one?

HANFORD YANG: That one I also [acquired] through the gallery, but it was way after the show.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: I don't think anything was sold.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Except for the one that—

HANFORD YANG: —except that one that was the metal piece.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And also the critics were very bad—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: On the paper. [*The New York Times*].

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: It says that Donald Judd painted the town red.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Indeed, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Well, I'm interested in your friendship, or association with Larry Aldrich, because he was a collector who founded his own museum—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —in fall of 1964.

HANFORD YANG: Right.

JUDITH STEIN: And four years later in the fall of '68, he showed 108 objects from your personal collection.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So, how did that come about?

HANFORD YANG: Well, there was an article written about it, about my collection in an art magazine—

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I sent Larry art for the article.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh okay.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, then he just called me—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —out of the blue and he thought—he thought I must be a real old man, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Like he is, he was very formal. So, the meeting is at the palm room at the hotel.

JUDITH STEIN: The palm room? Yeah [Palm Court -HY/FB/JS].

HANFORD YANG: The hotel gallery—

JUDITH STEIN: Does it—Yeah, the hotel I can't remember it myself.

HANFORD YANG: Now it's a co-op now; oh my gosh. It has a—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh the Plaza, the Plaza?

HANFORD YANG: The Plaza

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Yes.

HANFORD YANG: The Plaza, yes. The Plaza.

JUDITH STEIN: Well that's, yes, that's very formal. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: It's very formal. So I walked in there, and he was sitting in a suit and tie.

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: I was someone around 30 years old.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Perhaps he was last. So he saw me, he was so surprised, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: "How did you get over all [those paintings and other objects? -HY/FB/JS]"

JUDITH STEIN: And what did you tell him?

HANFORD YANG: So I said, "I was available."

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] You were available, exactly.

HANFORD YANG: If you stay available you can just go to the gallery, they'll be more willing than that you have it.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. So, I know that your career was beginning to take hold, and you were beginning to become more solvent and, but did you—were you able to buy these things outright? Did you make arrangements, financial arrangements with the galleries? How did that work?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, well for some reason they all were sort of interested in me and every gallery I call they immediately know me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so I think among artists, you know, they were all not famous yet.

JUDITH STEIN: Right.

HANFORD YANG: I think they talked about it, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So they [were] willing to let me have it for a time payment.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, time payment and did they give you a discount as well?

HANFORD YANG: They give a discount indeed, and which they don't do it, I think, with other collectors.

JUDITH STEIN: I see

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, well—

HANFORD YANG: So they know that the poor architect is interested in collecting.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: So they're sort of helping me out.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] I see, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Donald Judd, especially, was very, very kind to me.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, so then was it Bellamy who sent you to visit Judd, Judd's Studio? Is that how it worked?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. That's right. That was, that was an unbelievable introduction, by the way—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —for me to go to Donald Judd's—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and when I went there and we talked, he was so poor, it was a six-story building. I think it's still there today.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, on Spring Street I think.

HANFORD YANG: No, no

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, no not that one.

HANFORD YANG: It's on Park Avenue.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh the other one, yeah and 19th Street, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. 19th Street, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He and his wife with their—hover over a charcoal heating—the stove, those real old-fashioned —

JUDITH STEIN: Do you mean—oh the pot-bellied stove?

HANFORD YANG: No.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It's even more primitive.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: It's open, it's like a tray.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: It has charcoal on it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, that's how they—well, that's how they use it to put the additional heat.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Did Judd have a collection of things of his own that you remember?

HANFORD YANG: Yes [laughs] I remember very well. When I was there, of course, he says, "I must introduce [you] to a great artist—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —not now, but she is—you just believe me, she is going to be the greatest."

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So we walked up two flights—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and there was Yayoi Kusama's studio. That's how I met Yayoi Kusama.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So therefore, in his collection, I think he owns several [works of] Kusama.

JUDITH STEIN: I'm sure. Yes, I'm sure he did.

HANFORD YANG: White paintings. Yes because actually he promoted her greatly. Yeah, through writing and through personal introductions.

JUDITH STEIN: I see, and was she living with George Matsuda at the time or no?

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, she was.

HANFORD YANG: I don't know what was the arrangement—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —but the architect was living in the front part of the place.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: And in the back room there was Yayoi Kusama's studio.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. So did you go to any of Kusama's happenings?

HANFORD YANG: Of course, I did.

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: But that was much later.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, that was later. Okay.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, but I think the most exciting happenings were Oldenburg's.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, so you went down to the store where he was doing happenings?

HANFORD YANG: That's right.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And that also was introduced by Dick Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: So I later on—I knew evidence of the—

JUDITH STEIN: Oldenburg, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, very well.

JUDITH STEIN: Were there are any of the happenings that stand out in your memory, or any images?

HANFORD YANG: Well I think the first one, of course, simply was *The Store*.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then and a few ones that participated and Lucas Samaras.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh yes, sure.

HANFORD YANG: That interested me very much. Yeah. So, Wesselmann and his wife and Oldenburg and his wife.

JUDITH STEIN: Right, Patty.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, Patty participated. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: It was in a very dark room.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: It was a very, very dark, room. I think Samaras could have followed, if it wasn't so hot.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I don't think Yayoi Kusama happening is that good either.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. But they were outrageous. [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: They were outrageous, yeah. Indeed.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. You seemed to have clicked with Oldenburg because—

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: —because by the time you were showing at the Aldridge Museum—

HANFORD YANG: Yes

JUDITH STEIN: You had—there were 12 Oldenburg's from your collection on view—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: At the museum, yeah. So, did you buy—continue to buy? In the—by the spring of '63 Oldenburg had moved from the Green Gallery to the Sidney Janis Gallery. So, were you buying from him at both dealers and from the artist himself? How did that work?

HANFORD YANG: No, actually, a lot of drawings, Oldenburg actually give them to me.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Can you imagine? Yeah, he likes to—he likes Chinese dim sum, the pastry.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh the dim sum, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Dim sum, Oldenburg likes it very much. So he knows that I'm expert.

JUDITH STEIN: Indeed. Indeed. [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: So he calls me up, and usually, I just take him and his wife and my relatives, too, yeah, so we all have dim sum in Chinatown, yeah, and of course, I always treated him. So later on, he gave me several drawings, you know; mostly were painted on newspaper, yeah, like a torso, of arms, and legs, women's legs, and so forth.

JUDITH STEIN: And were other things in your collection the gifts of artists?

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.] Of course.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, well, maybe tell me about some of the gifts, please.

HANFORD YANG: Okay, Donald Judd practically gave it to me; I didn't want it, you know, because I thought it was too fragile; it's a floor piece, like a box.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: Two ends with metal, and three sides were plastic, and there's not too many found—just four—they all stand together, yeah. Also the—in light blue, yeah. I think he developed it for his catalog. He'll be able to find—he couldn't make but about four or five of them because it was so fragile. Yeah, he stopped and he gave me one of those, and then, of course, he like—I think I—we talked about it. He likes Dan Flavin's art.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, yes.

HANFORD YANG: The box with the corner chopped off.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, I just saw that; it's on view in the Spring Street building now.

HANFORD YANG: Oh.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, it's one of the *Icon* series, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah. Well, that's the—that's in his collection. Well, I acquired it only for \$400, but Donald Judd's pestering me to have it, and he wants it.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh so you were the one who bought that Flavin first and then Judd got it from you?

HANFORD YANG: Judd traded me with ten boxes [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: He wanted that bad, of that piece. He had ten stacks.

JUDITH STEIN: Hay stacks.

HANFORD YANG: Ten—no, ten boxes.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, ten boxes, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, the stacked boxes, yes, that's quite a trade.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, that was quite a trade, but he just felt a great feeling about that thing, about the Flavins that he liked. He says, "I'll trade you with anything you want."

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: "Are you done?" He says, "Yes." I said, "Well, I want ten-box stack."

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Then he settle for the trade.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.].

HANFORD YANG: Then he says, "Yes, I'll do it."

JUDITH STEIN: Wow.

HANFORD YANG: That was practically, I think, it's a gift. Yeah, from Donald Judd.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: And you bought other, Flavins did you?

HANFORD YANG: Yes I did. I think that blue box and that green box is one of his first sales as well.

JUDITH STEIN: Right, that's one of his *Icons*, the first with the electric light—

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yes, yes, and that was one of—piece that—according to him, one of the very few pieces that he showed first. Yeah, and then later on, I bought several of them.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Through John Weber.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, okay, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: He was at John Weber then.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. Let's go back to Kusama for a minute.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Artists were generous with you and then you were often generous with museums; now tell me the story of how the Whitney Museum acquired that wonderful airmail-stamped collage of Kusama's.

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.] Yes, according to many people, they called me up after they saw the piece; they said, by far that's one of the very best of Kusama's work, yeah. Well, I had—I bought it from Kusama and at the time, Marcia Tucker—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh Marcia Tucker, yes.

HANFORD YANG: —yes, was the curator there.

JUDITH STEIN: At the Whitney? Yes.

HANFORD YANG: At Whitney, and then for some reason, she find out that I have Kusama's mail sticker because it was [a very popular piece -HY/FB/JS]; she made me give it some time ago. Yeah, so she asked me for lunch [laughs]. [He says he gave it, not sold it. -FB]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Oh, so she asked you, and you obliged her?

HANFORD YANG: Well, I don't know why. She was, you know, very active and popular curator at the time.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes she was.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so she asked me for lunch, and I say, "Okay, we have lunch," and then she says so—she saw this piece and then she would be so honored that—if I would gift this piece to museum, I said, "No, no, no—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: —not the best." So she says, "Well, the museum gave me a very high price."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: The museum is very, very poor and then, especially, they don't like Donald Judd or Dan Flavin or [others] from that group, you know, minimum group; that like it, so she thinks that's one of the greatest ones, and I said, "Well, what would the museum do for me?"

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so she says, "Nothing" [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Yes, but—so I understand now that, I mean, she was a very special, visionary curator, and she appreciated the artists that you collected and the others—her colleagues at the museum did not feel as supportive, so she kind of reached out to you for that kind of support.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, but as a—right, exactly, but for all those things, I needed to [inaudible]. At the time, of

course, I didn't realize, you know, that there are many people call me up, "It's absolutely one of the best."

JUDITH STEIN: Oh yeah. Well, you know, it's pleasing many, many thousands of people today so.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.].

HANFORD YANG: But anyway, Marcia Tucker relaxes now, relaxes, relaxes, and she would call me once a week.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] You mean she's call you once a week—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah

JUDITH STEIN: —to keep working on you?

HANFORD YANG: Exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Exactly, until I give up.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, okay. Wow.

HANFORD YANG: That's how they got it.

JUDITH STEIN: That's how she got it. Okay, well, that's a great story. Thank you.

HANFORD YANG: Not a word from her [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] So, there were other dealers in New York; we mentioned a few, but I know that you also were collecting Warhol, and that must have been from Eleanor Ward; is that correct?

HANFORD YANG: Right, but to introduce me to a Warhol was not Eleanor Ward.

JUDITH STEIN: Ok, okay who was that?

HANFORD YANG: That was—I think it was Dick Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: And he says that—he says "That's some very [clears throat] weird guy."

JUDITH STEIN: A very what? Sorry.

HANFORD YANG: A very unusual guy.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, unusual, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, unusual guy, and he [Bellamy] came; he saw it. "But I [Hanford] have so many of that type of vision artist already." [Bellamy says,] "Yeah, but you should go take a look." [-HY/FB/JJS] [Bellamy gave Hanford Warhol's telephone number and said to call him. And Hanford says he called up Warhol immediately and (Warhol) invited him over. -FB]

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so I went to Andy Warhol. I just called up, and he did say it's okay to visit him.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Can you imagine in those days?

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Yes, I can, I can, I can.

HANFORD YANG: The artist is just so approachable so I just call call him, and he would come on over, and we went to the 70—no, 86—more than [inaudible] 86th Street, 88 or 89th Street, and Lexington Avenue. It's a very small brownstone—

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: —that his mother owned. His mother has it, and he would live downstairs; the mother would live upstairs. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: I see, and then so you saw works of his that you liked and—

HANFORD YANG: No.

JUDITH STEIN: No?

HANFORD YANG: No, we just—some of it, we just talk, talk about art, talk about what I've bought, and he was so surprised. He said, "Gee, you know, in your status, you must be very poor." [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: It's kind of hard. I said, "Well," I say, "I can manage it and even when I see something I like, I can always have the loan you know?" I mean, immediately, I get along with him so well.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, that's great [laughs].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, it's unbelievable, you know, and then I said—I say, "Andy, I would like to buy—buy a piece from you?" He says, "I want to give to you. I'll make a very good piece for you."

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So which one was that? What did he make for you?

HANFORD YANG: Well, at the time, remember he paint soup cans already.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: But not on silk screen, with a hand. It was hand painted.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, he did exhibition with Irving Blum—

JUDITH STEIN: Right.

HANFORD YANG: —I think in Los Angeles.

JUDITH STEIN: Exactly.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, well, they were painted. When I saw—when I went to the studio, there were about 10 of them started. I say, "Andy, can I buy one of them?" He says, "No, because this is a series I have promised somebody." He says, "But don't worry about it. I'll give you a piece when it's ready," like that. And then he will always say, "If you have—if you come down past Chinatown, can you bring me some dim sum?" [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: Dim sum again? [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, can you imagine that? So every time, then, I fly down from Boston and come through Chinatown, I buy him lots of dim sum of various stuff.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: And he would enjoy it so much, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Like that. So we talked, and we sit on his bed, by the way. The studio is that small.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. We were sitting on his bed; he painted on the bed.

JUDITH STEIN: On the bed, huh?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, not on the bed.

JUDITH STEIN: No, I mean, seated on the bed.

HANFORD YANG: And next to the bed.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: That's small. But around the room are the finished work.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, but his studio was, in those days, as I see it, he was sitting there with paint. So one day he called me, and he says, "Okay, your painting's ready." I walked in, and he was—with one of the soup can—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —with label peeled off.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh, wow.

HANFORD YANG: Okay? And this is a time for you to have this. I said, "Whoa," I said, "Oh, no, I don't think I am—I can afford it." He's like, "You can afford it."

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Okay? You know, "I'll make a deal with you. I'll charge you \$500."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Okay? And you can pay me \$100 a week—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: For a month and a week.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: One month and a week.[I would go to Chinatown and eat for \$1.50 a meal so I could pay \$100 a week to Warhol. -HY/FB]

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And then, because he was signed up with Eleanor Ward.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: But he didn't have a show then.

JUDITH STEIN: No, she didn't show him for another year or so, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Exactly, so, therefore, I like that he sold it to me, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Like that. Then I said—then I said, "Andy, I would like to have drawings, too."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And he says, "Well, I'll give you drawing, too."

JUDITH STEIN: Oh [laughs].

HANFORD YANG: Okay. Then I said, "Can I buy it?" He said, "No, no, no, I have to go to focus on Samaras's party." I said, "What kind of party?" He says, "It's a dressed-up party."

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, a costume party?

HANFORD YANG: A costume party. I said—and most of them will probably look at some other ones, just like women or something, you know? [Cross-dressing -JS]

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, I was so square at this is time, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: You know, how square I was.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes [laughs].

HANFORD YANG: I should have jumped on it.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, so you missed the chance to go to the party?

HANFORD YANG: All this historical stuff, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I'm just—and I said, "No, I cannot go." He says, "All right." And he was, "Oh, well, next time when you come, you have to join."

JUDITH STEIN: Oh [laughs]. That's right.

HANFORD YANG: And next time—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah?

HANFORD YANG: —it is all of a sudden, he'd become so famous by those movies he made.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Okay? And so one day I was there, and he comes in and said—he says, "Hanford, I have a part for you. I want you to be in a movie."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I said, "Oh, no!" I said—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: —"No, no, I will not do that!"

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: "And your movies are notorious. I cannot do that."

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: You see? That wasn't the first time. And then, one time he says—oh, he says—oh, he says, "I want to make a painting of you."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: "Oh, can it be"—I said, "Can it be—can it be like Mrs.—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Ethel Scull?

HANFORD YANG: Ethel Scull.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I say, "Can it be Mrs. Scull-type?" [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: I was so obnoxious. He says—he says, "No, you cannot ask; that's a little too big. I'll just make

a painting for you." And because I said, "Well, I don't like small" [phone beeps]—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I didn't know anything better.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: So first I rejected to make a movie.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Second, [phone beeps] I rejected to have a portrait painted by him.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: He proposed it, okay? And I rejected. So, after that, we sort of cool off.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, so he doesn't call me anymore and so forth. Maybe he's, like—reputation of course—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —is getting so big that I won't be—I won't be able—touch him.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: But much later on, this Italian wrote a book about it: Andy Warhol.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And he told me that he went to the research, and he found a drawing—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, of you? Yeah?

HANFORD YANG: No, no, no, he said, "His drawing says 'For Hanford Yang.'"

JUDITH STEIN: Oh.

HANFORD YANG: The drawing is still there—

JUDITH STEIN: I see. Oh.

HANFORD YANG: —back in the archive.

JUDITH STEIN: Right. Oh, well, thank you. Well, you know, you mentioned Ethel Scull and—

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: —the other—another question I was—I had was, did you get to visit other collectors? For example, did you ever get to see the Scull collection? Or did you visit the Tremaines, you know? Did that happen?

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, it happened. I didn't go to Scull because I think Mrs. Scull is a big show off.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: And she had such confidence that—for the department—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. You mean when they left the Green Gallery?

HANFORD YANG: No, yeah, not only there—where they later on—either she died or they divorced.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, they divorced in '74, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: That's right after the divorce, and Mrs. Scull thinking that she was Mr. Scull and keep on discovering, collecting—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —and there were—they—up through to the junk [laughs]. [He meant what she collected was junk. -JS]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: And so the ones—the ones they own—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —were the ones that Robert Scull discovered them—

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: —through the gallery—through Leo Castelli.

JUDITH STEIN: Right. And what about the Tremaines? Did you ever—

HANFORD YANG: Tremaines I know well; they're very, very nice people.

JUDITH STEIN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And did you—visit them in Manhattan? In Connecticut?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, I went to both. I'm sort of friendly with them.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: And she was very, very gentle, very gentle lady.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: She must have been—did she admire your art collection?

HANFORD YANG: Oh, very much. We were sort of like, now and then, you know, call each other to have a conference or something, some side of it [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: Did you compete for the same works?

HANFORD YANG: I did the same as she did, yeah. We almost have the same thing, anyhow.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, but of course, Leo Castelli worries, you know, talking about Leo Castelli, that takes favor of, you know, of her—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —not me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So always—I always bought what Tremaine left over [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Funny, funny.

HANFORD YANG: You know, he doesn't—Leo doesn't sell the same—

JUDITH STEIN: He saved them—did he save them for them and not you [laughs]?

HANFORD YANG: Exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Exactly.

JUDITH STEIN: Wow.

HANFORD YANG: But even though, I think, I have very good eyesight, still come out, you know, very good at the collection.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. There was another well-known collector who was an architect, and that's, of course, Philip Johnson.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Did you—was he part of your friendship circle?

HANFORD YANG: Well, of course. You know, he's a very—he's a very obnoxious person when you see him in person, you know? He gives a lecture—he was a—actually, he was a teacher—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —in MIT, just for a project like that. And then give a—also, he gave a lecture. Everybody sort of like so surprised.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He says, "Architect needs money and so, therefore, you have to—you have to—you have to be born with a silver spoon in your mouth." I am not one. [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: So right away, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: [He was that] obnoxious in person, so I was never too friendly with him.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: So, but I always call him to say I will bring a bunch of students or, you know, 15 students—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —to visit his collection, but he always let the others that, you know—and open up his safe.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And then show me the later viewings he put on that side.[The ones he stored underground. -JS]
[A revolving thing with paintings hanging on them. Buried in the ground in Connecticut. -HY/FB]

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: So we've talked about Eleanor Ward—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —as one of the dealers that was, you know, very fond of you. What about Lawrence Rubin?

HANFORD YANG: Lawrence Rubin also was super kind to me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. He's a real gentlemen.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He will let me buy, especially, Anthony Caro.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Anthony Caro, okay.

HANFORD YANG: He would let me buy Caro, with down payment. And also a—what else? [Robert] Motherwell—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —on-time payment.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So the first time we spoke, we talked about your background and your family.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: I've been curious, how—what was the original impetus that got you to say, "Okay, this is something—[clears throat] excuse me—that I want to live with." This is an object that intrigues me, puzzles me, disturbs me, whatever your response was, but that you said, "But I want to have this in my space, so I can continue to look at it?" You know, what were—how do you understand your own impulse to collect?

HANFORD YANG: Well, but don't forget [laughs]—don't forget, as I told you other—the last time—the last time, you know, my father had so many children.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Remember? So you always want to—you always deal or want what the others had, so that your parents will pay attention to you.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So I am—I have this—I have this impetus to overcome anything I can—I want to.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know? So I've always tried very hard to learn, though in architecture, I think I accomplish something, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And, also, and in art, too. I need—I need something to stimulate, rather than to be comfortable with.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah, I got you.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. And so, therefore, even Andy Warhol's *Soup Cans*, I know it's a very, very, you know, original and unusual art. And, but then—but then people say, "Oh, you might view it as Andy Warhol, too. 'You know, this is just art. And don't ask me why.'"

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know? But then you fantasize it. You say, why does he want to paint soup cans by the dozen and then—and then there's a painting—peeling off labels? And there was that, and then you turn next to architecture, which is very community-minded, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: So you have this connection of mass production and the same as—you know, it's a decadent, but he will never—he will never recognize—I mean, admit it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Okay? Because there's too much of the same. And then it becomes so—for numbness, you know? For numb [ph]? And then it became decadent. And that's my interpretation, but Andy Warhol will never admit it. [He meant consumerism made the population numb. -JS] [Decadence (of society) and repetitiousness (of society). -FB]

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Same thing, I like the Roy Lichtenstein.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Because in the earlier days, he painted more paintings, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: And it was so stimulating of a—of this—a cartoon, and yet—and yet, it's serious about that, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, sophisticated, indeed, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So I think that that's why many people keep on going, and then also people having the interest to do so.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: You know, you've—a while ago in this, we—you mentioned that it was an article about you in an art magazine that Aldridge had seen. In fact, I think it was in an obscure publication called *Art Voices* that—in the fall of '65. So, you know, if you began collecting in '61, '62—

HANFORD YANG: Right.

JUDITH STEIN: —that was just the moment of the explosion of interest in contemporary art and also pop art was, you know, making its first appearance, as was minimalism. So early, you bought early on; you were acknowledged early on, you know, in the press, and by '68, Larry Aldridge was calling you "courageous," "daring," and he said, "You had an enviable élan." [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: So you really were, you know, one of the pioneer collectors in New York.

HANFORD YANG: I—today, I believe so. I think that's part of the reason why those artists, as well as, galleries supported me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know? And I have to—I had some in this space, this idea, you know, if I am—if I am going to—I'm going to collect art, I must collect the best.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Otherwise—yeah, otherwise, I may as well, you know, do other things, but this idea of—that you don't buy the things. You see it; you immediately, enjoy it, like it; [then] don't buy those things. I think it's the biggest idea that helped me.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know, I always buy the things that troubles me, yet later on, they all come out tremendously, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. So I think, for instance—we talked about Scull, you know? He was just very lucky, you know? And also he has—he has money. He buys things because Dick Bellamy gave it to him, tell him, "This is what—the good sales, you should come at," you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And I've had struggle to get them.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, well, and he was a hard bargainer, from what I understand, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Of course, the biggest, biggest bargainer, yes.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. That's why.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, he gave Castelli a lot of trouble [laughs].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, oh yeah. Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Of course. Yeah, yeah, but Castelli is not my fondest collector or dealer.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, because he played favoritism and also he steal—I don't believe he has a—wonderful artists go to him because he has this old, old, European air.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: You know, still thinking about [Pierre] Bonnard or [Henri] Matisse, because when he first had the gallery, he showed this stuff.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, I mean, and an artist like Rosenquist—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —he had a chance to sign him up before Bellamy did.

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely.

JUDITH STEIN: But Bellamy took him, and then when he became a success—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —then he left Bellamy and went to Castelli, and then Castelli was ready for him.

HANFORD YANG: No, what I'm really, really trying to say is that, not only his behavior, saving things for his favorite people, he favored Europeans—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —a guy by the name of [Giuseppe] Panza.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Has the best Frank Stella there, you know?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know, what—but beyond that, I really—what I'm trying to say, the eye in Castelli is his wife.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Ileana Sonnabend, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Ileana Sonnabend that has the eye, not Leo Castelli.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: But in the history book, it's all Leo Castelli, but I—I needed you to know—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: —because he's—when you talk to him, too, he's always referring to Europe.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: He has no taste for American art, essentially.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know, like this outrageous stuff, Andy Warhol, or—at the time, you know? Andy Warhol or Rosenquist.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, he was a complex, complex man.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, he's complex. I think we should write a biography about him.

JUDITH STEIN: There actually has been; in 2010, someone did write a biography of him [*Leo and His Circle: The Life of Leo Castelli* by Annie Cohen-Solal], but—

HANFORD YANG: Too bad they didn't interview me.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Yes, no, they did not. They did not interview you.

HANFORD YANG: Now I refuse the best part of Leo Castelli, because I don't think, you know, that he had—he had a good eye.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Ivan Karp even though, you know, his very bad reputation—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —later on, but when he worked for Leo Castelli, he helped, you know—

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: —Leo Castelli. So did Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: Sure.

JUDITH STEIN: There is one more dealer I was going to ask you about, and that's Paula Cooper?

HANFORD YANG: Oh, Paula Cooper, my darling.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: And I liked her so much and she's the—she's absolutely the most straightforward and good-paced artist. Yeah, she never plays game.

JUDITH STEIN: No, she never did. What did she—I'm sorry, go ahead.

HANFORD YANG: She always taught me something; she'll always do it, and also, there's so many wolves around you know? I think they all bully her [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Namely Pace Gallery [laughs].

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Pace Gallery mainly and another would be Leo Castelli, so there was an article; I don't know if I still saved it. It's from *New York Times*, an article about Paula Cooper. I think through the—it was about a month or two ago.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh yes, I think I did see it, yes.

HANFORD YANG: You could see it, right? But Paula Cooper talked about it, Pace gallery, to some artist from her.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Well, I think, if you read it again or to find that article—

JUDITH STEIN: Sure I will, I will look it up.

HANFORD YANG: I was astonished when I read that article; she must be so mad.

[END OF TRACK.]

HANFORD YANG: —and also she says that they all sort of look down on her. She was this little, skinny girl with her good heart to show.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Oh that's—yes. Of course, sexism is—

HANFORD YANG: Oh, yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —is still around in the art world.

HANFORD YANG: Huge today, I imagine, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: That was the—he reviewed that, you know, article.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And also revealed her—her whole home and that, in that home, it has Donald Judd's gift of ten stacks there.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.]

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, you've seen the pictures in that article?

JUDITH STEIN: And is that one that is the one that you got from Judd?

HANFORD YANG: Yes. Same—no, no, no.

JUDITH STEIN: The same one [laughs]?

HANFORD YANG: No, no. Same thing—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —different colors.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. So the same genre or the same moment in time.

HANFORD YANG: Same—right—yeah, same genre.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I mean, but same Donald Judd. But it's different piece.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

So here's a question. You know, what do you have left in your collection? Are you living with art around you still?

HANFORD YANG: Yes I do. I—well, you know, I'm very old now. I'm close to 90 years old.

JUDITH STEIN: Wow.

HANFORD YANG: So, yeah. So I give a lot of art to the universities. Big universities. University of South Carolina and also several museums, too.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: The Hirshhorn and then of course Frank Born now is like—it's like my agent. [Frank Born helped Hanford give art to other museums. -JS]

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. He sort of connect me to the outside world now.

JUDITH STEIN: Okay.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Because I'm very, very weak at times.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I still have some Frank Stella I like.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh good.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I still have some [Mark] di Suvero I like.

JUDITH STEIN: And the Robert Morris I-Box, that little box—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah—

JUDITH STEIN: —that you—did you get that from Bellamy then?

HANFORD YANG: Yes, I did. I got it, and then my whole family want to disown me.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: It was so shallow, you know, just so terrible. And can you imagine if, in those days, Rob Morris has that I-Box?

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: And I own it, okay?

JUDITH STEIN: Wow.

HANFORD YANG: And I have to return it to Dick Bellamy.

JUDITH STEIN: You owned it, and then you returned it to Bellamy?

HANFORD YANG: I returned it much later. I don't know who owns it now.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah, I can't remember.

HANFORD YANG: I think Ed Stone—Edward Stone had it for a while.

JUDITH STEIN: I know that Bellamy liked it because it showed him [Morris -JS] full-frontally nude, and it was a surprise.

HANFORD YANG: But that, you know, for men to own it, especially your sister, you know, your brother, would think differently.

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: They think that I might like nude, you know? I might like men. But I bought it purely by—I dislike it so much.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: You know, it's so shocking.

JUDITH STEIN: And that's why you got it, because you disliked it.

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Absolutely. You know, a man, that's in nude and it says "I"—Oh I would give anything for that piece back—to get it back.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: Because I did own it and so unfortunate that I had to return it.

JUDITH STEIN: Which portrait did you return? Oh, the Scull. I mean—I'm sorry—what did you—

HANFORD YANG: No, the I-Box.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Bob Morris' I-Box.

JUDITH STEIN: Aye, the I-Box. I'm sorry. I got—yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I returned it.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Okay. Here's another, perhaps, rude question—

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: —about your—the women in your life. Have any of them been artists? Have you been romantically involved with artists?

HANFORD YANG: There were several, but I don't want to go into detail.

JUDITH STEIN: I see.

HANFORD YANG: There were several. Also, there were several surprises, too.

JUDITH STEIN: Surprises?

HANFORD YANG: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And I dated and they turned out to be totally different.

JUDITH STEIN: You mean that you'd get to know someone, and then they'd be different from what you expected?

HANFORD YANG: Yes. They—yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: But I cannot tell you the name. You know, I think you probably know.

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] I think I'm—I might know one name.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah? Who.

JUDITH STEIN: Kusama? Is that—the one I'm thinking of.

HANFORD YANG: No.

JUDITH STEIN: No?

HANFORD YANG: Kusama is not gay, no.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, oh, I'm sorry. I misunderstood. You mean the women were interested in other women; is that what you were saying?

HANFORD YANG: Yes.

JUDITH STEIN: I see. Understood. Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Guess who? Do you know Chryssa?

JUDITH STEIN: I know Chryssa. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: I was so close to her.

JUDITH STEIN: Ah.

HANFORD YANG: Was very, very young.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: She lived on 14th Street.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, 14th or 18th Street, living in a loft. I was there, and we were very intimate—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —then it turns out she likes one of the lady, who has that [Dia -HY/FB/JS] foundation—from

Texas.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh. Gosh, I can't think of the name. Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: They had three, four daughters.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, but I can't think.

HANFORD YANG: I don't know whether you want to publish it or not.

JUDITH STEIN: Well, we—if this is something you would prefer to keep private, we can just—

HANFORD YANG: I think you can suggest it, but you don't have to spell out, okay? Did you know that Louisa Chase—

JUDITH STEIN: Did I know who? Sorry.

HANFORD YANG: Louisa Chase.

JUDITH STEIN: Louisa Chase. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: So very—once upon a time, was a very, very good artist.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, I know her work. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah, you know her work, right?

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And she was even shown at Emmerich.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. I dated her many times, and it turned out, she likes women.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.] But Kusama, you would think she must be. I don't because, I mean, it's not. No.

JUDITH STEIN: No. She was—

HANFORD YANG: She's just crazy.

[They laugh.]

JUDITH STEIN: I see. But loveable crazy.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Loveable. Very loveable.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: But this part—you can modify it.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. You asked me about women in my—

JUDITH STEIN: Sure. Well, let's step back from this intimate conversation to—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —is there anything that you wanted to say or that you think I should have mentioned that I didn't? I think we've had a really wonderful conversation.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Thank you. Thank you. You can ask me anything. I'll be as honest as I can—

JUDITH STEIN: Sure. Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: —to answer your questions.

JUDITH STEIN: I guess—you know, we've discussed pretty much all the topics that I hoped to, and we've talked about how you were such a—you know, in the avant-garde of collectors. And just as the pop art and minimalism came to the fore, did you ever buy any pieces of conceptual art? I know that after, you know, you went into lyrical abstraction, and how did—how would you describe the evolution of your taste over time?

HANFORD YANG: I don't think—I don't think I ever changed the taste, okay? It just—I followed—I like any sort of art—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —if it follows my idea, my principle.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And that principle being?

HANFORD YANG: Being that, if it confronts you, you should pay attention to it. If you look at it and says, "Oh, geez, I like it so much, and I understand everything of what the artist is doing," well, I think you should wait for a while to collect it.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Okay. I had a few examples for you.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Okay? Jeff Koons.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: [Laughs.] The first time, right, I loved it. I said, "Oh, it's so wonderful! This balloon dog."

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: And yet when you try to lift it, it weighs a ton, okay? So you need to like it. I thought—the first little dog was exhibited at Ileana Sonnabend. So up—they said, "No, no, no, it's impossible now." "He and I are very close to"—he says, "No, no, no." The next group that comes in [laughs], "I'll let you have it." I said, "You mean he's going to make that many?" He says, "Oh yes. He's going to make it, like, ten foot tall." [Sonnabend told him the 2-foot tall balloon dog was sold. So he lost his chance to buy it. -FB]

[They laugh.]

HANFORD YANG: Like that. So I got it. Later on, I realized that Jeff Koons is a very, very, very bad artist, okay? Very—did not have the concept. It's all—it was corny.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Then, later on, sure enough, somebody interviewed Frank Stella, and at the end of the article, the interviewer asked him about Jeff Koons. And Frank Stella said, "Jeff Koons' art is for the very rich people with the lousiest taste."

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.]

HANFORD YANG: I knew it then.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. That's what I think of Jeff Koons. A few people, you know, I immediately dislike. Another one is—I think this one brings hell for some people. I don't think Richard Serra is that good.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Richard Serra, to me, the art is executioner.

JUDITH STEIN: Art is—sorry.

HANFORD YANG: His art—

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: —are executioner.

JUDITH STEIN: Executioner.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Because tens—20 tons of steel, not welded, purely laid on the head of a point.

JUDITH STEIN: Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: And to make people walk through it—

JUDITH STEIN: [Laughs.] Yes.

HANFORD YANG: You can threaten people visually, but not physically. I mean, there are so many installers, who installed this art and died of crushes.

JUDITH STEIN: So—well, I take it, then, you've never—yeah. By the time Richard [laughs]—you weren't collecting Richard Serra [phone beeps].

HANFORD YANG: No, I don't collect Richard Serra because of that. Also, to me, okay, I don't like illustration. I mean by illustration is that: show the hard example, not art aesthetically.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: Let's say I never had a Rickey. Do you know Rickey?

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, George Rickey? Yeah.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. That move around?

JUDITH STEIN: Yes, right. That the wind moves, yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. Compare that to [Alexander] Calder.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: I think that Rickey is an explainer, is an illustrator to, say, kinetic art.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, kinetic art. Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yeah. That Calder is the one says, "This is what kinetic art is at heart." Rickey shows the theory that Calder displays.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Did you ever buy any Calder?

HANFORD YANG: Oh yes, I did.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So he was one of the artists, yeah.

HANFORD YANG: I know, the greatest. I like him.

JUDITH STEIN: So, I mean, you must feel a great deal of satisfaction looking back at your life and that you were there; you seized the day, at the time when other people were not anywhere near as secure enough to buy the things that you were buying.

HANFORD YANG: Right, right. Because I think, you know, your art really needs not only money for, like, [inaudible]—

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: —but also education.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes. Yes, I—

HANFORD YANG: I had wonderful teachers, you know. First in MIT—I mean, the guy tells me to not go to the museum, only because the museum is the—what did he put it? It's a warehouse, and the gallery is the one where you see the new challenge.

JUDITH STEIN: Yes.

HANFORD YANG: Yes. So I always go to the gallery first, and much later, I would go visit a museum.

JUDITH STEIN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HANFORD YANG: By the time I go to a museum, it was all famous stuff, you know.

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, Hanford, it's been such a treat to talk to you and hear you talk about some of your personal history. I just want to thank you so much.

HANFORD YANG: You are more than welcome because I also would like your address—

JUDITH STEIN: Oh, yes. I tell you what—

HANFORD YANG: Yeah.

JUDITH STEIN: —let's—this is a formal interview, so why don't I formally thank you, and I will end it, and—but stay on the line, okay? But—okay. So I'm going to just end our interview now. Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]