



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Helen
Williams Drutt English, 2018 January 8-
26

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Helen Williams Drutt English on 2018 January 8, 9, and 26. The interview took place at Drutt English's homes in Philadelphia, PA and New York, NY, and was conducted by Jane Milosch for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Helen W. Drutt English reviewed the transcript several times from 2018–2021; Jane Milosch reviewed the transcript in 2018. Their corrections and emendations appear below in brackets with initials. In October 2021, Drutt English wrote an addendum to the interview which is included. 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

JANE MILOSCH: This is Jane Milosch on Tuesday, January eighth. I am in Philadelphia, in the comprehensive library [. . . -Ed.], at the home of Helen Williams Drutt English. This is the third interview session with Helen. And we're going to start looking back a bit to what wasn't covered pre-1991, when the last interview was started. This is—I should say—2018, fresh in the new year.

Hang on. I'm just going to make sure—I'm testing this. That was just—

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK02.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, we're back on live. I'm sitting here with Helen Drutt on Monday, January 8, 2018, in the library in the home of Helen Williams Drutt English. Helen, how are you feeling today?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Quite well, thank you.

JANE MILOSCH: I'm delighted to be leading the third interview with you. The last one concluded in 1991 at the—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Amazing that I've lived this long.

[They laugh.]

JANE MILOSCH: You haven't just lived this long. You've generated a lot of great things for the field. I've been a beneficiary of so many of those projects that you've done, and books, and things. But I thought before we move forward beyond 1991, I wondered if you would mind stepping back to the very beginning of the interview, which talked about your family background. I'm always interested to hear of people's ethnic backgrounds, and upbringing, and also if there was any kind of faith or religion involved. I specifically ask this about you because I connect craft, and spirituality, and your love for Rainer Maria Rilke, and your generosity, and where these values spring from. So I just thought it would be wonderful to hear a little bit about your family's ethnic background.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Only their ethnic background?

JANE MILOSCH: Well more—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Because I think their aesthetic background is even more important.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you covered that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Did I really?

JANE MILOSCH: You did. It was fantastic. That's why I was curious, as a matter of fact, to what country and traditions they were coming from.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right.

JANE MILOSCH: Because they were very attuned to a lot of different things, both your mother and father differently. In fact, I was wondering if they came from Eastern Europe or Europe.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, both of my parents were born in America. My father was born in 1899 in Winthrop, Massachusetts. And my mother was born in 1905. But there are moments when we think it might have been 1904—in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—because her mother was pregnant with her when they came to America. I'm not quite sure, but I think it was Vilna, that they came from Vilna. [00:02:22]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, interesting.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And my mother was the first born in America, of eight children. So she was the third. My mother was an extraordinary, bright woman. My mother was a human computer during the Second World War. I'm not joking. This is before computers. She was in charge of warships going out to sea on a mission. And she would decide immediately the relationship to how many men, what the duration would be, the amount of gasoline, the amount of food, the amount of munitions, the amount of medical supplies. She would do all those calculations.

They would send her to Newport News and to Rhode Island. And we have pictures of her on a warship with battle gear on. When she was 100 years old, the Secretary of Navy actually sent her a letter stating that her participation during the Second World War was very valued. I must remember this because she was really dedicated to service during the Second World War.

JANE MILOSCH: Can you say her name for the record?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: My mother's name was Blossom, which was not her birth name but a name that she took. Blossom Politz Williams. She took the name of Blossom when she was a teenager sitting in high school at William Penn High School. And there were many women from the Main Line that had names like Klippy, and Twipsy, and—[laughs]. There is, in a certain social milieu, nicknames that young women took. [00:04:21]

And so, her name was really Minnie, but she took Blossom, and it stayed with her her entire life. Even her headstone says Blossom Politz Williams. And Politz was not their real name because they came through Ellis Island. The name was Pal and they put an I-T-Z on it. And I noticed about 15 or 20 years ago that there was a family in New York, Clarence Palitz, and my mother said that there were relatives.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: P-A-L-I-T-Z. I mean, it is interesting how people's lives and names are altered by immigration services who have no patience really. They just want to herd them in. So, my mother, as I said, was the third of eight children, and she was extraordinary. She taught me perseverance. She taught me commitment. She taught me the values that I hold very high.

My father, on the other hand, was an aesthetic human being. He loved beauty. He was an only child, and he was the only child of Ida Marcus Williams and Meyer Williams, and he was born in Winthrop, Massachusetts, December 3, 1899. I was also born in Winthrop, Massachusetts. I always thought that was really great, before we moved to Philadelphia, that I could share my birthplace with my father. My brother was also born in Winthrop, Massachusetts, but my sister was born here. And I remember she was born in Philadelphia, we always thought she was an outcast because she wasn't [laughs] from Massachusetts, which was not very nice. But we're each 19 months apart. [00:06:10]

I remember my paternal grandparents. I remember them with great, deep affection because they lived long, and I was the firstborn of an only son. I was rather spoiled by my grandparents, and I would spend my summers in Winthrop with them. My grandmother had an extraordinary eye. I have a quilt that she made that is just unbelievable.

JANE MILOSCH: Is that the crazy quilt?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: The crazy quilt.

JANE MILOSCH: The one where it was started while your father was at the knee, and when he—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. When I asked him, "When did she begin the quilt?" he said, "Don't bother me." And then one day, a few months later, I received a letter that said, "When she started, I was standing at her knee. When she stopped, she was cutting my ties." But she had great flair. I'll show you a photograph in the hall where you see her with her velvet dress with a brooch on one shoulder. I'm sure that somewhere in my visual memory, that I was influenced by her. She was also a great cook.

I remember when the Depression came, and money was almost nonexistent, she would cater for fine families, because, as she said, not only was she a great cook, but when she was older, she said the coming of age was present to her when she could no longer decipher, when tasting a new recipe, the ingredients in that recipe—that her taste buds had diminished. [00:07:55]

And my grandfather was very tall, and very—he was wonderful actually. I loved him because he did things that were extremely unusual. He hated cemeteries. So we would have to walk, when we were in Winthrop, maybe four blocks to the south, or the north, or to the east, to the west, to avoid walking by a cemetery. [Laughs.] And he had a very fierce command of what he wanted. I remember this wonderful story—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you certainly inherited that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. I am the only grandchild that has my grandfather's personality. Because after the war, we were sitting in our house in Philadelphia. My father had acquired a television set, and he would not permit it in the living room or in the other places in the house. And he built a room in the basement, like, with knotty pine and a place for the television and possibly entertaining. But it was a small house. It was not an elegant house. It was a small house. And my grandfather disliked Sid Caesar, and he disliked Milton Berle, and he pleaded with my father—

[Phone rings.]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Let me just keep going.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. He actually requested that my father change the program, and nobody wanted to change it. I don't remember whether it was, you know, Sid Caesar or Milton Berle. But my grandfather just very calmly got up, took his cane, walked out of the room, and removed all the fuses in the house. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No argument.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, that was one way to end that program.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.] So, I do remember. I remember that my grandparents' names were Meyer Williams and Ida Marcus Williams. I'm not sure whether my grandmother had brothers, but I do remember that she had two sisters. One sister's name was Sadie Gilbert and the other sister was Eva Holzwasser. I remember that because Eva lived in Winthrop, Massachusetts, and she had a son by the name of Billy. Billy was like my older brother because I would come to Winthrop [every summer -HDE]. [00:10:26]

I do not remember if religion was a central part of our lives. I can only tell you that my mother came from an Orthodox Jewish family. But my father came from a family in which religion was not really central or present in their lives. And because his last name was Williams, I think my father took opportunities to so-called pass. I'm not certain, but I do know that when he came to Philadelphia, he lived in Alden Park Manor, which was restricted.

He, however, met my mother, and I can't remember through whom. I don't know whether it was Hugh [It was Hugh McGee -HDE] or another one of his friends. I'm not sure of the exact name. And they did fall in love, and they were, for my grandmother, a strange couple. Because when my father wanted to bring his parents to Philadelphia—my grandmother was

blonde and blue-eyed. And my mother came from a very apparent Polish Orthodox family. But they were elegant because my grandfather owned a very important men's clothing store in Philadelphia called Barney's, which was his first name, at 10th and Bainbridge. And my mother said that the clientele was quite elegant. And you could always tell that the Italian men from South Philadelphia had the best taste in the city because they really knew a fine fabric.

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, I just remember these little stories.

JANE MILOSCH: No, I wanted you to recount some of this and add to it, because I found it had a great impression on the formation of your—[00:12:08]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, my grandmother loved china. So if you go downstairs in this house and look in my mother's china closet, you will see my grandmother's Minton, and you will see the de Haveland. So, she collected the de Haveland, she collected Minton, and she collected Noritake, when nobody was collecting Noritake. I have two or three major Noritake pieces that belong to my paternal grandmother.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. So, ceramics, early, early on—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I didn't know it as ceramics. For me, it wasn't ceramics. It was—

JANE MILOSCH: —china.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was china for setting the table and serving.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Service was very important. At night, we always ate in the dining room. We never sat down to breakfast without my father. There was no running back and forth with your schoolbag over your shoulder. We waited until my father came down between 7:15 or 7:30 in the morning, and we listened to Fats Waller—

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —on the radio. I do remember this. But service—you know, having the right salad bowls, the right dishes for all the accoutrements of eating, were very much part of my growing up. And I have remnants of that in the *Wunderkammer*, because in the *Wunderkammer*, there are lobster dishes, oyster dishes, lobster terrines. And I still wonder what's going to happen to the china. Neither one of my children will want it, and I can't bear to have it go to Goodwill.

JANE MILOSCH: No, you can't do that. We'll help find a way. But so, let me ask you this, then. Because I think that's one of the things I took away from the first interview, and why I wanted to bring it up. That there was an awareness to—formality wasn't something negative. And the fact that your mother was ahead of her time, in working, and still coming home, and setting a dinner to make sure that you ate together. [00:14:17]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We had breakfast together and dinner together. Lunch during the days in which she was working was in the refrigerator, with our names on it. I remember that.

And then you asked me also about religion.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, we were not brought up in a really sacred, religious household. My father, as I said, did not really want to attune himself to Judaism. But my mother, at one point, reinforced the concept that we had to go to Sunday school. So we joined the congregation called Keneseth Israel, KI, which is a Reform congregation in Philadelphia. There were two really important Reform congregations, KI and RS, Keneseth Israel and Rodeph Shalom. And as you may or may not know, the Reform movement really developed during the time of wartime crisis, so that Jews could assimilate and almost become [laughs] Episcopalian. I mean, so really—

JANE MILOSCH: Interesting.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, in a sense, many aspects of the Judaic service were sort of minimized in the Reform movement, but they were there, and you were known as part of the Jewish community. However, what I learned was at the time of confirmation in the Reform system, you became confirmed, which was also something that was similar in the Episcopalian and the Methodist traditions, or in the Catholic. One had confirmation, and confirmation did not exist in the Conservative or Orthodox Judaic traditions. [00:16:01]

But during confirmation, I remember that I had the highest mark in the class, and the rabbi called [laughs] me in—Rabbi William Fineshriber—into his office to tell me that though I had the highest mark in the class, I was not permitted to deliver the "Ode to the Parents" because I was not a German Jew. I was not purely German Jewish, and that would have to go to somebody whose family was financially deeply involved with the congregation and—

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. He told you all of this?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And I never told my parents because I knew my father would then put a light to the temple and burn it [laughs] so I decided not to tell him. But Janet Rosenwald delivered the "Ode to the Parents." She was Lessing Rosenwald's granddaughter, and he was the big print collector. And I couldn't compete with that kind of social or religious hierarchy. So now, you've asked me [laughs]—I hope this gives you—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, we will move on from here but—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But that was a very interesting thing for me to learn, because that was my introduction to the social hierarchy within the Reform Judaic movement. And it still exists today. I'm sorry to say that, you know, when I married Peter Stern, I realized that he was part of a very esteemed German Jewish tradition.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I just wanted to revisit it because I feel that those formative years and values transfer to—and I see so much generosity in what you've done. And I just was curious where some of the roots were coming from. [00:18:05]

In all of the projects that I've seen you involved with—and we were talking about it earlier. I met you in 2004, not long after I started at the Renwick. I've not met someone, at all, ever like you before. Faith plays a big part in my life, and it gives me the ability to be generous. And so I was just curious to know. And I'm a great fan of Rilke as well. And when you were married to [Peter Stern -HDE], you were talking about reading Rilke and that came—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, Rilke is really Peter. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Peter, sorry. I did not know that. Oh, because that did—Rilke comes up in your first, so there was a continue—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, Peter is entrenched with German poetry, Celan and Rilke.

JANE MILOSCH: That makes sense.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Whereas Maurice was Irish, and Irish poetry, and Irish—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you know, a lot of those poets looked to—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I know.

JANE MILOSCH: That German-British exchange was very—I mean, the arts, the Romanticism, and—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It is true. But right now, Uli [Ulrich] Baer, who is the vice provost of NYU and a great Rilke scholar, is currently translating Rilke's letters of mourning, and Random House is publishing it. And he comes and he reads to Peter.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I met him quite by chance [through a National Gallery of Australia board meeting -HDE] Australian meeting in New York. I met a friend of his [Lisa Fox -HDE] who is very involved with the Australian artistic community. She said to me, "I

have a gift for you," when she asked me about Peter. And two or three days later, she brought Uli Baer to our apartment, and he's been reading Rilke to him in German ever since. And now, I have just arranged for him to read at the Rosenbach [Museum and Library in Philadelphia -HDE] in May. On the eighth of May, he's going to read from the book that's being published. [00:20:04]

JANE MILOSCH: That's fantastic. Well, let's move forward.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, there we go. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Thank you for moving back. This is a good prelude and transition as we move forward to your current marriage with Peter.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We're moving from where?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, we're going to move forward from post-1991, but I wanted to work backwards a bit in the beginning.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, okay.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Alright. Here, we're starting back again. Helen, I wanted to start off by saying that your travels between Europe and the US and how you've worked with these artists internationally—bringing Americans to the awareness of European artists, and collectors, and museums, and then bringing them here. You've nurtured and had a lot of relationships and friendships with artists over the years. I thought maybe you could share some examples of some of the most meaningful things that have come out. Because now, since you did the interview in 1991, you still keep up with a lot of these people. And you were talking about Breon O'Casey.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I still have communication with many of the artists. And I have, somehow or another, made it a very central part of my activities to bring American crafts into the European, and Asian, and Australian domain. And I have been able to initiate many exhibitions, some of them independently and some of them with the assistance of other institutions like the Design Museum in Helsinki. And, of course, when Yvonne Joris was alive, I worked very closely with her with the Stedelijk Museum in 's-Hertogenbosch. The exhibition *Brooching it Diplomatically*, which— [00:22:20]

JANE MILOSCH: A great one when we think of you as a cultural ambassador for the arts.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it was a very interesting exhibition in the sense that it started casually as a small invitational, only to be held in my gallery in Philadelphia in 1998. I invited an international group of artists to create a brooch that would be significant for Madeleine Albright to wear while traveling across the globe and fulfilling her diplomatic obligations. Because the jewelry that she was wearing was very social, and it offended me, and I thought, "Here is an opportunity for our Secretary of State to also spread what was happening artistically in our field." And especially when she wore that gold eagle with a little pearl, I kept saying, "Bye-bye birdie."

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I said, "Bye-bye birdie." But I had to get permission from the State Department in order to do the exhibition. And at that time, Senator Arlen Specter, who was from Pennsylvania, was a friend. He assisted me in getting permission from her staff to go forth with this exhibition, which was going to be held in my gallery.

JANE MILOSCH: So she hadn't yet been to your gallery, you had not met her?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no.

JANE MILOSCH: This was your idea for her.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I wrote a letter, and I stated what my mission would be. That I was not asking for funding. I didn't want any assistance. I simply wanted to do this exhibition to give international artists an opportunity to develop a brooch responsive to her life and to her domain. [00:24:14]

JANE MILOSCH: I see.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I did. I invited many artists from the Netherlands, from England, from Finland, from Italy, from Germany. And I was surprised that they all accepted. And then when Yvonne Joris and Marianne Aav heard about this project, Marianne Aav called from Finland and said, "We will do the catalogue." I hadn't even planned a catalogue. "We will publish the catalogue." I was very nervous about whether or not the publication would be appropriate or not. And I sent Gijs Bakker from Amsterdam to Helsinki to look at the graphics. I will never forget that. [Laughs.] I said, "Gijs, you must do me a favor. Go to Helsinki. You're on the continent." And I wanted to use, for the cover, the Timothy Greenfield-Sanders image of her, but to take off the brooch that she was wearing and to put on the Gijs Bakker.

JANE MILOSCH: That's not her really wearing that?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my goodness. We're looking at the cover of the catalogue. I have admired this for a long time.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: It's a picture of Madeleine Albright wearing this amazing piece.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: By Gijs Bakker.

JANE MILOSCH: By Gijs Bakker. And I always assumed she owned it and she was wearing—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, she now owns it, but she didn't have—[one beforehand - HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: But this was digital work in action.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, absolutely.

JANE MILOSCH: Unbelievable.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I had to write to Timothy Greenfield-Sanders to get permission to use the portrait.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, that is amazing. This goes, like, back to Roman times and the Roman emperors who would wear certain things, or queens and kings who would wear jewelry. You really heightened the importance of visual language and symbols, and what they mean for our diplomats. [00:26:02]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I didn't, but the artists did. And the exhibition traveled from—

JANE MILOSCH: You created the highway.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It went to the Netherlands, it went to Finland, it went to Tallinn, Estonia. It went to Oostende, Belgium. It went to Hawaii, to Genoa, Italy. I mean, it traveled to Pforzheim, Germany. And when it was at Pforzheim, Germany, by the way, that's when I met Dirk Allgaier [and Dieter Zühlsdorff -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, how wonderful!

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I met Dirk Allgaier [and Dieter Zühlsdorff -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Through one cultural ambassadorship project, to another person who you've worked with, who did that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Dirk Allgaier and Dieter Zühlsdorff, who at that time was alive, and who was the editor and publisher of Arnoldsche. Dirk was his top associate and assistant. And they came to—

JANE MILOSCH: Can I just say that Arnoldsche is really one of the leading decorative arts

publishers in Germany and Europe. So, go ahead. Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I know that.

JANE MILOSCH: But I'm saying for people reading this down the line. When I worked for Prestel Art Publishing, and I thought, "Oh darn it, I really wish I could be working for Arnoldsche."

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, Arnoldsche has actually dedicated themselves to modern and contemporary crafts.

JANE MILOSCH: Correct.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: In addition to architecture and other aspects of design, but—

JANE MILOSCH: Historic and contemporary, I might add, which is unusual.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Right. When it was in Pforzheim, and I think that was in 2001, Dirk and Dieter appeared at the opening. I remember walking out, and Dieter just sort of taking my arm in a very genteel manner and putting it into his, and he says, "We would like to republish this catalogue, so it could be distributed internationally." And so that was the beginning of that. But it was a really wonderful thing that happened. [00:28:06]

And I will also say that that exhibition acted as a catalyst for everybody [in Europe -HDE] to do exhibitions on their—the women in city council, the women in the Senate, everywhere you went for—

JANE MILOSCH: Yes. I remember in Washington, when a variation of that show, as you said, came to the Smithsonian Castle.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was not a variation of that show at all.

JANE MILOSCH: It was not?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No.

JANE MILOSCH: Explain that. Okay, good.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What came to Washington was her personal collection, which I was trying to illustrate as too social, rather than a collection of work made by artists. What came to Washington were the brooches in her drawer and the—

JANE MILOSCH: But she did acquire some of these artists—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Those were all her personal pieces. Those were all her personal pieces. What came to Washington was the private collection of Madeleine Albright. There were one or two pieces from the *Brooching It Diplomatic* collection that went into her collection, in addition to the Gijs Bakker one, which was on the cover of her catalogue.

JANE MILOSCH: And Kim and Robin's piece as well, she acquired.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No.

JANE MILOSCH: No?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't think so.

JANE MILOSCH: I thought she did.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not sure. I don't remember. I must tell you, I do not remember. [Kim and Robin's *Profile of a Woman* is in Museum of Fine Arts, Houston -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: It was an amazing—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It may have been. But the collection that went to Washington was not this exhibition. This exhibition was, however, shown at MAD, at that time the American Craft Museum. But then her personal collection was shown at MAD, I believe, at

the Museum of Art and Design. So, there were two aspects to this. But the book that she published has the Gijs Bakker on the cover. [00:30:02]

JANE MILOSCH: Connecting it to the original show you did?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, either that, or maybe in some way pretending that this was an artistically creative collection. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I think you succeeded in educating her eye and elevating her awareness—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I was not concerned about the Secretary of State. I was concerned about artists, throughout the world, having an opportunity to respond to her political importance and to create something unique.

JANE MILOSCH: Very good. Well, that was just one of many of these. You're holding another book.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I also—you know, I'm just trying to think back. I am a little bit old, so I have to remember things. I am thinking back to maybe the time that we did *A View from America* in Melbourne, Australia. I was invited to lecture at the Royal—

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK03.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —Melbourne Institute of Technology in Australia. I think it was around 2004. My memory may not be perfect. And Gerd Rothmann from Munich was having a solo exhibition at that time. And I came forth with the idea that I create an exhibition to take place during this exhibition of Gerd's and this conference that we were having of American work. And we secured the Gold Treasury Museum in Melbourne, and I did an exhibition called *A View from America*.

I invited maybe 10 or 12 American artists. I don't remember every single person, but I remember Judy Onofrio, and Marjorie Schick, and Eleanor Moty, and Thomas Gentille. But there were many, many artists that were American artists that were in that exhibition. And two or three of the works became a permanent part of the National Gallery of Victoria. I know because Marjorie Schick died just a few weeks ago. I remember distinctly her *Liberty* piece became a part of the permanent collection.

JANE MILOSCH: But did the show—because between Canberra, and Melbourne, and Sydney—did it go to Sydney at all?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. It was just for Melbourne.

JANE MILOSCH: In Melbourne, okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It's just for the Gold Treasury Museum. And it was specifically to take place during that period, that time in which Robert Baines invited me to come. And also, he arranged the exhibition for Gerd Rothmann.

JANE MILOSCH: Can we—connected to that, I mean, you've had a longtime connection with Australia with Robert Baines. And when I've—Australian jewelry, in the tradition there—the museum in Sydney used to be called the Powerhouse. [00:02:02]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It is the Powerhouse.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, I think they have a new name now. You know, it's changed three times. I saw a jewelry exhibition there, and I could tell everyone knew your show. They knew *Ornament as Art*. They knew *Jewelry of Our Time*. You really are a star to them. I mean, that is a long way down there. When I flew to Australia—I've only been once—it's a long journey. You went several times back and forth.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I'm not sure I went several times, but the first time I went —

JANE MILOSCH: Was it with the World Crafts Council?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. No. I was invited to come by the Australian Crafts Council,

and they invited two people from America. They invited me, and they invited Kate Flynn, who is an aboriginalist expert. And we were invited to come to Australia, and to visit artists' studios, and to visit museums and museum collections, and to also offer lectures during that time. We went first. Jane Burns was the Crafts Council contact that I had at that time, and there was another man, John [Odgers. -HDE] And we began in Sydney and from Sydney, we went to Melbourne. And from Melbourne, we went to Adelaide. [And Brisbane and Perth. - HDE] And I cannot believe this—just stop for a minute.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But I do remember that we were given a list of artists to visit. I have to say that I probably—I did visit them, but when it came to working with anybody, my independent research brought me to artists that were not on the list, which did not make me terribly popular.

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.] [00:03:58]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: In Adelaide, I visited Frank Bauer, who was German-born and a great metalsmith and designer. I also saw, in the museum, Marc Newson's airplane lounge, which was just created. It was \$1,000. It's now selling for over 1,000,000. But there it was, sitting in the middle of the Adelaide Museum.

And the other part of the exhibition in the Adelaide Museum—if I can recall now, that's in 1991—were ceramic works that really looked like funk ceramics from northern California. And it turned out that the young woman who was working had worked with people in California. And I can't remember her name, but I remember being surprised.

I remember the bottlebrush trees that were so amazing. And I think it's the first time I ate kangaroo meat. I had kangaroo and turnips. They did not serve kangaroo in Melbourne. They did not serve it in Sydney. But they did serve it in Adelaide.

And from there, we went to Perth. And Perth was my introduction to the work of Margaret West, whose work I've always felt was extremely unique and very, very singular in its style. She's deceased now two or three years ago, but she was an incredible artist and also a great poet. And her works were extremely imaginative and very far removed from what one expects when one thinks of jewelry. They were very esoteric. In years to follow, she actually made a carpet of 3,000 hand-carved marble elements that almost looked like flowers that were all joined together. And I think she created it for the National Gallery of Victoria. [00:06:13]

But that carpet was so important to me that eventually, I implemented an exhibition between Margaret West in Australia and with Marianne Aav in design in Helsinki at her museum, that brought the work of Kristina Riska who was Finnish, Paula Winokur who was an American, and Margaret West who was Australian. It was called *Three Voices, Three Continents, One World*. And the carpet was actually brought to Finland. It was a massive negotiation. It was also a very difficult time because Margaret didn't like to fly, and I was also on the phone giving her confidence on taking an airplane and going to Finland. [Laughs.]

But, you know, everything is like a pretzel. It's all completely intertwined. You begin with one idea and before you know it, it burgeons, and it grows, and it develops, and—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I think you are fearless in developing those twists and turns, and that's what has made so many of your projects great. I meet a lot of people. The more complicated things become, they think, "Oh, got to back away." You've never backed away from complexity if that represents excellence. And I think that kind of force in vision is what's needed to show the interrelationships in the world. And this is all pre-Internet. I mean, the Internet was getting going, but I feel like it's amazing the amount of exchange you accomplished just by phone and letters. You still are a huge correspondent with a lot of these people. [00:07:56]

But let me ask you, then, between Australia and when you mentioned Marianne Aav in Finland, and we talked about Dirk in Munich. These are all people that came into my life thanks to the fact that *Ornament as Art* came to the Renwick Gallery. The fact that your collection came, even though you were gifting it to Houston and it opened there. I remember

in order to have it be at American Art—our director Betsy Broun said, "Why should I show an international jewelry show? We're an American craft museum." And I had to think about it, and then I said, "But she's an American collector. She's an American educator-curator," and she said, "Okay." But I still had to count now many international artists and how many American artists. Luckily, you had a few more American artists than you did international.

But all of these people came to Washington, DC. It was like having the wealth of what you had done for so many years suddenly come together in an international context. So, I don't want to make you jump to that show, but it's amazing, because even before that project—I'm looking at the *Jewelry of Our Time* book, which you did with Peter Dormer. And that's someone else who I want to make sure we have time to talk about.

But how did you convince a lot of these people to do these things, Helen? You gave them a lot of confidence, a lot of—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I didn't convince. I think that exhibitions that began to emerge were based on friendships, and on discourse, and dialogue, you know, exchanges of ideas. When I think of my relationship with Yvonne Joris and all the exhibitions we did in the Netherlands, it was extraordinary. I mean, she eventually built the most important collection of American ceramics in Europe. But it began with *Who's Afraid of American Pottery?* in 1980 or '81, when she came to America. I don't know if I spoke about this. [00:10:04]

JANE MILOSCH: You did a little bit at the end.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Okay. I did.

JANE MILOSCH: But it's a good jumping off point to even—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: She came to America with Evert van Straaten, who eventually became the director of the Kröller-Müller Museum, but he was very much interested in ceramics. He's no longer there. He's now retired. But he and Yvonne appeared at 305 or 309 Cherry Street—I can't remember—you know? And by the time our one-hour meeting and introduction to each other was over, I was the warehouse for all the works that they were collecting from America.

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I remember that. I will never forget that. You know, within—less than two hours, there I was, okay. They were wondering, how are they going to get it to the Netherlands? And that was an amazing exhibition.

And in years to follow, Yvonne would come to the United States or I would go to the Netherlands. But on one of her trips to the United States, I took her to a private collection of Ron Nagle and Ken Price, probably the most amazing private collection of their small sculpture that existed in America. And eventually, that entire collection was acquired by the Stedelijk in 's-Hertogenbosch. Amazing. [The collection was Patricia and Frank Kolodny in Princeton, NJ -HDE]

And then another time we were looking for a Voulkos, and one of my friends who was a great collector, Edna Beron said, "Well, there's one in my garage." So we got into a car, and we drove to Margate, New Jersey [laughs] and we picked it up. I mean, when you think about it, it has to do with energy and passion. It has to do with caring about the work, and it also has to do about friendship. All these curators—

JANE MILOSCH: Trust.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —and artists—

JANE MILOSCH: They trusted you, Helen.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —lived—they all lived in this house. [00:12:01]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: They all lived either on the third floor or the second floor. There were never a separation of going to a hotel and then having a meeting. It was a total ambiance, you know, of working together. Even Peter Dormer, you know. When I first met

him, I met him in Oslo, Norway at a ceramic conference. And he was very formal, he always was so formal. And he was just beginning to do a series of books, *The New Jewelry*, *The New Ceramics*, *The New Furniture*, *The New Textiles*. All his research was done in this house. Most of his research was done in this house, except for *The New Textiles*. And then he would send Chloe Colchester to do *The New Textiles* book, and she walked off with my textile library. And when I finally emailed her and said, "I want my textile books back," she sent me somebody's French textile library [laughs]—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my goodness.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But, you know, when I look at that Row of dictionaries down there, my heart really sinks, because Peter loved dictionaries. As a houseguest, he would always give me a dictionary. I would always get a new dictionary or a dictionary that didn't exist, you know?

And then eventually, we did the *Jewelry of Our Time* together and he—

JANE MILOSCH: Good thing he didn't give you the Oxford dictionary. That would take up the whole room.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Guess what.

JANE MILOSCH: You've got the whole thing?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I have to tell you that a year ago for my birthday, I bought myself the entire *OED*, because it's not going to be published—

JANE MILOSCH: No, that's right.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's right. I have the entire *OED*—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, I better not tell my husband, Mark. Okay, strike that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —in the backroom, on the floor. They're not even unpacked.

JANE MILOSCH: But this again was—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Because I met Simon Winchester. [He delivered the H. Peter Stern lecture. -HDE] And Simon Winchester wrote *The Professor and the Madman*, the book on the history of the *OED*. And he said, "If you want it, I can get it for you at a special value." [00:14:05]

JANE MILOSCH: But all of this passion and interest in learning really bespeaks you as an audited ex-scholar. You talked about in your first interview—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not considered a scholar.

JANE MILOSCH: You don't consider you a scholar, but the rest of us do.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It pains me that [laughs] that's—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I'm sorry. But I think that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I am not a scholar. What I am, and what I really am, is what Bernard Berenson called passionate sightseer, a passionate observer. I am a passionate observer. That's what I am. I am not really a scholar, but I do see, and I do understand—

JANE MILOSCH: You value scholarship as well as you value the art. I think that's what's important. As you talked about in your first interview, you were interested in what I think doesn't happen today. You were helping artists to develop their career.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Absolutely.

JANE MILOSCH: You were committed to people. That was a relationship. That was a friendship. But at the same time, because you weren't caught up in that museum structure, you didn't ask permission to do these things. The decisions that you made—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Without a board.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, thankfully, you did it to me too, that when you decided to—you said, "I want to do something for the Renwick for the 40th anniversary," and I said—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Thirty-fifth.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Excuse me. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: It's 35. See, your memory is better than mine: 35 gifts for 35 years. You said, "Only if you get off the train now in Philadelphia." I said, "Well, theoretically, I should ask Betsy for permission." You're like, "Now or never," and I thought, "I'm getting off," and I'm thankful that we did. But without that kind of passion, so much of this change—but also the trust and the companionship of these people being with you.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm going to go back to Breon for a moment.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, great. [00:15:53]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Only because something recently happened in the last month or two. I'm going back to Breon because, as I said, I first met him in 1981 at the American Irish Historical Society, and we do know that story about how I met him. And we also know that eventually, I began to exhibit his work even though I was panicked about exhibiting his work. Because he was Seán O'Casey's son, and I thought, "Oh, what if he doesn't really create wonderful pieces?" But because of that, I began to understand when I saw his work, [the paintings of -HDE] Ben Nicholson, and I began to understand Barbara Hepworth. And I began to understand that Cornish aesthetic, which is very unique to that part of the British Isles.

But so many things have happened as a result of him, even since he died. I was wearing two bracelets at Mountainville one day. And Chris Booth, who's a very well-known New Zealand artist and sculptor, was being considered for a potential project of Storm King, which did not eventually become facilitated. But he was there with his wife and his two children, and eventually, he came to have dinner with Peter and myself. And so he knocked on our door, and when I opened the door, he looked at me, and he said, "Are you wearing Breon O'Casey?" This man from New Zealand. I said, "Yes." [Laughs.] I said, "How would you know that?" He said, "Well, Breon and I were Barbara Hepworth's studio assistants in the '60s."

JANE MILOSCH: No way.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And as a result of that, we developed a wonderful friendship, and he starts sending me brochures from that time.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, Cornwall and New Zealand kind of have some—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I know.

JANE MILOSCH: —similarities going on there!

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.] But I thought to myself, "Isn't this amazing?" You know, this kind of connection through two bracelets that I wear all the time. And the result was that the family and Peter and I have become correspondents. And we connect with each other maybe once or twice a year, but it's always very pleasant. [00:18:17]

But then again, something else happened in which Breon is at the core. Last January of 2017, I received a telephone call from my stepson, John Stern, who is now the director of Storm King, to inform me that the poetry series is being canceled. And it was very upsetting for me because Peter had actually begun the series with Stanley Kunitz and Richard Wilbur.

JANE MILOSCH: This is the Maurice English Poetry Award?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, but this is before.

JANE MILOSCH: Even before? Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But Peter had started the series at Storm King because he loved poetry, passionate about poetry. He had Stanley Kunitz, he had Richard Wilbur, he had

Gerald Stern. And when Peter and I became a couple, he said to me, "You know, it would be really great if you would bring your Maurice English Poetry Award funds to Storm King, and then we could initiate a program that would be stronger, and we could get the poet laureates to come and speak." And so, I transferred from Philadelphia. I must say, the poetry community—

JANE MILOSCH: I did not know that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: The poetry community was very unhappy. You know, it was very unhappy that I was taking the Maurice English Poetry Award, which I had initiated upon Maurice's death in 1984 or '85. He died in '83, so I began to use his social security money in order to empower the poetry community because he was so passionate about poetry. And so, with this joint sponsorship between Storm King and the Maurice English Poetry Award, we brought people like Galway Kinnell, we brought W. S. Merwin, and we brought Naomi Shihab Nye. We brought [Philip] Levine. It was really amazing. And then suddenly [John Stern terminated the poetry series -HDE]—and I think our last one was Simon Winchester [00:20:16]

JANE MILOSCH: Is it really canceled now?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: A year ago, January, he called, and I had to ask, "We haven't done anything about the poetry selection for April." And he simply said, "It's been canceled. We're not doing it anymore." I was, of course, very upset. I simply, quietly, hung up the phone. There was nothing I could do about it. I just simply decided that if that was what he wanted, he's the director of Storm King, there's no choice that I could have. But I did ask if I could have some of the photographic material that was responsive to some of the poetry events that we had that we had jointly sponsored, because I was giving funds for this. And we began to build a website for the Maurice English Poetry Award. I did not do anything about it because I was initially stung [laughs] and I let it go. So that was January.

In May, I walked into the American Irish Historical Society to see the final exhibition material of Joseph Walsh, who is a brilliant, young furniture designer from Ireland. And he was having a one-person exhibition at the American Irish Historical Society. I called. It was being packed, but they let me in any way. And as I was there, the director came down—and his name is Chris Cahill. He said, "Are you Helen Drutt?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "How's the poetry readings going?" And I looked at him, and he said, "You know, I remember when you were here in—what—1981, was it? When Maurice was reading *Songs of the Dispossessed* and Breon and you were—and Breon O'Casey was here." He said, "Could I come and see you tomorrow?" [00:22:13]

He came the next day to the apartment, and he said, "We would like to sponsor the Maurice English Poetry Award." He said, "You know, that's an important event, and everybody knows about it. It's a national event. It's a national reading. You know, you've had it going since 1984." He said, "We would like to sponsor that with you." And then he said, "We're now working with the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia. I think we should have a meeting." Eventually, about five or six weeks later, we have a meeting in Philadelphia and the Rosenbach Museum and Library says, "We will also want to be part of the Maurice English Poetry Award."

JANE MILOSCH: Fantastic. Cultural ambassador again.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. So then we have to select a reader, right? And so, Chris Cahill says—you know, of course, I'm sponsoring it with Maurice's social security money. [Laughs.] I tell, "I'm paying for everything!" And now instead of one reading, I'm going to have two readings, right? I'm going to have one in New York and one in Philadelphia. And the poet that he selects is Paul Muldoon who has just, in the past week, received Queen Elizabeth's major poetry award in London.

JANE MILOSCH: Ahead of your time.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. So he's going to read on April 19th, the Thursday, at the American Irish Historical Society. And that following Monday, April 23rd, he's going to read at the Rosenbach Museum and Library. And in addition to that, Uli Baer, who is our Rilke reader, is going to read on May the eighth at the Rosenbach. Of course, I have to sponsor [laughs] all of this.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But is that not—[00:24:00]

JANE MILOSCH: It's fantastic.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But then because—oh, I'm not finished. And then, because of all of this, he's sitting there, and he said, "Who did that statue, that bronze statue in your living room?" And I said, "Breon O'Casey." You know, and I'm wearing my bracelets. He says, "Let's do a Breon O'Casey show." I said, "Are you serious?" He said, "No, let's do it in May when the art fairs are here." I said, "We can't afford to bring him," and he said, "Oh, you'll get your public collections, and you'll look for your—you know, the people that"—I said, "Fine, I have 17 [bracelets -HDE]. I have the bronze lady in there. And then I have the birdbath. And then I know at least 25 women in the city that have his work."

So, we're going to do a Breon O'Casey exhibition in May. We're doing the readings in April. And I thought, "This is really karma. Breon, you are not dead! [Laughs.] There's something up there that's—you know, there's a bird up there descending upon us just with its wings out, just like your birds in your serigraphs, and you're scooping us all up."

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. Well, with the help of your—I mean, again, this bespeaks your—how you honor people in history, I think, again and again.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: In death. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you write these amazing obituaries for the craft artists of the world.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, you read—wait, in *AJF*, you mean?

JANE MILOSCH: Yes. Well, the thing that you circulated most recently was Marjorie Schick. I think it was the last thing that you sent out, these notices. And I feel like everyone—things are moving so fast in time that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, we're working on Betty Woodman right now.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, yeah. But it's just part of this whole—and so, that's a wonderful outcome of how you started something, and it looked like it was going to stop, and you got it off to a whole new start. [00:26:03]

[. . . -HDE]

[They laugh.]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Let me do a little transition. Helen, let's shift gears a bit and talk about some of the other cultural ambassador projects, so to speak, that you started.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. I actually never thought of myself as a cultural ambassador. It was the city [laughs] of Philadelphia that decided that I was a cultural ambassador and made me a cultural ambassador. I never saw myself with a mission to communicate country, or to communicate ideas internationally, or to in some way act as a catalyst bringing works internationally from the Philadelphia area into an international domain and vice versa. But the city decided that I was a cultural ambassador, so I said, "Fine." [Laughs.] They called me one day and said, "Would you like to be our cultural ambassador from this year to that year?" And I said, "Fine."

JANE MILOSCH: You actually got a title?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I did.

JANE MILOSCH: I didn't know that. I was thinking in terms of arts and culture diplomacy today is a big topic, but you were ahead of your time again and you had that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I was given this title, which was sort of funny. I think I had it for about five or six years, whatever. But Hawaii was something totally different. I have no idea how that began, except that I received a letter one day inviting me to participate in a

symposium on the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. And I thought that was very unusual because I didn't even know if they knew my name. [00:28:00]

But I accepted, and I traveled to Hawaii. And Hawaii became very important for—first of all, Maurice had a friend there who was on the East-West Center, and his name was Reuel Denney, and he was a very important sociologist. And he had written, I think, that book, [*The Lonely Crowd*, Reuel Denney, Nathan Glazer and David Riesman, 1950] or—there was a very —

JANE MILOSCH: Far from the—no, I'm thinking of Thomas Harding, sorry.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, you're thinking of—

JANE MILOSCH: Hardy, Thomas Hardy.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You're thinking of *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

JANE MILOSCH: *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Or the—but it had "crowd" in it. I have to find out the name of what he—but he was—

JANE MILOSCH: We'll put it in there.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He was a famous sociologist, but also Reuel Denney had also written on the back of the cover of Maurice's first poetry book, *Midnight in the Century*.

But at the same time, Hawaii was haunting Maurice because his son had been drowned off the coast, the Nāpali Coast in Hawaii, a week before his marriage. And so he did not want to go, himself, to Hawaii. But as long as I was invited to Hawaii, he asked if I would take a journey to Kauai and to go up the Nāpali Coast where Brian had disappeared. Somebody had removed the sign that said "Danger-Undertow" to use it for cooking dinner the night before.

At any rate, the most important thing that happened for me in Hawaii was my meeting with Jay Jensen—James Jensen or Jim Jensen—who was, at that time—I don't know whether he was the chief curator or just a curator of contemporary art at the Honolulu Academy of Art that time. It is now called the Honolulu Museum of Art. But Jay Jensen—Jim Jensen—James Jensen [laughs] and I formed a very significant friendship and relationship. [00:30:10]

He became very interested in what I was doing in contemporary crafts, and implemented and initiated ways of bringing exhibitions that I was involved in to the Honolulu Academy of Art. The Madeleine Albright exhibition went there. He brought Paula Winokur in a solo exhibition there. He brought Manfred Bischoff. Nobody in America was even concerned with Man Bischoff's work. But we did a Manfred Bischoff exhibition there.

And we had an incredible relationship. He introduced me to Hawaiian crafts. I began to understand, through his eyes and his connections, Hawaiian woodturning. I began to understand works that were made with feathers. I began to learn about the Niihau shells—

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK04.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —which I knew nothing about. I had no idea that these shells were as valuable and as important as rare pearls. And that they could only be collected off the coast of the Robinson Island—I think it's the Robinson Island. And that we who are not involved with that island are not allowed to even trespass on that island.

But I became totally involved with the history of the lei. I began to understand what a lei was, and the different flowers, and the various ways in which you could create a lei that was either simple, just stringing the flowers, or whether it was a complicated piece, made of the twisting of leaves.

That relationship brought me to Hawaii several times. And then in another sort of semi-professional, cooperative way, Jim came here. One year, he came, and he curated an exhibition at the Philadelphia Art Alliance drawn from the private collections around the Robinson Square. And that would really amaze you because the private collections around the Square held—well, a history of art was within these homes, you know, from collections of Georg Jensen's brooches to collections of Magritte, to collections—

JANE MILOSCH: So, everything.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, to Oceania Avenue, to everything. And he drew from these collections and created two exhibitions at the Philadelphia Art Alliance. So, when he died last April—it's hard to believe that he died last April—we were in the midst of developing an exhibition on Wunderkammer, drawn from this house. And we were looking at Wunderkammer exhibitions, a Wunderkammer exhibition for the Honolulu Museum of Art to take place in, I guess—what year am I in? I'm in 2018. [00:02:07]

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was supposed to take place in late November of 2018. Of course, upon his death, that exhibition has been canceled, which is unfortunate. But it could only come to fruition if he were alive.

JANE MILOSCH: Right.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I made an attempt to say that I would sponsor a lecture on Wunderkammer by this great historian from John Hopkins University, but they didn't want that at all.

So, Hawaii was important to me because of my relationship with Jay, and also because of my relationship with many other people in the community, like Verna Kuyper and Jay. And just recently, I was looking—actually, it's here, which is really amazing that it is here. When W. S. Merwin won the Maurice English Poetry Award, I think it was probably 1989. And he did not wish to come to the mainland. He wanted the award to be presented in Hawaii because W. S. Merwin lives in Maui, and he did not want to come to the mainland. He wanted the award to be presented in Hawaii. And Matthew had contracted cancer, so I could not go to Hawaii to present the Maurice English Poetry Award. Deirdre [English, Maurice's daughter -HDE] went in my place, and Jim hosted it at the Honolulu Academy of Art, which is now the—[00:04:12]

JANE MILOSCH: —Honolulu—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —Museum of Art. He hosted the award, the reception, the entire program—the reading, everything.

JANE MILOSCH: Amazing.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: All these things that happen because they become composites of your life. They're not just singular events. You know, it's like tumbleweed. You think you're starting something or you're doing something. Before you know it, because of the respect for each other, because of the friendship for each other, because of the interest that you have, not only in singular things that you share but things that you learn about. I learned so much from Jim just driving through the woods of Hawaii. There's a bowl downstairs, a huge wood bowl from a eucalyptus tree, burl, made by a man by the name of Robert Butts, who was in the war, the Second World War. He never made it back to the mainland. He settled in Hawaii, and he became a woodworker, a beautiful woodworker.

JANE MILOSCH: I think we have a bowl by him at the Renwick.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You must.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, I'm pretty sure. Butts, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Butts, B-U-T-T-S.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, and that's downstairs. But that burl is amazing. It's a huge, huge eucalyptus burl.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. It seems to me—you mentioned the Wunderkammer and the intersections of art and nature, and also the idea of indigenous and regional crafts. Those things are all connected. Like, you're talking about pearls, and it's interesting because the artists that you've shown and included in your exhibitions and book—it's never been relegated to one kind of precious material or non-precious material. It's always been about quality and expression. And so, it seems also you have a lot of Indian art now since you've

been together with Peter. Since I came here last [. . .], I see a lot more of the—[00:06:13]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, but that's not Peter.

JANE MILOSCH: That's you? Is it?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, no. You know, Peter's Indian art is Mogul. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: He is Mogul, and yours is?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And mine, village craftsmen.

JANE MILOSCH: So, there you go. Back to indigenous, okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But I don't know if I spoke about Ruby Palchoudhuri in the last—

JANE MILOSCH: No. I don't think so, no.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Because during the Festival of India, I received a telephone call from the city, that the Crafts Council of West Bengali was coming to Philadelphia, to the Port of History Museum, with a shipload of Indian crafts. And their chairman was Ruby Palchoudhuri, and they had no place for her to stay, and could she stay with me? But the village craftsmen were staying at Father Divine's.

And so Ruby Palchoudhuri came into my life, and has been in my life since 1986. You know, she came during the time that I was [organizing -HDE] "Contemporary Crafts: An expanding view" for the Squibb Gallery in Princeton. She lived on the third floor. She was here for six months. It was hard for me not to become involved with village Indian crafts.

The door that you see hanging down there was a temple door from Orissa, and Stella Kramrisch came and looked at the door, and she said, "It can't go back to India." [Laughs.] And I said, "But I do not collect Indian crafts, Stella." She said, "It cannot go back to India." It was, in 1986, \$3000, which was a tremendous amount of money. But Ruby allowed me a kind of two-year term to pay for it. Its value is not even distinguishable at this particular point. [00:08:09]

But through Ruby, I became interested in Kanthas. The way the world runs is crazy, or unanticipated. The Kantha that is hanging on the stairway, I bought from Ruby in Hawaii, in Honolulu when she was doing an event in Honolulu at the same time that I was in Honolulu. [Laughs.] I mean, I come to Honolulu, and there is Ruby doing an event with her Crafts Council at the museum. And that particular Kantha, she had brought for the museum to acquire and they didn't have the money, and so I bought it.

My bedspreads I bought from her when I went to Calcutta, and I visited the Crafts Council [laughs] of West Bengali, which she had started. And the headquarters of the Crafts Council were in her mother-in-law's original home, and her mother-in-law was the first woman elected to Indian parliament. And we became very close friends. We speak to each other on the telephone every week. So, what you see of Indian crafts there predated Peter. But also, the two big panels on the wall, I bought in 1962 in San Francisco.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. So, it all comes back to the eye, the eye, and friendship. The eye.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Those two painted Orissa panels, I bought in San Francisco at Cost Plus. Can you believe it?

JANE MILOSCH: No, I can't. Again, it goes back to the eye.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, so there you are. That's where the—

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, so Hawaii to India, and in Ireland, in Cornwall, and New Zealand. [00:10:04]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But India didn't begin until Stella died. When Stella died, I was given—and now I can say it publicly—I took her ashes to India. That was my first trip. That was pretty deep. And I will never forget when I got to the London Airport, and I had this box wrapped in Indian fabrics, and Matthew was with me. And his doctor was furious because he

had just finished chemotherapy. And his doctor called and said, "How can you take your son to India? [Laughs.] He's just finished his bout with chemotherapy." Well, at any rate, he wanted to go, and he went with me.

But I'm in the London Airport and I'm rolling my luggage carrier. And I have on the top this box wrapped in Indian fabrics, and I bumped into Bob Venturi and Denise [Scott Brown - HDE]. [Laughs.] I know they just looked at me, and they looked down, and I think they understood exactly what I was doing.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But that was my first trip to India. It was an amazing trip. Stella had made arrangements for me long before that when I would go to India, I would meet Alfred Werfel, who was a very close friend of hers. And I did meet Alfred Werfel, and he took us to Varanasi with the ashes. We rowed out into the Ganges, and then he took us up to Haridwar, which is the sacred place where you also spread ashes [in the river -HDE]. We drove through the sugarcane fields. It was just an amazing, amazing moment.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, it was. [00:12:01]

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK05.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Okay.

JANE MILOSCH: Here we go. We'll just try it.

Helen, I thought we could transition from Hawaii to Hermitage. You have a current project with them, but your relationship and involvement with Russia goes further back—as I'm admiring this coat that you have here with all of these pins from all over the world called *nachkas* [ph], we think.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not sure.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But—

JANE MILOSCH: Tchotchkes or *nachkas* [ph].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, well, they're not tchotchkes.

JANE MILOSCH: They're not tchotchkes. They're wearable tchotchkes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Znachki.

JANE MILOSCH: *Znachki*.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know. I don't remember the name.

JANE MILOSCH: Anyways, you said it started in Russia.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, the first souvenir pins that I acquired were in Russia, and that was in 1986. For my first trip to Russia, I was part of a cultural group that was selected from Philadelphia to go to Russia and, at that time, to go to Leningrad to try to initiate and implement a—

JANE MILOSCH: Hold on one second.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —cultural exchange. Why?

JANE MILOSCH: Something is not working. Okay. I'm just curious. It should be playing, but it's recording.

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK07.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. I think we have a new track now. Let's transition from Hawaii to the

Hermitage.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: They're both H's. [Laughs]

JANE MILOSCH: Exactly. So tell us how you became interested in Russia, and how you have developed your current project, which is another major cultural feat in the time. It's very difficult right now between the US and Russia in some ways.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And the exhibition really, in some way, shows you how cultural exchange can bridge the barriers of difficulty, you know?

But my first journey to Russia was in 1986. There was an initiative in the city of Philadelphia to develop a cultural exchange between Philadelphia and what was then Leningrad, before it became Saint Petersburg again. And I was invited to be part of this cultural exchange, and I represented the crafts aesthetic in the city. And other individuals that were part of this cultural exchange came from the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the University of Pennsylvania, the maritime museum, various—the Gray Panthers, an aging political initiative.

So, we went to Russia to develop a cultural exchange with the city. That really didn't happen, but it was a great trip, and I must say that I made some lifelong friends. I still—this past December, John Medveckis, Gay Scott, Helen Cunningham, and I had our 31st luncheon commemorating our journey from Leningrad to Novgorod. For 31 years, we've been bound together as friends. And we use that moment to sort of discuss the previous year in our life. And this time, we dipped into some cultural heritage discussions that we had never discussed before, in which John told us about his childhood in Riga, Latvia, et cetera. Anyway. [00:02:35]

However, I did return again sometime in, I think, 1989 for another visit, but this time it was a professional visit to look at artists' studios, and it was—

JANE MILOSCH: What year was this?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That was, I think, '89. '89 or '90. It was at that time that I was called back from Russia because Matthew had been taken ill. And my daughter Ilene called me, and she said, "Just come home." She didn't tell me why, but obviously, Matthew had been diagnosed with cancer.

However, I think those two journeys were very separate, and there seemed to be no connection in my presence there with the contemporary craft movement. I didn't really visit studios in the crafts. I was there with a former partner in the New York gallery called Edward Roberts who was really interested in painting and sculpture. But I was there and led by Marina Kovalyov, who has become a lifelong friend.

The important time in Russia occurred in 2012. And it occurred after a visit from—I'm just trying to think. Okay, turn it off right now. [00:04:18]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, how did the relationship with the Hermitage emerge in the 21st century?

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I was at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. There was a presentation by Robert Edsel on *The Monuments Men*. And I was standing in the audience listening to his presentation when a woman came up to me and admired my hat. We began to have a conversation, and she asked me my name and where I lived. And it turned out that Mountainville, where I was living with Peter, was very close to Tuxedo Park, and she happened to be the vice president of the American Friends of the Hermitage Foundation.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. You invited me to the event. I now remember this.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, whatever—you know, it was very interesting. So, we developed a discourse, a conversation, and then she told me—that Mikhail Piotrovsky, who

was a director of the State Hermitage Museum was coming to America; did I think that we could arrange a visit for him at Storm King? I said, "No problem." I said, "Tell me how many people. We'll have a brunch first at our house [Cedar House -HDE]."

JANE MILOSCH: How lovely.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And then I arranged—and I believe by that time, Peter might have been retired. And I called John and told him I was bringing the director of the Hermitage Museum and a group of people from the American Friends of the Hermitage to Storm King. So, that sort of was an embryonic connection, but nothing really happened. [00:06:02]

He, Mikhail Piotrovsky, was floored by Peter's collection of Asian textiles, Indian textiles, Mogul textiles. It turned out that he was a celebrated historian in that particular field. And he was totally—well, he was, I would say— I don't like to use the word "impressed," but I think that he was impressed with Peter's aesthetic selection and critical selection of very fine works rarely seen in a domestic environment. There is no doubt about that. But he was also very curious about the contemporary ceramics. He had never seen contemporary ceramics from America. And, of course, they were infiltrated throughout the house because [laughs] the house was a combination of Peter's aesthetic and my aesthetic. And when we were married, those two [merged -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Intermingling occurred.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Occurred.

JANE MILOSCH: Visually very beautiful, for the one visit I had.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And it's documented. We have photographs, I'll show you.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I had the house photographed before it was—

JANE MILOSCH: —turned back over to the son.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it wasn't turned back over to the son.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, okay. I thought that was part of the directorship maybe.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, it never—no. Storm King did not own Cedar House. Cedar House was owned by Peter Stern. And according to nonprofit laws, you can't do certain things that would enhance a nonprofit situation if you were part of it. There are laws.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. This Hillwood. Hillwood just had it—yeah, go ahead.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. At any rate, following that visit by Piotrovsky, the young curator, Tina [Ekaterina Khmel'nitskaya -HDE]—and I cannot say it in Russian. But Tina came, and she was the curator of Russian porcelain and ceramics. And Chauncie Rodzianko, who was this woman from the American Friends of the Hermitage Foundation, brought her to the house, and she totally flipped out. She had never seen it. She had never seen American ceramics. So, she decided—[00:08:18]

JANE MILOSCH: Contemporary American ceramics.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Contemporary—

JANE MILOSCH: Post-war.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Post-World War II. You know, pieces by Rudolf Staffel, Wayne Higby, Jun Kaneko, SunKoo Yuh, by Claudi Casanovas. In the garden, the big Claudi Casanovas piece was installed [Casanova from Spain -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Bill Daley everywhere.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Bill Daley.

JANE MILOSCH: Khmel'nitskaya.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Khmel'nitskaya, you know? And she's an authority on Russian ceramics and Russian contemporary ceramics. Her eyes were sort of, like, dancing within her eyelids. You could just see them going up and down like little puppets. It was really wonderful because [laughs]—it was. It was really marvelous to see how excited she was.

And following that, she actually came to Philadelphia. She actually stayed here, and eventually, she stayed here for almost a month doing research [on American ceramics - HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: So she got to experience your dining room, which I've always loved. The time capsule, as I call it, the post-war or the American studio craft time capsule.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But more than that, she used my library. And she photographed my library.

JANE MILOSCH: Good.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I gave her permission to photograph the library. She had permission to do anything she wanted with books that were not available to her in Saint Petersburg, but she could not go into my files. She could use the library, but she could not use my files. And she could use the artists' books that I have upstairs, but not my files. As a result of this dynamic exchange, which was very enthusiastic, I was invited to give a lecture in Saint Petersburg. [00:10:04]

That was in 2012, and it was December. I remember that. It was very cold. And I lectured not in Hermitage itself, but next-door at the Vladimir Palace, which is extraordinary and quite beautiful. And another lecture at the Academy of Art in Saint Petersburg.

JANE MILOSCH: On American crafts?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: On American crafts. One on American studios and work, and the other one was strictly on ceramics, I think. I gave the two lectures, and after one of the lectures, Chauncie Rodzianko was with me, and she said, "Mikhail Piotrovsky, the director, would like to see you." So we went to his office which was vast, and baronial, and filled with more books than here, which I'm happy to say—

JANE MILOSCH: That seems impossible to me.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —this looks barren [laughs]—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my gosh.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —compared to his baronial office. And he said to me, "You know, we have no American work, post-World War II or even 20th century, in our collection at all." And I, feeling very spirited, said, "Well, I can help you with that."

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So he said, "How?" I said, "Well, maybe I can see that one or two pieces come as gifts." And he said, "We would deeply appreciate that."

But, you know, I went home and the whole idea of their not having anything sort of acted as a catalyst within my brain. And I thought, "Well, we can do something about that." Within eight months, I had 74 pieces of work. I had textiles, I had ceramics, I had Claudi Casanovas [Spanish -HDE], I had huge pieces by Françoise Grossen, a huge rope piece, and Ted Hallman, and Lizbeth Stewart, and Wayne Higby, and Bob Turner, and I mean—[00:12:16]

JANE MILOSCH: But, Helen, are these all people who—did you let the artists know or did you find these from other collections to be given?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I called artists directly. I called artists. I made studio visits. In one case, I found the collector who had two Toshiko Takaezusu, and I invited him to lunch at the University Club. And I said, "Eugene [McVey -HDE], if you send these to auction, they may be sold at an appropriate place, but if you give them to the Hermitage, you will have a great tax deduction."

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Because we had a 501(c)(3) through the American Friends of the Hermitage. You know, so the Turner family gave a great Robert Turner.

JANE MILOSCH: And you helped us acquire wonderful things for the Renwick through the Turner family.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I did do that.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, you did.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I absolutely—I stayed with him in his studio—and three of the best Staffels [went to the Hermitage -HDE], I must say. I'm now wondering why I did that. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: These were from your own collection.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. I gave three of really the finest Staffels I had, and—

JANE MILOSCH: Now, they'll be in the Hermitage where porcelain—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And Lizbeth Stewart—and she's deceased now—the great one with the bat on the leaf with the anthurium. It's just extraordinary. And Risë Nagin's great piece called *Dwelling*, which is a masterpiece of silk and paint-collage. You know, it's a masterpiece.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, through the American Friends of the Hermitage Foundation, Matthew worked with me. Matthew wrote a great essay for the catalogue. The photographs for the catalogue were paid by the foundation. But the Hermitage paid for the publication. But they wouldn't wait for the bios because they wanted the show—the exhibition—to open. It shouldn't be a show. Shows are people who dance and sing. [00:14:24]

They wanted the exhibition to open in 2014, upon the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the Hermitage. So it opened in December 2014. It was supposed to close March 8, 2015, and it's still up. It's now 2018, and they haven't taken it down. And we believe that the reason it has not been dismantled is because it is, symbolically, evidence of a friendship between America and Russia. And also, crowds are coming constantly. We even had Paula Winokur's 14-foot porcelain piece. It is amazing.

JANE MILOSCH: Did you know that all the works—was the idea always, from the beginning, they would go over for the exhibition and then be donated? So it was more—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: From the beginning, it was gifts.

JANE MILOSCH: It was gifts.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: From the very beginning.

JANE MILOSCH: And it became an exhibition?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it was gifts that were collated, [gathered to comprise an exhibition which would enter the permanent collection. -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: Again, arts as cultural diplomacy.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But other things happened. We had a panel. Many of the American artists came. Jim Makins gave us the most extraordinary set of bottles and a tray. Nagin came, Jim Makins came, Higby came, Gijs Bakker came. Giorgio Vigna came from Milan because his big, glass necklace—it wasn't just Americans who were—it was *Gifts from America*. So I had some non-American works there. [00:16:18]

We were all staying at the Kempinski, and every morning, we were all having breakfast together. But also, we had an exchange with Russian artists. I have just gotten a green card for one of the Russian artists that I met there, who is now going to come to America to

teach. And he was able to—he made things that I had never seen before. Forged-iron bracelets, unbelievable. I have three in New York. They are extraordinary. They are truly extraordinary.

So then, it was an amazing time. Tina arranged trips for us to go to see palaces. And, you know, we were in buses together, and it was just an amazing time. And then even the opening, the 250th-anniversary dinner, was amazing. And Francis—who's the great British painter?

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Bacon?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Bacon. The major Francis Bacon show from England also opened at the same time.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, how wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, we had—you know, it was an amazing confluence of people. Anna [. . . Netrebko -HDE] sang at the opening. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. Oh, grand.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was like out of a fairytale. You know?

JANE MILOSCH: Grand, right. Dostoyevsky. Or no, Tolstoy.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We were all dressed up. It was an amazing event, and it is still up [exhibition has remained on view -HDE]. [00:18:03]

Now, as a result of that, Berndt Arell, who is no longer the director of the Nationalmuseum of Sweden, came to the opening of the 250th anniversary, and he saw the exhibition.

JANE MILOSCH: He said, "Could you do that for us too?"

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And he came to see me last year.

JANE MILOSCH: A national treasure in America.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And now, I'm [organizing gifts/exhibitions -HDE] for the Nationalmuseum of Sweden.

JANE MILOSCH: You really are.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: In Stockholm, right there by those wonderful Niki de Saint Phalle.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, and the palace.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, and all that amazing ceramics and glass in that. Wow. So, when will that open?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I don't know yet, but I decided to be a little more adventuresome. In the Hermitage, I only have one piece of furniture. I have just a Nakashima chair. But I started last May, and I now have a [Tom -HDE] Hucker loveseat. I have a Garry Knox Bennett. I have a Michael Hurwitz. I have the Jere Osgood [chair -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: You need an Albert Paley in there.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I've been talking to Albert.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, good, good, good.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I've been talking to him. I have been talking, and he thinks he has a donor. It's probably your donor.

JANE MILOSCH: I don't know. You could also talk to Chunghi Choo.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What? She doesn't have a donor.

JANE MILOSCH: No, but she might gift something.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Do you think so?

JANE MILOSCH: She's been gifting—

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Talk about that later.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Okay.

JANE MILOSCH: So, you've got this project in Sweden. How did Greece figure in? That's another interesting—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, yes, well, Greece. So—

JANE MILOSCH: Did that come out of Russia, too?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no, no. No.

JANE MILOSCH: That would be really historically interesting.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, that came out of Helen in Philadelphia. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: And your name. I mean, Helen and Greece just seems like it should happen. Helena.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: About two years ago—I think it's two years ago—I received a call from Ioanna Lalaounis. [00:20:12]

JANE MILOSCH: So this was before the banking crisis?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Either before or around the same time.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Telling me that they have this wonderful museum in Athens that her father had started. And it is basically his collection, and his works, and his drawings, and they would like to reach out. And they had already hosted the *Châtelaine* exhibition. But I couldn't go, so Marianne Aav was very angry at me because I couldn't go to Athens. She went to Athens, but she couldn't understand why I couldn't go to Athens also. Well, going from Helsinki to Athens is easier than going from Philadelphia or New York to Athens.

At any rate, they had already hosted the *Châtelaine* exhibition. But she contacted me and said that she would like to come and see me in New York. And she came to see me, and she asked me if I would serve on her board.

JANE MILOSCH: Their acquisitions board or just the museum board?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Whatever. I wasn't quite sure, but she was forming an American board. And she asked me if I would serve on that board. And I thought about it, and I thought, "Well, if her philosophical intent is to broaden the museum"—and I had been to the museum. I had met her father when he was alive, and I had been to the museum, and I knew the museum. But if her philosophical intent, as director, was to really build an international collection, then I would be happy to serve. And so, I said yes. And again, you know, without salary. This is all pro bono. [00:22:03]

I was not paid by the Hermitage. Although, they did bring me over, and they did house me in the hotels. They did pay for my passage when I came to lecture. They didn't pay my passage when I was installing the collection, which was in the new galleries. The galleries that Rem Koolhaas had designed. So I said, "Alright." [Laughs.] And so, I have been slowly building a collection for them.

JANE MILOSCH: Is it just jewelry? And gold?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, it's just jewelry.

JANE MILOSCH: It is just jewelry?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. They have an amazing Marjorie Schick. They have an amazing Deborah Rapoport.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Are you identifying the artist in the pieces, and then they're finding the money to acquire them?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I'm getting them as gifts.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, okay. Wow. How many boards do you serve on, Helen?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Not many. I'm not on the American Friends Board of the National Gallery of Australia anymore. I retired because they were asking for a huge stipend, and I decided that what I am doing for the National Gallery of Australia, I can do independently. I'm really basically on the Archives of American Art Board [retired early 2021 -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Okay. Very thankful for that. We are very thankful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But, you know, I am great at encouraging artists to gift and to get patrons. And actually, you know, it makes a great deal of sense. You know, artists are getting older. They have studios filled with work. It's important to have America in various countries. It would be great to have them buy it. [00:24:06]

But before Marjorie Schick died—it's now three weeks, which was so tragic. She had just retired. She and her husband had just purchased this house in California.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, to move out there.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And they—she was about to move within—

JANE MILOSCH: To really retire, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And as Jim said, she didn't want to travel anymore. She just wanted to relax. We were working on the shipment—of her *24 Bracelets*, I think it is, it's a huge sculptural piece—to go to Sweden and to come first to New York to go into storage. And the next day, she had a stroke, and she died two weeks later. [That piece was gifted to the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne due to delay in Sweden in 2019 - not Sweden -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my goodness.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It is terrible. It was really tragically and emotionally difficult for everybody. And, I mean, in the midst of her jubilation about finally moving, and retiring, and having a life free from a lot of academic pressures.

However, in the past year and a half, while she was preparing her studio to move, I have helped place several pieces in major museum collections: The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich; the Ilias Lalaounis Museum in Athens, Greece; the Philadelphia Museum of Art, which has the great Schiaparelli collection; the Honolulu Museum of Art; the Nationalmuseum of Sweden. [Did not happen. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston - Arkansas Art Museum, Little Rock -HDE] [00:26:03]

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. So in a way, you're making these marriages between the artists and the patrons who own them, who then gift them to the museums.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And sometimes just the artists who have their partners or a relative gift them on their behalf.

JANE MILOSCH: This is very important because, unfortunately, artists can't gift things to museums and get tax credit.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's right—[expenses cannot receive the tax exemption -

HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: And I feel like you were ahead of your time, again, in being able to facilitate to make sure this art didn't just go into personal, private collections but some museums—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Major museums.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, major museums like the Renwick.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We were turned down by The Met. [Laughs.] The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

JANE MILOSCH: Recently?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. Last year.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, they have a new curator there now.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. But—

JANE MILOSCH: I met him.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I think he liked the work, but he wasn't really sure that the head of costumes and design wanted—the head of costumes and design no longer wants craft material. I think that was the answer, but it's okay. It's really good to be honest about what you want and what you do not want, so that it's not just sitting on a shelf or in a box.

JANE MILOSCH: And time is not wasted.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I have great respect for an honest decision. Great respect.

But we're not finished with Marjorie. The problem now is that everything is in storage, and Jim will not know where to find it. But I have placed her in several major, major, major collections. [In 2020, works were gifted to Goldsmith's Co. London, England. -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, and she has that beautiful book—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —by Arnoldsche. Right.

JANE MILOSCH: Arnoldsche, right. And maybe this is another good shift. It's a little late, so we could stop the tape here. But, to talk about Arnoldsche your relationship with Dirk Allgaier and—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. We can. Do you want to do that now?

JANE MILOSCH: If you want. I think it makes a good transition. [00:28:01]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: One thing I've noticed is Arnoldsche, a German publisher, has done all of these beautiful monographs on many artists, which you introduced to them. So, how?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not certain that I introduced them, but I certainly may have made some kind of support connection in discussions with Dirk, you know?

JANE MILOSCH: What was your first book, or how did you meet Dirk?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I think we talked about that.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, we did. You did.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We did.

JANE MILOSCH: Because you met Dieter, right.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I met Dieter and Dirk together in the year 2001 at the Schmuckmuseum in Pforzheim.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. But I mean the first book you worked with him when they—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Was the *Brooching It Diplomatically*, when we only published 1,000 editions, and they picked it up, and they published it, and then they distributed worldwide. But it was originally published by [Designhused, Helsinki, -HDE] Finland.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Oh, okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know whether this is an Arnoldsche production or not. It isn't because I have all the venues handwritten in here. But they worked with Marianne Aav, and got the rights, and then republished it, and distributed internationally. It was Dieter and Dirk who decided that they wanted to do this, and they captured me at the Schmuckmuseum, [Pforzheim, Germany -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Got it. Well, it's just because in the earlier interview, you—not only in building artists' careers, it's their legacy. And without a really beautiful book, that is—that's the thing that lives on. Exhibitions have a finite time.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Right.

JANE MILOSCH: But if the book isn't done beautifully, you can't get the rhythm and the grandeur of the art. I mean it's one of the—it's a whole 'nother experience of that artist's work. [00:30:00]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right.

JANE MILOSCH: And I feel like you've—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But if you look carefully, you'll notice that some of the earlier books are much more elaborate in their design. Like the Peter Chang with the Plastic Puffing [*It's Only Plastic...*, 2007], or the—

JANE MILOSCH: Your orange fuzzy cover for *Ornament as Art*?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Which one critic, in reviewing it, really talked about disliking the orange fuzzy cover.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, I loved the orange fuzzy—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I do too.

JANE MILOSCH: —cover. It became an object. It was clear.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I think the book became a kind of icon for a lot of people.

JANE MILOSCH: Absolutely.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, we have to also thank Cindi for—and her—

JANE MILOSCH: This is Cindi Strauss?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. And her [research staff from Museum of Fine Arts, Houston -HDE]—

JANE MILOSCH: This was her first big show, right?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know if it was her first big exhibition, not show. Because a show is for dancing. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Sorry. You're right, sorry. Exhibition.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know whether she had other—she may have had other exhibitions. But she really took hold. The collection went there in 2002, and the first exhibition opened in 2007. So, it became a major involvement for her.

But we were talking—

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK08.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —about Arnoldsche.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But Dirk and I have a relationship that goes beyond publishing. His daughter is 10 years old. I have been there since before she was born. I was there when she was born. Lucy is very is very important to us. She is like a grandchild for us. She calls me *Oma* Helen and she calls Peter *Opa* Peter. She used to call him *Opa* Peter, and who's the other person, [laughs] you know, when she was very small. You know? I mean, when Peter was really well, and we would go there. There are wonderful photographs of the two of them holding hands. So my relationship with Dirk goes beyond a professional relationship. It's a relationship of deep friendship, and love, and respect, and care.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. But I think that the books that result out of that friendship and trust are also a reflection of a shared eye and aesthetic, the quality.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, yes, but not everything. He has his own eye and his own aesthetic. I mean, maybe in the beginning a little more than now, because he has really burgeoned. He has truly burgeoned.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, I agree.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And he has flowered, and the publishing house has flowered. But essentially, we have deep respect for each other and—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, it's thanks to you, I met him. I met him at the opening of *Ornament as Art*. And we struck up a friendship because, like I said, I always was impressed with their publications, so it was exciting to meet him. And then when Chunghi Choo wanted to do her book, I had her talk to him and that's how that happened. Thanks to you, another positive outcome.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's really great [laughs], you know? But we've done other things. Last summer, we went to Documenta together. We went to Münster together and then we went—oh, where did we go? We went to—I forget the name of the town. The small, German town where they have a major ceramic fair—a small, German town—[00:02:18]

JANE MILOSCH: Not Münster?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. We went to Münster.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Oldenburg.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: To the ceramic fair.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, you went to Oldenburg, the ceramics fair at Oldenburg.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We went to the Oldenburg ceramic fair. And actually, Scheid was showing there, which was really interesting. Sebastian Scheid, who was the son of Karl and Ursula Scheid. Ursula has died but Sebastian was exhibiting at the Oldenburg ceramic fair. And I actually [laughs] acquired a Lazy Susan in ceramics [laughs], which I couldn't believe I was doing.

But we traveled together, and we're very good at traveling together. We've traveled together before. One year, we traveled through Germany, and we traveled during the white asparagus season. We kept [eating -HDE]—we just have a very—

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. Maybe this is a good point to mention, too, that another presence that you've really had is also in Munich. Even though Arnoldsche is in Stuttgart, and with the Schmuck Fair that's there every year in Munich, you have deep connections there as well.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I do. I do have deep connections, you know? And I guess the catalyst for my being there is the Schmuck events. But I've had friendships there that—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Otto Künzli, you gave him his first show in the US, didn't you? [00:04:02]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I don't know whether he had his first exhibition, but he and Therese had an exhibition here.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I had a longstanding relationship with Gerd Rothmann. In fact, something very funny happened. One Saturday, I got a postcard from Gerd to New York and it said, "Helen W. English and H. Peter Stern, [. . .], New York, 10019."

JANE MILOSCH: And it reached you? In fact, this is a good point—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Do you realize what's missing?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, the street.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, the street is missing. But in fact, I met Gerd through you when you had—when Mihai opened a gallery briefly.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Mihai didn't—

JANE MILOSCH: No, not Mihai. The—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Hurong [Lou].

JANE MILOSCH: The Hurong. And you had a beautiful show of Gerd's work. He—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I had a show of—

JANE MILOSCH: That wasn't Gerd's?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. It was Georg Dobler.

JANE MILOSCH: It was Georg Dobler, excuse me. But another connection with a German jeweler.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, and my connection with Manfred Bischoff was deep and ongoing, and very important to both of us, and extremely moving. Also, he loved Peter. He loved Peter because Peter spoke German fluently, and Peter knew all the poets and the philosophers, and Manfred was very involved with philosophy, and Kant, and poetry. He and Peter could have a really great dialogue together. And he loved to talk to Peter on the telephone. [00:06:00]

So I had very deep relationships with Gerd Rothmann, Hermann Jünger, Otto Künzli, Georg Dobler. You know, which was a corps of really very important artists who were living and working there.

JANE MILOSCH: Can I ask you sort of a side question? Because you really are the one person I know who's gone to Schmuck over the years and seeing some of these younger contemporary jewelers. How have you seen the Schmuck Fair change over time? I mean, I haven't been in a couple of years.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It's really the same. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: So, do you think the quality has stayed very high or—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, I'm not going to critique the quality. Bringing together a group of artists and works is always a learning experience, you know? And last year, there were only one or two works that were attracted to me, but I also learned a lot. I learned a lot about artists that I had never seen before, and I find that that's always very important.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. The thing that struck me is people think this idea of pop-up exhibitions is some sort of new invention. And when I went to Schmuck, I realized, you know, that's what they have been doing all along for a long time from the very beginning. Or what you were doing early in the '60s and '70s before there was "the gallery" or "the place." It's

sort of interesting.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I was grateful there was not a lot of work that attracted me. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: So the pocketbook doesn't get depleted.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I was very happy. I did acquire one piece by a student from Estonia because I thought it was very powerful.

JANE MILOSCH: The guy—[00:08:00]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. I did not get [Tanel] Veenre. I know who you're thinking. I didn't buy. He's not a student anymore.

JANE MILOSCH: No, no, no, he's not a student anymore. His work is amazing.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't have the name of that person in my head, but it was a very deep and dynamic piece.

JANE MILOSCH: But you've also brought or introduced some of these artists to the Philadelphia Art Alliance, and they've had shows there, too.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's not true. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: I guess I was thinking of the one from Latvia who had a show here, and I thought that was through you.

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Sure.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, it is. Okay. Well, I'll strike that from the record. No Philadelphia Art Alliance show from an Estonian or Latvian jeweler?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't think so.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But there might have been that I didn't know about.

JANE MILOSCH: I just know that because of your going to Schmuck, many Philadelphia collectors began to go and still go. I was thinking of Clara and Ben—Clara Hollander.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: She went once with you.

JANE MILOSCH: [. . . -HDE] Anyways, I think a lot of people are inspired—

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK09.]

JANE MILOSCH: This is Jane Milosch for the Archives of American Art interviewing Helen Drutt. Today is the second day, and we've been interviewing yesterday and today, and so we're about to resume.

Helen, when we left off yesterday, we were talking about the exhibition that's—well, really a project that you had with the Hermitage Museum. And you talked about Matthew's involvement. Now, I've known Matthew as a curator and art historian very involved with the arts. Tell me a little bit more about his role and then maybe as a follow-up, your daughter Ilene, who you told me went to RISD.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It is true that Matthew had a heavy involvement in the exhibition at The State Hermitage Museum. As you probably know, he is a Russian scholar. He was the curator for the Malevich exhibition that opened at the Guggenheim, and was also in Berlin, and traveled, also to [. . . The Menil Collection -HDE]. And he recently did a major exhibition, *The Last Futurist Exhibition of Painting (In Search of 0, 10)*, which opened in Basel [Foundation Beyeler -HDE] about two years ago with a definitive catalogue.

And Matthew's involvement with the Hermitage project was rather central, first of all,

because he is a scholar and he wrote a wonderful essay on American crafts. And he was very much involved in the process of acquisition and also in the exhibition installation. Frankly, that installation, which is really glorious, could not have been achieved without Matthew's presence because the installation and exhibition staff would not, in any way, work with me because I was a woman and they were Russian. And Matthew spoke Russian fluently, and he was able to communicate with the staff in a way that permitted us to achieve the kind of installation we desired in order to make these "Gifts from America" really sing. [00:02:26]

You know, I wanted this installation to really, in some way—I wanted the exhibition and the installation of the works to bring the wealth of information that was necessary with the effort that we had put into gathering these works for the permanent collection of The State Hermitage Museum. And it also opened at the same time as the Francis Bacon exhibition from England [Sainsbury Center for Visual Arts, Norwich -HDE], so we had great company at that time.

Ilene's involvement in the gallery is not as central as Matthew. Matthew's involvement was very important when he came as a 17- or 18-year-old and became interested in the gallery and how the gallery functioned, and because of his interest in art history. Ilene is always there in a supportive role.

I do remember that after Maurice died, I closed Cherry Street. And I really didn't think that I was going to function for a great period of time. But I closed Cherry Street and eventually decided to move from Olde City, which is now a mecca, of course, for art galleries and nonprofit institutions. But at that time, I was by myself. You know, I can remember Sam McKeel, who was the editor and publisher of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* coming to Cherry Street, and sitting on the curb, and saying, "What are you doing here?" [00:04:13]

But in that transition, we decided to reopen the gallery after Maurice's death. I think it was April 1984, and we were opening with the Jun Kaneko show. And simultaneously with the plans to open that exhibition, my father had a major stroke in Florida. I flew down to Florida, and Ilene and Matthew really took over the opening of that exhibition. And Ilene, in her idiosyncratic, wonderful, humanistic way, I think was serving watermelon cubes [laughs] instead of—I'm not sure, but the rumor was. And, you know, she is a very unique human being. Ilene is a singer-songwriter who was never recognized because she didn't have an agent, but her major songs were and still are extraordinary. She was recognized, I think, by Stephen Holden, who was a great music critic for the *New York Times* on the same day that the space capsule exploded, and everybody died.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. Oh, my gosh.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, all that information and all the critique about what she did was dissolved. And in her permanent and her current life, you know, she works as a clown in the clown care unit with children who have life-threatening diseases. And she also works with adults who have dementia. So, she is an amazing human being, but she's not really involved in the plastic artistic aspects of the family. She likes the work, but, you know, it's not a conscious, permanent, part of her involvement. [00:06:08]

JANE MILOSCH: But for Matthew, he went on to pursue art history, and he got a degree—I don't know where.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, yes. Well, Matthew, of course, is a scholar. He went to NYU and then he went to Yale University. And he was in the midst of his master's program when he contracted cancer, which was about 1989. And the news of his illness came while I was in Russia actually, with Marina Kovalyov and Edward Roberts. And I came home immediately. I left Russia immediately. Ilene called and said, "Come home. I need—just come home, and I'll discuss it with you when you get back." They wouldn't tell me what the diagnosis was. I do remember trying to get a reservation at that time without having advanced reservations was very difficult. And I finally got a seat on Aeroflot, and I didn't really know where I was going. I think it was going to Washington, and I remember when we landed in Greenland. And I remember I thought that I was coming into Washington at the time, and I looked down, and I saw frozen ice—

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I saw frozen ice, and I didn't see any—

JANE MILOSCH: The apocalypse has happened.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I didn't see any buildings, and I thought that Washington had been bombed, you know?

[They laugh.]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. Oh, my gosh.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I will never forget that. [00:08:00]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my gosh. It's like a Paula Winokur landscape.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I was panicked. Right.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Helen.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But also, you know, I was emotionally not stable [laughs] at that time.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. But he got better, and you've collaborated not only on the Hermitage. I think he's written about many of your artists, craft artists.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Absolutely. He wrote about Albert Paley when Paley had his exhibition at the Renwick. He has a strong interest in the modern and contemporary international craft field. And most recently, we lent works to the *MEDUSA* exhibition in Paris. We lent eight works from eight artists, and, of course, the museum did not have funds to send a courier. And I sent Matthew with the eight works to *MEDUSA* because he also speaks not only Russian and German, but French and Swiss German. He negotiated the loans, and he also was responsible for the installation. And enroute home from—I think he was coming home from Venice in the fall, where he had just given a lecture on El Lissitzky. And on his way back from that lecture, he stopped in Paris and brought the works back to the United States.

JANE MILOSCH: It's magnificent that your son, one of your children, would go on to have a similar passion and—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it's more than mine. I mean, his is in a much larger field. But the fact that he's interested is really very rewarding. [00:10:04]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And Ilene is an amazing support. I mean, her support as a human being, and her support not only of me but Peter, and her incredible support of her brother, who just returned home from Israel having been diagnosed with diabetes type two. And she made sure that there was food in his apartment, and all the accoutrements that are necessary for his arrival to give him comfort. So, I mean, I think that that is wonderful.

JANE MILOSCH: Let's transition for that, because you mentioned how they're caring for Peter, and I think it's so beautiful. Family was a very strong part of your upbringing, and I think you instilled that in your children.

Let's talk about your new family. I would like to know how and when you met Peter Stern, and the romance, and art adventures, and operas that followed, because that's a new portion that wasn't in the previous interview. And I want to give you plenty of time. He's an amazing individual.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, that is absolutely correct.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, may I put down for the record? I feel over honored that I actually met you just as this was taking off—a new level. And you've known him longer, but I just want to say there is nothing more beautiful than seeing an older woman madly in love again.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: An older woman? How dare you! [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: An older woman for me, somebody in their 40s.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: An older woman.

JANE MILOSCH: I was in my 40s.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: An older woman.

JANE MILOSCH: An older, elegant woman.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: An older, elegant woman. An older, elegant woman. So, I was, what, 75 at the time?

JANE MILOSCH: Yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not sure. Maybe.

JANE MILOSCH: Alright. Well, let's not dwell on that. Let's dwell on the romance and the moments.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. Because I'm now 87, so alright. Maurice died November 18, 1983. And at that time, one of my major supports was, of course, my friendship and relationship to Stella Kramrisch, who, at that moment, began to call me every single day. And then it was transferred that I would call her every single day at 7:30 A.M. no matter where I was. Even if I was abroad, I had to look at my watch, you know, if it was 2:00 in the afternoon, would it be 7:30 A.M. or seven o'clock [in Philadelphia -HDE]? [00:12:16]

But we had a very deep and not complicated relationship, basically because I was not an Indian scholar. I was not in competition with her in any scholarly way. But we had a wonderful relationship. And even during Maurice's lifetime in our brief, really brief time together, less than two years, we even traveled to Morocco together.

JANE MILOSCH: On your honeymoon. You talked about it in the first—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, right.

JANE MILOSCH: That's hilarious.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But she went off to Marrakesh, and we went to Greece.

JANE MILOSCH: Thank goodness. [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We parted. We parted in early January. And we spent a large part of our honeymoon together. And she was staying with Tom and Marguerite Dove, who were with the consul [U.S. Cultural Counsel in Morocco -HDE] in [. . . Rabat. -HDE]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Here. Well now, you can say that. The capital of Morocco?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. So evidently—no, we were staying in Rabat. Stella with the Doves, and Maurice and I in a hotel. However, after Maurice died, as I said previously, we became even closer. And Stella, because of her renowned position in Indian art, had developed a very close relationship with Peter Stern, who was the President and Director of the Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, New York. [00:14:15]

They had a relationship based on their mutual interest in Indian art. Peter had a great collection of Mogul textiles and Indian paintings. And they also overlapped in their friendships with other individuals who shared that deep interest. And Peter also had a great interest in Indian music and would often host concerts in his home at Cedar House in Mountainville.

JANE MILOSCH: Where Storm King is.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Which was not far, you know, a few minutes from Storm King. I believe that he had invited Stella to come to a concert with Barbara Stoler Miller, who was also an Indian scholar teaching at Barnard. And quite coincidentally, Maurice had published Barbara Stoler Miller's essays on Stella. And Stella called Peter and his wife—who was Margaret Johns, who was a biologist and actually a great painter and watercolorist—to

find out if she could bring me that December, which was December 1984, to Cedar House to attend the concert. And, of course, he said, "Yes, bring your friend and guest." And that was the moment that I met Peter Stern and Margaret Johns. [00:16:03]

And subsequently to that meeting, we became friends. I wasn't even certain how that friendship evolved. Except that occasionally, I would get a call from Peter Stern saying that he and Margaret were coming to Philadelphia, could they see me? And on some occasions, they actually stayed at the house because Margaret was very interested in researching the history of her family, which—I think one of her grandparents had lived in Philadelphia and had had a brewery in North Philadelphia, and she was researching where that brewery was and where the family was, and also visiting the cemeteries. And Peter had friends outside of Philadelphia in the suburbs who were violinists and cello players, and part of a group that he had at Storm King called the Mountainville String Quartet. So, they would come, and she would do research, and Peter would go off and participate and practice with his Mountainville Quartet in the suburbs of Philadelphia.

[They laugh.]

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, we developed a friendship.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you said in your first interview that Stella had a wonderful sense of humor. And Peter has a wonderful sense of humor, and so do you, but it's very witty. And I can imagine the two of you very early on hitting it off, through a very aware observation and awareness. I don't know.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it wasn't really—

JANE MILOSCH: The three of you must have all had a good time.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I just had a special relationship develop with them, and they began to invite me for weekends, for holidays, which was really amazing to me. You know, that I was suddenly—you know, I would get a call—

JANE MILOSCH: In the family. [00:18:00]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I would get a call from Peter: "Come up for the weekend. This is a holiday weekend, we would love to have you as our guest, alright?" And I was a little bit taken aback.

JANE MILOSCH: So, what year was this again? Around?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I met them in December 1984. I remember that distinctly. But then over the years, these calls would come, or I would get a call from Peter Stern: "I'm getting on a train in Washington. I would like to stop"—this was after Stella died—"I would like to stop in Philadelphia, and I would like you to meet me at the museum, and let's go through Stella's galleries, and talk about her."

JANE MILOSCH: What year did Stella die again?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, dear. Oh, my goodness [1993 -HDE].

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, ready? So Peter came to Philadelphia, you were saying?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Peter and Margaret came to Philadelphia. But Peter—oh, you mean when he called me to—

JANE MILOSCH: —go to the galleries that Stella used to—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, right, right.

JANE MILOSCH: And I was just curious what year Stella died.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, Stella died August 31, 1993, and I was there minutes after

her death. Seconds after her death, actually. I called in Anne d'Harnoncourt immediately, because I thought Anne should know and should also come over. And I had received a phone call from her caregiver saying that she was coughing, and it looked as if she no longer was breathing. But I will never forget that morning.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I remember washing her and covering her with flowers. And I do remember that.

JANE MILOSCH: You've cared for a lot of people, Helen.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I think it's my heritage. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. I know. I was just thinking of your mother as well. [00:20:01]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it's not just my mother, but I remember—oh, dear.

JANE MILOSCH: Who lived to be—100? [105. Mother died February 6th, two weeks before the day of her 105th birthday on February 17, 2010. -HDE]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I was 20 or 21, I had my first position at the Smith Memorial Center after college. I had saved money, and I wanted to go to India. And I had read about this amazing train that you could take through the British rails for 30 days. And you lived on the train, and you could see India, and I really wanted to do that. And my grandmother became ill, and I went to Boston instead. [Laughs.] I mean, I was always being sent out. [Laughs.] Right?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know how to explain that part of my personality. But I think it's really good that I have it because I'm working with artists and poets. And I think many times, they need a great deal of personal care in addition to professional understanding and dialogue. I mean, housing them, working with them, having them as part of your life. You're not separate from just the gallery.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And there were so many funny stories that I can't even tell. Like, Mark Burns was Matthew's babysitter. And I remember one day coming home, and neither one of them were here.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my [laughs]—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Mark had taken him to New York. [Laughs.] Grand Mark sat for him. I mean—you know?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Because Ilene at that time was older, and—but, you know, I do remember that. I mean, I will never forget, actually, Mark Burns being [laughs] Matthew's babysitter. It was somewhat—

JANE MILOSCH: It turned out okay. Matthew turned out okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. It was alright. [00:22:01]

JANE MILOSCH: No harm was done.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. But I—you know?

JANE MILOSCH: So, Peter—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, this caregiving is, at any rate—you know, going back, that was the initial time I met Peter and Margaret Johns, and we became good friends. I would not say intimate friends, but we were certainly good friends and spending time together occasionally, maybe once or twice during the year. And I was introduced, at that time, to

Storm King Art Center, which was extraordinary. And also, the privilege of seeing it through Peter's eyes, his passion. His passion for the land, his passion for art, his passion for bringing land and art together in such a cohesive, amazing manner.

I mean, Storm King burgeoned under Peter's presence. You know, his father-in-law, Ralph Ogden, was the co-founder with him, and it was the land that I'm sure that his father-in-law had. And his father-in-law was responsible for implementing the David Smiths, et cetera, and other pieces from Europe in his travel. But it was Peter who really dynamically worked with William Rutherford and changed the landscape, and brought the Mark di Suveros [Peter approached Mark after or during his exhibition at the Whitney. "Where was he going to store the sculptures when the exhibition was over?" Peter suggested that he install them at Storm King. The rest is history -HDE]. He brought Noguchi and Nevelson. He negotiated with Henry Moore in his studio in England because he was getting advice from Joseph Hirshhorn as to how to negotiate subtly.

JANE MILOSCH: Joe Hirshhorn?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, funny. [00:23:57]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: To negotiate quietly. He once told me that with the major Calder that is situated in Storm King as you enter Storm King—when it was way beyond his financial ability to acquire it, he was advised to offer to purchase it over time [laughs] and not to negotiate and not to try to get it less than what was being offered. But just to have a longer period of time.

And seeing Storm King through Peter was amazing. You know, before we married—I didn't tell you that Margaret died very suddenly in 2003. She died of a heart attack, a very sudden heart attack. Margaret was a nurturer of other people, but she did not really take care of herself. She was a real nurturer. She died in 2003. And Peter had a friendship. We had a relationship, and he was in great grief at the time, but slowly began to move out of that and began to—he actually began about a year or so later to have relationships with other people. Now, I'm not sure what kind of relationships, but I know that he began to socially involve himself and to have female companionship in his life.

But I, throughout all these various moments and episodes, remained his constant friend. So, he would call me up and say, "Would you like to go to the theater?" Or, "Would you like to come up for a weekend and just spend a weekend with me at Cedar House?" But we were not lovers. We were simply friends. [00:26:07]

JANE MILOSCH: But opera was one of the things I remember two of you really met over.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. We did both love the opera, and we both loved poetry. And at one point, I was to go to India with Gijs Bakker, and Gijs backed out because he wasn't ready for his exhibition at the museum. And Peter was helping us plan that journey to India. And he once called and said, "When are you leaving?" And I said, "Well, I'm not going. Gijs has backed out." And he said, "Well, I'll come." [Laughs.]

And so, we went off for a whole month in India. We spent time with Ruby Palchoudhuri. We spent time with Rasil Basu, who was his friend. We went by car into the tea country, you know, in the north to Darjeeling. We then, independently, flew to Mumbai and saw many historical sites that were very important to both of us, through the eyes of Stella. And we also went to Ahmedabad and visited Louis Khan's buildings.

But through all of this, we were not lovers. We were simply friends. He actually dumped me in Mumbai to go visit his girlfriend, who was from Bard College [laughs] and teaching at Saint Petersburg. I will never forget that. And reminding me that since we had joint tickets, not to forget to meet in Paris before we flew home. [Laughs.] However, we remained very close friends, and somehow or another, an evolution took place, and we became much closer. Whatever relationships he had seemed to be waning. And I was supposed to go to Australia for an exhibition that Robert Bell had curated, and it was a very important exhibition. [00:28:39]

JANE MILOSCH: Were you on the board already at that time?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. No. And I was going to Australia via Hawaii to stop and see Jim Jensen, and then to Australia. And Peter said to me, "How can you go to Australia and not go to Angkor Wat?" And I said, "Well, I wasn't planning to go to Angkor Wat, but I was planning to go"—

JANE MILOSCH: Sort of between Hawaii and Australia lies Angkor Wat.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I was planning to go to Bangkok and to meet Darielle Mason, who was the curator [of Indian art, Philadelphia Museum of Art -HDE]—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, okay. So, you had plans to go to Thailand.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —of Indian art. And I was on the Indian art committee at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. I had no idea why I was placed on the committee. But I think Anne d'Harnoncourt placed me on the committee because of my relationship with Stella Kramrisch, because of my social and personal relationship with Stella, even though I knew very little about Indian art. And, well, he [Peter -HDE] convinced me that I had to go to Angkor Wat from Bangkok and made arrangements for me to go to Angkor Wat via the World Monuments Fund.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. Which he was deeply involved with.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He was vice president [of World Monuments Fund -HDE]for 40 years.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. [00:30:00]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And while I was in Angkor Wat, he was calling me every night. And I was becoming slightly embarrassed, because I was sitting there with three or four friends of his from the World Monuments Fund, and why is Peter Stern calling me every single night? He wanted to know what I did, what did I see, did I forget to do this, did I go to this temple? And I found myself every late afternoon sending him faxes about what I saw, where I went, and my impressions [laughs] right?

JANE MILOSCH: I hope somebody saved those.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Faxes? I hope so too. Do you know—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you had to write it on a piece of paper and then fax it, so somebody has to have those.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I hope so.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Go ahead. Sorry.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not certain, because when Peter's term expired, and when he retired, and there was a transition, I wasn't—

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK10.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —permitted by his [Bea -HDE] daughter and by Georgina— Georgene [to see his faxes -HDE]—George. Oh, I can't remember her name. It's such a—

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright, okay.

JANE MILOSCH: Ready?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I wasn't permitted to go through his personal files in his office. Bea, his daughter, and Georgene Zlock, his executive assistant and secretary, took those papers that were central to Storm King, of course, and they stayed in the Storm King office. And whatever was left, I was given, and I didn't find many of his personal papers and notes in there.

JANE MILOSCH: Letters.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, I have no idea—

JANE MILOSCH: A romance through correspondence. Fax.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. I'm not really sure what happened, but it was not my position to go into a professional office. Because those things belong to Storm King. You know, and that was fine.

JANE MILOSCH: So through these wonderful faxes, which he was reading, calling—calls and write, so that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, it was pretty embarrassing, I must say [laughs], you know? People were raising their eyes, you know?

And I came home at the end of December. At the beginning of February that year, and our friendship continued in a very platonic but warm and gentle way where we were constantly in communication on the telephone, and occasionally, I would go up to Mountainville. And then I remember I had a dinner party here in Philadelphia, and Peter said he would only come if it were just Anne d'Harnoncourt and Joe Rishel. And I promised him it would not be more than Anne d'Harnoncourt and Joe Rishel. He wanted to see them. He wanted to have a quiet dinner party with them, and he would stay here overnight. And suddenly, Mohsen [Mostafavi -HDE] and Homa [Farjadi -HDE] appeared. [Laughs.] And, of course, when Mohsen and Homa came to Philadelphia, they always stayed at the house, and it turned out to be a really great dinner party. Anyway, let us stop right here for a second. [00:02:29]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, sorry. Back to Peter Stern. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, and the dinner.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Back to Peter Stern, and knowing that from November 1983 when Maurice died until the moment in which my relationship with Peter Stern transitioned, I was alone. I was just working with the gallery, working with artists, initiating and implementing exhibitions, beginning to travel more freely than I ever had before. But I was alone, and I had no companions. I had no emotional attachments that were in any way significant or meaningful.

My relationship with Peter began to transition from friendship into something more significant during 2006. Basically, after the return from Angkor Wat and that sort of unanticipated communication between faxes and telephone calls across the great Pacific. [Laughs.] And on May 27, 2007, we married. And we married with very little notice. I remember we were sitting on a train going from Philadelphia to New York or New York to Philadelphia. And Peter just turned to me and said, "You wouldn't like to get married again, would you?" [Laughs.] [00:04:12]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, that's so sweet.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: That's the kind of proposal that comes late in life.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. You know? And I must say that I was very nervous. I said, "If it's Peter Stern, the answer is yes." [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Very sweet.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: However, afterwards, I was panicked about the fact that my life would dramatically change. That my center was Philadelphia. That my relationships —

JANE MILOSCH: Your independence.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I never had to ask anybody whether I could buy a hat [laughs], you know? Nor did I have to lie and say, "Oh, that hat? That was my grandmother's," or "That was my mother's," [laughs] in order to protect myself from this

passion for accessories. Gloves and hats were really —

JANE MILOSCH: I have that as well.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Do you?

JANE MILOSCH: Yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, right. My passion for millinery. You know, I have no idea, but I think it was embedded inside of me. At any rate, so we married May 27th. And I must say I should give you—our announcement card was really great.

JANE MILOSCH: I remember it, and actually every year—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It said, "Guess what?" in maybe 25 or 30 languages. It just simply said, "Guess what?" and then it had four or five photographs of us on the inside cover, and we just simply sent it out. Our marriage took place in the garden of Cedar House on May 27th, and it was basically our children, Peter's children, John, and Bea, and Lisa, and their siblings, and Ilene and Matthew. And I believe Kevin was there with his video camera. Kevin is my daughter's lifelong partner. And Matthew was with his wife at that time was Claudia Schmuckli. You know, they are currently divorced, but everybody still remains good friends, however. [00:06:25]

And Homa [and Neda -HDE] I believe was there. And Lois Boardman just flew in, you know? I mean, but it was a very—and John Medveckis was there with Marina Kats. [. . . -HDE]. [Laughs.] [. . . -HDE]. It was a small wedding. It was very family-oriented with just one or two close friends. Leslie Jacobson came. He was Peter's longtime lawyer and also a very important part of Storm King. And Georgene Zlock was there, of course. And I believe David Collins and his wife [Vivienne -HDE] were there. [. . . -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: And at this time, he was still director of Storm King. Correct?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. Peter was still director of Storm King, and he was not retired at that time. He didn't retire until he was 80.

JANE MILOSCH: You had closed your gallery in 2002, but you were still doing many independent projects.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Absolutely.

JANE MILOSCH: And the Houston Project, we'll talk about a little bit later.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. You know, the gallery closed. Not I closed it.

JANE MILOSCH: You had time for romance. [00:07:53]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes [laughs], I had time for romance. What I really had time for when the gallery closed, in addition to unanticipated romance, was—finally, I could go to the opera. I could never go to the opera because I could never make the midnight train on a Friday night. And I always had to be back in the gallery early on Saturday morning. But suddenly, my life exploded with the opera, which I have always adored. That was an amazing opening for me. And Peter shared that interest in the opera with me, which was really fabulous. So, therefore, we did marry, and my life dramatically changed.

JANE MILOSCH: And did he slowly retire from Storm King as director? How did—how involved —

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no. It wasn't slow. When he was 80 years old, he retired as president and director, and handed the wand to his son John Stern.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. But it seems to me—I remember the wonderful tour you gave me. You —

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But I remember something else. The retirement dinner in which I wanted to speak and Mrs. Zlock did not put me on the program. I did speak, and I did write something really beautiful about Peter, but I noticed that when the program was printed, I wasn't on there.

JANE MILOSCH: Some people have a hard time making a transition and letting people in. You know, you may be—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. But we were married in 2007, and this was three years later.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, 2010.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was subtle, but it wasn't so subtle. It certainly was an indication that my presence was not documented. I remember also, I wanted a guestbook at the entrance of a luncheon, and I wanted everybody to come. And I brought this huge guestbook—[00:10:19]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. That's one of your other strengths, again, is documentation and guestbooks.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: She refused to have it there. She told John that it would impede the passage into the luncheon tent. [Laughs.] Right. So, fine. So, we don't have a guestbook with a record of who was at that luncheon. It's probably in a computer someplace, and I don't have access to that. But there is a guestbook now in the reception area at the Storm King Museum. So, I noticed—

JANE MILOSCH: So, you did have some impact that they acknowledged the importance of a guestbook.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I may not get credit for it, but I certainly know that the guestbook with comments and people is—I know that I was responsible for implementing and suggesting that that was a very important document.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. But then when he retired, did you begin to travel more? You acquired some art together. You moved to New York. How did your life change? And your work?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not sure that we've traveled more after his retirement. I mean, Peter was an adventuresome traveler. He loved to travel. You know, he began to attend conferences, international conferences in which I was invited. I had a ceramic conference in China. We went to the conference and John Gill remembers that I was falling asleep upon arrival from jetlag. [Laughs.] But we went to the conference in Xi'an, and then we went to see the caves [Mogao Caves in Dunhuang -HDE]. [00:12:15]

And then we flew. I remember we combined our interests together, and we flew to Tokyo and then we drove to see the great sculpture park outside of Tokyo [Haaken Open Air Museum -HDE]. So it was a combination of Peter's interest and also my interest, and they were brought together.

He loved meeting the artists with whom I was working. His relationship with Dirk Allgaier really was extraordinary. He had a great friendship with Deiter Zühlsdorff and Dirk at Arnoldsche. You know, Deiter was a man of great elegance and European manners and shared a passion for music, which they shared together. And Dirk became very close to Peter. We knew about Luzie even before she was born. We knew—

JANE MILOSCH: His daughter. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We knew Luzie before Lucy emerged. And we knew the relationship that was going to occur between Lucy and Dirk and Lucy's mother, Ms. Matthews. But also, we had surprises with Dirk. I mean, I remember that Dirk would meet us at the Frankfurt Airport, and we would do things that were surprises. [00:13:56]

Dirk arranged for Peter and me to go to Worms [in 2008 -HDE]. Worms is the birthplace of Peter's mother. His mother was born in Worms. His father was born in Hamburg. His mother's family had a great department store in Worms. I think it was called Goldschmidt. Next to the *Dom*, next to the great cathedral in Worms. And somehow or another, Dirk knew about these amazing [Jewish conclave -HDE] archives that existed, and we found the history of Peter's grandparents. We found the wedding menu. I can't believe that we found the wedding menu. We found photographs of the store with its all art nouveau accoutrements. All the documents from the store were saved in these archives. We went into the cemetery, and we found his great-grandfather and great-grandmother's tombstones. The Nazi general

that had been there did not destroy the [Jewish -HDE] cemetery even when he was ordered to do so. And it turned out that that cemetery, I think, is older than the Prague cemetery. So we did things together. You know, we went—

JANE MILOSCH: Dirk planned these? He planned these—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Dirk, yes.

JANE MILOSCH: —very thoughtful, very imaginative—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But, you know, we combined our interest. Peter had amazing interest in Asian art, but he also had amazing interest in European painting and sculpture. And when we would go to Munich, we would go to the old museum, and also, I remember when we were in Torino, we went, and we found the Egyptian museum. So, we combined our interests, and it was sort of like—it fused together. And I must say that the craft artists adored him, absolutely adored him. [00:16:04]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Ready?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. There is no doubt that the artists with whom Peter met through my relationships embraced him, and, in many ways, enriched his experiences. I can remember Wolfgang Rahn. When I was speaking in Graz and also speaking in Vienna, Wolfgang Rahn remembered that there was the great sculpture park of Austrian artists somewhere between Graz and Vienna, and took us there so that Peter could experience this great Austrian sculpture park, which very few people in America even knew existed.

And another moment I remember. We were coming to Austria and Dieter Zühlsdorff had wired to Peter Skubic, who was going to meet us and be our guide, to make sure that we were booked in this former chalet, or this former castle, outside of Vienna. And also, Peter Skubic arranged for us to travel with him so that he could introduce Peter to Austrian sculptors who were still living and working in the countryside outside of Vienna, and not far from Gamischdorf where Peter Skubic lived. [00:18:02]

And there were many artists who were extremely famous. I'm not sure of everybody's name at this time. But we traveled for two or three days going from one sculpture studio to another because Peter Skubic loved Peter Stern. And he wanted to show him that there was a world beyond goldsmiths, and beyond ceramic, and beyond the craftsmen. And that was an extraordinary part of his journey with me, you know, through my relationships.

One of the most meaningful things that I can remember happening was in maybe around 2006 or 2007. Peter came to Schmuck with me, and I wanted him to meet Caroline von Steinau-Steinrück, who was, at that time, working as the exhibition curator for the Schmuck event every year and working, you know, with the Handwerksmesse. I wanted him to meet Caroline because she was lovely. She was also a student of Hermann Jünger's. But during the course of conversation at lunch, it was amazing. Peter lived in Romania.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Bucharest.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Okay. And he, as a child—

JANE MILOSCH: He lived in Bucharest?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He lived in Bucharest, and his father was there because he was a very important part of Shell oil, which had, in some way, emerged through his grandfather or great-grandfather. But Shell oil had a major place in Romania because the oil fields were there.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And his father was in charge of Shell Oil and the oil fields. And they were living in Bucharest in this amazing house, which is now the Indian embassy in

Bucharest. [00:20:15]

JANE MILOSCH: How ironic is that?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What? It is really amazing.

JANE MILOSCH: I mean, the fact that he would—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It's now the Indian—but that was his childhood home. But during the course of the conversation at lunch in Munich with Caroline, it turned out that it was her grandfather who was the German officer who warned Peter's father to go to Lichtenstein, and get a passport, and leave as soon as possible. Now, how weird, and strange, and amazing—

JANE MILOSCH: And even that it came to that conversation—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Just through conversation. And about five years ago, she sent us a book of her grandmother's memoirs. It's all in German, I can't read it. But it supports and clarifies that entire conversation.

JANE MILOSCH: So he was a German officer in Bucharest.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: In Bucharest.

JANE MILOSCH: And he knew what was happening.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And he knew what was happening, and he knew that Peter's family was Jewish, and he knew that even though Peter wasn't brought up in a religious atmosphere—you know, that they had assimilated in many ways, but he was Jewish and—

JANE MILOSCH: —vulnerable.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: More than vulnerable. You know, they could have been just taken.

So that was an amazing, amazing moment. But then something else happened. I'm just connecting these two because of Shell oil. I was a very good friend of Ida [van Gelder] Boelen and Inge Asenbaum. The three of us had become good friends because, among the three of us, we had a mutual interest in contemporary jewelry. Ida Bohlen lived in Amsterdam and she had a great collection. And of course, Inge Asenbaum lived in Vienna, and she had a great collection. And because of those collections, the three of us were brought together as friends. So, when the collection of my work, which was traveling—and it was exhibited at the Mint Museum—[00:22:32]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, in Zurich as well.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What? No. No, just—no.

JANE MILOSCH: Sorry, go ahead.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, Zurich was something else. Zurich was before the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. You're going to confuse me.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. No, don't let me confuse you. Continue.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm sorry. I had a train of thought. Alright. Just let me finish. When the exhibition of *Ornament as Art*—which was the collection that was curated by Cindi [Strauss -HDE] in Houston—traveled, it went to the Renwick, it went to Tacoma, but it also went to the Mint Museum in North Carolina?

JANE MILOSCH: North Carolina.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: North Carolina. Rom Boelen, the son of Ida Boelen, decided to come for the opening of that exhibition. By that time, Ida had died, and Ron brought with him his cousin, who was this very tall, marvelous-looking, Dutch man, Peter's age. And it turned out, quite by chance, that this young man—this man who is no longer young—his father was also in Bucharest at that time. And Peter and he were childhood—together at the

same time. But Peter's family got Lichtenstein passports, and they went through Genoa on the last ship. They went, actually, first to Geneva where they stopped for a year or two enroute to getting passage outside through Genoa. But this young man, because he was Dutch, was sent to the [East Indies. His father worked for Shell, Dutch Co. -HDE][00:24:25]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: He was sent to?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He was sent to Java, part of the Dutch East Indian Islands, right. And that's where their family was sent. And here, how many decades later, these two young boys meet as mature, older human beings at the opening of *Ornament as Art*, my collection at the Mint Museum, with Rom Boelen who was the son [laughs] of Ida Boelen. You know, what an unexpected—

JANE MILOSCH: —convergence.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, a convergence of history, and human beings, and interests.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, events. History, events.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. It was amazing. So that incident, and the incident with Caroline, was extraordinary. So, here is Peter—from his world of passion for literature and music and international relations, and his erudite knowledge of French and German and his amazing, amazing relationship with the Storm King Art Center and contemporary art—coming with me to my little world of contemporary jewelry, and ceramics, and textiles, and having events like the trip to Worms, or the events like the lunch with Caroline in Munich, or this amazing moment in the Mint Museum in North Carolina. [00:26:18]

So how does one anticipate that kind of fusion of history and friendships and relationships? So, I always feel that in many ways, our marriage brought a wealth of unanticipated incidents that have bound us in a very special way. And it continues in a way that—you know, how do you anticipate that moments will occur?

About six or seven months, it's probably a year ago, I was at a meeting at the American Friends of the National Gallery of Australia. And quite by chance, this woman comes up to me, and she starts talking to me and asking me all sorts of questions about myself because I was wearing a hat and she really liked my hat. And then she wanted to know, did I have a husband, who was my husband? And I began to tell her about Peter. And she looked at me, and she said, "I have a gift for you." And the next day, she calls me at the apartment and says, "Are you home?" And I say "Yes." She says, "I'm coming with my gift for you." And she brings to the apartment, Ulrich Baer. Ulrich Baer who is the vice provost at NYU and who happens to be one of the great Rilke scholars whose letters of Rilke's mourning is currently being translated by Random House. [00:27:58]

And she introduces Ulrich to Peter, and since that time over a year ago, Ulrich appears every other week or so to read Rilke to Peter in German. Subsequently, I have given him all of Peter's German poetry books from maybe a century ago or 50 years ago that were part of the family. I didn't feel that I was doing anything that was inappropriate, because nobody speaks German or has the passion for German literature that Peter had. And I felt Ulrich is giving a gift to Peter, and I would like them in return—there were five or six volumes—to go to Ulrich.

JANE MILOSCH: That's great.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But who anticipates these kind of, you know, magical incidence?

JANE MILOSCH: Speaks to a greater, greater power, some orchestration of things. You know, in some ways, I was struck by your description of Peter meeting these jewelers who are really also sculptures in miniature.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, no, he met sculptors though. I don't believe that they are sculptors in miniature.

JANE MILOSCH: No, no, they're not miniature, but what I meant was—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm sorry. I will have a dialogue.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Well, I just think sculpture in a landscape and sculpture on the body is like a macro and microcosm. That was my only point. But I think that there wasn't a dissimilarity there. It was just a greater unison of your passions. And that struck me again when the two of you married, and your households, and the display, and the environment in which you lived, became a unification as well. I thought you might talk a little bit about that, the apartment in New York City, because you've left Philadelphia.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I haven't really left right now.

JANE MILOSCH: No, true, true, but spending—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I—

JANE MILOSCH: But spending much more time at Cedar House in Mountainville, and then also in the New York apartment behind MoMA, right next to MoMA, right in the middle of everything. [00:30:08]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But, you know, up until two years ago, we had a much more permanent residence in Philadelphia. We would come here every Tuesday morning, and we would leave on Thursday night or Friday morning. We would have three days here. I would work in my library. Peter would practice violin the garden [laughs], which was really great. So he would practice violin, I would work in my library. But when Peter became tragically very ill and that could no longer exist, certainly we spent a great deal more time in the apartment. And when Cedar House was sold, we moved permanently to the apartment.

But it was really fabulous that our aesthetic worlds came together. I mean, Peter's collection of Mogul textiles and Turkish velvets and Indian miniature prints—

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK11.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —was a constant part of Cedar House. But I sort of renewed Cedar House. Margaret loved the garden. The house was not a passionate part of her aesthetic interest, and it gave me the opportunity to keep things as constant as they were. The furniture remained almost the same, with the addition of my collection of Chinese furniture, which really melted into Cedar House, and also my interest in contemporary ceramics. Luckily, Peter loved it, and it was really wonderful. We brought the Claudi Casanovas, which had been in the exhibition *Poetics of Clay* and had traveled from Philadelphia to Finland to Houston. And it was a really large sculptural piece. It took its place on its railroad ties in the garden.

We brought the Felicity Aylieff porcelain tower, which I had acquired in Munich. I didn't know she spent a great deal of time in Jingdezhen and created these amazing pieces. We were introduced to her to work actually by Stoker, the Duke of [Devonshire - Chatsworth is his home -HDE], who was on Peter's board at the time. We were visiting him, and he said, "You've got to look at Felicity Aylieff's work." And subsequently, or quite by chance, I had bought one in Munich, but I didn't know how to get it to Cedar House [also acquired the Morton Lebnev Espersen at the same time -HDE].

But also, you know, there were all sorts of mergings. The combination of Peter's collection, his interest in Indian culture and art, as well as contemporary sculpture—which was certainly more dominant at Storm King—and the relationship between contemporary ceramics and textiles and Chinese furniture, just merged in a very magnificent, aesthetic way. And I think I have to take credit that Cedar House never looked better. And I'm not being selfish about that. [00:02:36]

JANE MILOSCH: And you documented it thankfully with photographs.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. I documented it, and it was in [March/April 2014 -HDE] *Antiques*. There was a feature article [by Elizabeth Pochoda -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: I think I remember seeing that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, a feature—

JANE MILOSCH: Now that you mention it, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —about it, which upset his children [. . . -HDE] because they

were not central to the interviews and to the documentation. It was not something that they—you know, the fact that I was in some way creating a legacy for Peter, which is what I was interested in doing.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. What you were interested in for your artists all along.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But I wanted also a legacy for him. Very important—

JANE MILOSCH: That's beautiful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —to me that he have—when we went to Worms, I had that entire thing. Dirk documented our visit, and we had disks. And I gave each of the children a disk and a documentation because it was their father, their paternal history, and it was a part of their paternal history that they did not really know quite well. So, I always was very careful about documentation and making sure that everybody was included. Though I may not be remembered that way. [Laughs.] [00:04:14]

So, what I'm initially saying is that the merging of our lives enriched our lives in ways that we never anticipated. And certainly, I began to see more evidences of major sculpture. We went to—I think it was [. . . the Hakone Open Air Museum, the Japanese sculpture park. - HDE] We also went to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. We were in London. I think I had a meeting—yes, it was the Peter Dormer Lecture—and then we went to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Peter Murray was the director. He knew Peter very, very well and in some way complemented Storm King, so we combined both interests.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. Let me ask you this. You mentioned the Peter Dormer Lecture series, but there's also the H. P. Stern Lectures. Can you tell me how that came about?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. When Peter retired from the World Monuments Fund, where he had been vice president for 40 years—

JANE MILOSCH: And he's known for saving the Brancusi column, *Endless Column*.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That, and also his work on Angkor Wat. He had seen Angkor Wat very early. He was very instrumental in moving World Monuments Fund into Angkor Wat, and he had a great relationship with Bonnie Burnham who was the former director of World Monuments Fund. She's now retired. [00:06:06]

But when his term on the board and his term as vice president ended, I said to Bonnie, "I would like to do something that would secure his legacy at World Monuments Fund." And I said, "I'm not sure I can do something that is consistent, but I would like, in some way, to start an H. Peter Stern Lecture series." And she thought that was a really very good idea. And she thought also the fact that Peter's philosophical interest in travel and in civilization—and he was very inspired by Toynbee in his youth—[. . . -HDE]

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was, philosophically, a starting point for us to begin a lecture series. And I didn't think I could do it annually but maybe biannually or every other year. We could have a lecture series that was known as the H. Peter Stern Lecture, and we would support it by inviting people who philosophically could speak about how travel and civilization and the passion for cities and structures would enhance one's life.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, beautiful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And so, we began with Pico Iyer who was first, and then after Pico—

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm trying to think. I think it was Pico Iyer and then it was Simon Winchester, because we loved *The Man Who Loved China*. And we loved listening to Simon Winchester tell *The Man Who Loved China*. And we would listen to it all the time as we drove from Philadelphia to Mountainville or Mountainville to Philadelphia, and his voice was so extraordinary. [00:08:16]

And so, we had Pico Iyer, Simon Winchester. And then we had Robert Wilson, who, again, was unbelievably extraordinary. And this year, we are having Jonathan Rose, who wrote *The Well-Tempered City*. And he will deliver the Peter Stern Lecture in February at the University Club. So, these lectures, though they're not annual, have become a very important part of the World Monuments Fund program, and they are known as the H. Peter Stern Lecture Series.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow. It's interesting. You continue to curate. I mean, if you're not curating art exhibitions, you're curating people, and legacy, and events, and poetry, and readings.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, poetry. We didn't talk about Paul Muldoon yet.

JANE MILOSCH: No.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Did we?

JANE MILOSCH: We have not.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, we would later. Alright.

JANE MILOSCH: So, when we're still on to Peter. Do you want to talk a little bit about his current health situation? Because that changed your ability to travel and your ability to move around. But the relationship is still, in my mind, pretty unusually close.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Peter is at home. Peter has hydrocephalus, which is a dreadful disease. It's water on the brain. It has impaired him immensely because the brain does not receive messages from the eyes, or from the mouth, or from the physical aspects of your body. [. . . -HDE]. [00:10:01]

He can barely articulate except if you heard him, he says, "Stop it." [Laughs.] When the manicurist comes and does his pedicure, if it's a little bit too tight, he says, "Stop." [Laughs.] However, he's blind. He can hardly speak, and he is immobile. But he is at home. However, his hearing remains acute. Therefore, he listens to poetry, and he listens to music all the time. And I'm not sure how much consciousness he has of our discussions with him, but we do know that he responds with his hand.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, you watch movies together holding hands sometimes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I watch the movie, right?

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.] Yes, that's correct.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: With my hands holding his and my head on his shoulder. And we listen to opera on Saturday afternoons together. And at one point, tears were coming out of his eyes. I'm not sure whether he was responding to *Butterfly* or not. But it's been three years of a very difficult and tragically unfair situation because he is trapped in his body. His living will says, "No mechanical means to revive me." His living will says, "No mechanical or extraordinary apparatus to keep me alive." But his body has remained strong and healthy from years of skiing, and years of playing tennis, and years of walking. And he's not in a conscious state or, you know, not clearly conscious. We're not sure. He is conscious, but he's not able to stop this. [00:12:15]

It's a very difficult situation for all of us, especially for Peter and for myself. I was traveling last summer. I had to go to Sweden. I arrived in Sweden at 7:30 on a Tuesday morning. Right before I had arrived and left that Monday, his sister had died in Washington. I arrived in Sweden. I went to my hotel. I had lunch with the director of the museum. We went through my program for the next three days. I arrived in my hotel room, and Matthew was on the phone with police knocking at my door to tell me that Peter had been rushed to the hospital. I was back in the airport and on the next plane out at 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning, and in the hospital by, I guess, noon the next day. And I haven't traveled since. I've traveled to Philadelphia, yes. I've gone up to Alfred to look at work, yes, but I haven't gone overseas. I'm just not certain whether this is something I can comfortably do. Though I'm not saying that I will not travel again. Just for the next few months, I have been dormant.

I don't know how to explain the situation except that Peter is at home. He can hear the music. He can hear the people around him. He can smell the food cooking. He has a great

appetite, an amazing appetite. It is a tragic and unfortunate situation for a man who would never want this.

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK12.]

JANE MILOSCH: This is Jane Milosch in the afternoon with Helen Drutt, and we're picking up from our discussion about Peter, her husband Peter Stern. We want to shift gears a bit, Helen, and talk about your residences in Philadelphia [. . .]. And how it is so closely associated with you, your collections, and the people who have stayed with you, who you've hosted over the years: artists, poets, architects, designers.

And maybe you might start with some of the recent guests that are starting, and connect it with the past if you want, or start at any point you would like to talk about. We talked about Peter Dormer earlier. I noticed that was a residency that started later. But you said artists were staying here long before Peter Dormer [stayed in the house -HDE].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, actually, he did not have a residency. He was just my overnight guest.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Sorry.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: My residencies are—

JANE MILOSCH: I thought he worked on things here too but—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, he did, but it wasn't like a residency where somebody would stay for two or three workweeks and work—

JANE MILOSCH: Correct. I was exaggerating a bit.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —in the library or work with the archives.

Actually, if I really want to go back a few decades, I took possession of [the first row house -Ed.] 54 years ago this February first. And [. . . -Ed.] the row house next to it was acquired in, I believe, 1990, I think? No, not 1990. In 1981 actually, 1979 or 1982. They're two 1847 row houses on a single street in Philadelphia, which has not been altered, literally, since that time. And the two houses are joined by a garden, which makes it very convenient to have your privacy and personal life on one side and to have a guesthouse on the other side with the garden as a meeting point. [00:02:33]

Before Maurice died and before I married him, artists always stayed with us in [at the house -Ed.] after the gallery was inaugurated. I can remember Marvin Lipofsky staying here, and Richard Shaw, and Ed Blackburn, and Bob Hudson. And they would all normally stay on the third floor with my children. Everybody had sleeping bags, so it was sort of like an unconventional dormitory. And it didn't really provide privacy for anybody, but it was really great.

I remember my neighbor, at that time, who owned [the other row house -Ed.], was a very reserved lady by the name of Mrs. Butler, Winifred Butler. And her confrontation—she was really reserved. She dressed at five o'clock every night for dinner with her earrings, and she had her scotch and her—I remember her first meeting with Marvin Lipofsky when she said to Marvin, "Where are you from?" And he said, "California," and she said, "Nobody, nobody is from California. And what kind of name is Lipofsky?" And he looked at her and he said, "Lip of sky." [Laughs.] That actually broke the ice because she was the kind of woman who actually adored me and adored Matthew and Ilene. But when she walked down the street on Sunday morning [to church -HDE], she would walk with her head toward the street, so if anybody opened the door, she didn't have to confront them or say hello. [00:04:12]

When Mrs. Butler died—she said to me right before she died, she didn't want anybody else living in [the house -Ed.] but me. My lifestyle had changed. I was a single parent at the time. It was around the time that Maurice and I were becoming a couple, but before that, she said she knew that someday I would need this house for my activities. Little [laughs] did she know, little did she know, I will—

JANE MILOSCH: Second museum space.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, little did she know what was really going to happen. I

remember when Patrick Lannan came to visit me with Mary McFadden when he was building his craft collection. You know, he was building this big ceramic collection for the Lannan Foundation, and he came to the house. And he turned to me and said, "Well, you live in a good part of town." [Laughs.] And he looked over to the other side—Mrs. Butler was still alive—and he said, "Where did all that Irish silver come from?" [Laughs.] It was on her buffet.

So, I mean, there are just lots of stories about the house. But when I came to the street, I was the youngest person on the street, and now, I am the oldest. And when I passed this house and it had a "Rent" sign in the beginning, I knew it was going to be mine. I had this special feeling about it, and it did happen. [00:05:46]

Maurice tragically died not even two years after our marriage in 1983, as I have said before. In late spring of 1984, I received a call from Adèle Santos at the University of Pennsylvania. She was the Dean of architecture, and she said to me, you know, "I know that you have the houses. I know that you have a private entrance with [the house -Ed.] in the kitchen, et cetera. We have a failing budget in the department. May our visiting architects stay with you?" And I said, "No." I was not interested in having anyone in my life. I was, frankly, in deep mourning. It was just six or seven months since Maurice had died, and I was not interested in cohabitating with anybody, especially people that I didn't know. And that was in late spring.

Early August or mid-August, I received a call from Adèle, and she said, "Homa Farjadi is arriving tomorrow." I said, "What do you mean?" She says, "Well, she's staying with you. You know, she's our architectural critic." [Laughs.] And she said, "We'll arrange for a private telephone, and we'll arrange to have somebody come once a week to take care of the domestic activity that takes place with a guest." And that was the beginning of a very different kind of hospitality. Before, artists would come and they would stay on the third floor. We were all cohabitating in the same house sharing a garden. And Mrs. Butler had allowed me to take the fence down in between the two houses years ago. So the garden was wide open and very responsive to having people sitting there and having breakfast, or lunch, or dinner. [00:08:00]

But Homa's emergence into my life actually changed my life. And also, her amazing brilliance and subtle intelligence also helped me reconsider and rethink the way in which I was teaching and presenting information. But it was also the beginning of a different kind of atmosphere in the house. Because once Homa came, and then her soon-to-be husband Mohsen Mostafavi came, and they stayed here for two or three months, and then Carlo Severati came, Boris Podrecca came. I mean, I could go down the list of— [Alvaro] Siza was staying here overnight two or three nights.

JANE MILOSCH: And families were started here.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I must say that Neda was conceived here, and she's now 32 years old. And I always remember that Frank Weise was very upset with me. Frank Weise was a brilliant architect who built this amazing house on South Chadwick street in Philadelphia. He was brilliant, but he had no business sense. He was a total failure when it came to being an organized, thoughtful, successful, architect in the sense of having a business structure. But his designs were extraordinary. He eventually designed the gallery for me in New York, but he was also [extravagant. -HDE] When I went to IKEA to get the crib for Neda after she was born and coming back a year later or two years later as a three-month-old, he cursed me for making him put the crib together. I will never forget that. [Laughs.] [00:10:09]

JANE MILOSCH: IKEA will do that to people.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, right. But what I'm really initially trying to say is that the house became a kind of—I don't want to say a salon. But in a sense, it was a salon because students would come from the University of Pennsylvania. They would sit in the garden and talk to their professors. My artists were coming, and they were in and out of the house. And then in 1984 to 1985, I began the Maurice English Poetry Award. And, of course, the poets started becoming part of the residence. Galway Kinnel stayed here, Naomi Shihab Nye, David Ray, Robert Bly. I mean, I can go on and on and list all the poets that stayed here for almost 20 years.

JANE MILOSCH: Did these poets, architects, and artists, some of them, meet for the first

time here?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, sometimes. Certainly, when Ruby was here in 1986. Ruby was here at the same time that Homa and Mohsen were here. And so there was this meeting between Ruby Palchoudhuri and Homa and Mohsen and then also Adriano Cornaldi from Padua, who wrote *La Casa Domestica* was here with Sandra [Chinaglio], and it was their first time together after a long love affair that was suddenly culminating into a marriage. [00:12:00]

They came back a year later, and then they brought their grown children, and they were living on the third floor. And we had sheets from the ceiling making, sort of, these barriers for their three adult children. Their one son, I remember, Shaul Bassi [ph], who was the son of Sandra Chinaglio, said to me he came to America looking forward to having hamburgers and hotdogs and French fries, and all he got was *dahl*. [Laughs.] Because Ruby would have the village men, who were also here, come in and cook for us. And Ruby was here during the Festival of India because the city had allowed her to bring her husband's tea ship filled with Indian artifacts, and she did a huge exhibition at the Port of History Museum.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And then in addition to that, Haku Shah was here, with Vilu. And when they stayed here, [Vilu was -HDE] always making these beautiful flower arrangements with a kind of flower, and colorations in front of the doorways. And they were here because they were close friends of Stella Kramrisch's, and they were supposed to stay with Michael Meister, but Michael Meister said he didn't have any room, and so they wound up staying here.

So, it was like tumbleweed. And there were times when there was a kind of—

JANE MILOSCH: Meeting of the minds.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —unanticipated meeting. And many times, it resulted in very important dinner parties. I can remember when I invited Stella Kramrisch—oh, what is the name of the famous art historian that taught at the University of Pennsylvania? [00:14:04]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Ready?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright.

JANE MILOSCH: Was it Leo Steinberg?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was Leo Steinberg. I had a dinner party with Homa, and Mohsen, and Stella, and I invited Leo Steinberg because I thought that he and Stella would really enjoy meeting each other. And it was a disaster. First of all, he was smoking constantly, so he had to leave the dinner table and go into the garden. And they had a verbal conflict on Cézanne, I believe, that was very intense. I am not sure whether Joseph Rykwert [Arch. Historiador Scholar -HDE] was also at that dinner party. It was before I kept a guestbook, and I'm really sorry that I didn't think about keeping a guestbook until much later. But it was before I kept a guestbook.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Well, you closed the gallery in 2002.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: 2002, right.

JANE MILOSCH: And so, in a sense, did a lot of that energy meeting then transfer to here where you were meeting with—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No.

JANE MILOSCH: It didn't really change? This just was always going on.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: This was separate. I mean, what was happening with dinner parties was separate. I remember Carlo Severati taking the marble from my garden, which was the former marble of the oyster bar that belonged to Mrs. Butler's very exclusive emporium [Butler's Purveyor -HDE] on 20th Street. And he was giving it out to his students

for projects, you know? And I remember once he wanted Homa and I to engage with him in some kind of social situation, which was of no interest to us at all. And what did he call us? He called us [repressed -HDE]—I'm sorry, wait.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: So, there was a nickname? We'll insert that later on. [00:16:01]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It wasn't a nickname. But it was an adjective to describe our lack of interest in his sexual advances.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right.

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, yeah. Well, there you go.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Or it did become part of a kind of group sexual activity someplace on the mainline. He had friends who were—you know, adult friends who this was a kind of—

JANE MILOSCH: Pastime?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. Pastime in their adult lives, and they were all very famous academics. But—

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But [laughs] it was—

JANE MILOSCH: But this wasn't going on here.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, of course not. But something else was going on here that was really interesting. The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts had asked me to host one of their new administrators for a week. And she stayed for over a year, and she was inappropriate, [. . . -HDE]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Transfer her to another location during a summer period when a friend of mine had their home totally vacant and was looking for somebody to take care of the garden. [00:18:05]

JANE MILOSCH: Excellent. You won out on that one, but of the people you had stay here, what is your two or three most memorable guests?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, certainly Homa and Mohsen are family, you know? We are totally engaged with each other. And Neda is my granddaughter, I'm her American grandmother. And when Homa's parents finally were able to leave Iran and come to the United States, I came up to the [New England -HDE] area, and stayed with the family, and stayed with them. And I also stayed with her parents in Paris. I mean, that relationship is solid, and we are involved with each other constantly. And I have also ongoing relationships with several of the poets that still write to me or send me a message. I recently received a lovely card from Naomi Shihab Nye and then a notice from Samuel Hazo, but many of them have died. You know, Bly has died. I think David Ray is gone. William Stafford is dead. Galway Kinnel is dead. You know, so—

JANE MILOSCH: But at least at some point, people can access maybe these guestbooks, because you're giving your archive to the Archives of American Art, right?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But I didn't start the guestbooks until very late. I wasn't smart enough. I think one of the biggest things that happened is when Kinya Maruyama was here from Japan. And he made a guestbook for me that I will show to you later, that pulls out like an accordion [like a Japanese watercolor -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I think that was one of the sparks that gave me the idea.
[00:20:00]

And then I remember Rudi Staffel wrote [sketched -HDE] how to light his pots in a guestbook, which was really great. And then at a breakfast once with Robert Turner and Sue Turner, they talked to me about Black Mountain, because they were at Black Mountain. And Sue Turner said, "Well, you know, we had to leave. We had two young boys, and there we were in Black Mountain, and they had yogurt, health food, and homosexuality." [Laughs.] I will never forget her saying that [laughs] at breakfast, you know?

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, times have changed.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, yes, but there were some wonderful moments, you know? And some wonderful dialogue, and experience. As I told you, when Peter Stern first came to supper here, he really only wanted Anne and Joe. But then Homa and Mohsen appeared [laughs], you know? Which was great. So they were wonderful. And that has continued in a way. I mean—

JANE MILOSCH: But you've had a lot of international artists, too, like Peter Skubic, Georg Dobler—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, this is Gijs Bakker's home. This was Yvonne Joris's home. When Yvonne came here once to work on a Staffel project—I don't know whether it was the Staffel project or whether it was *Beauty is a Story*. And Moshen [Mostafavi] had arrived earlier that day and had taken possession of the second-floor back room. And Yvonne arrived around six in the evening from the Netherlands. And she walked up, and she saw him in possession of what she thought was her room, and she demanded that he leave and go to the third floor. [Laughs.] You know, I—

JANE MILOSCH: So people became very proprietary of which location, which room they wanted to stay in. [00:22:00]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, right, right. Because that was her room, but it was always Homa and Mohsen's room. And Ruby had the third floor. And Ruby had the third floor for six months. And then when her son graduated Cornell, at the end of the semester, he also came here.

JANE MILOSCH: Now, didn't you use to have people sleep in the library? I feel like I—or has it always been a table here in this room?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: In what?

JANE MILOSCH: In the room where we're conducting the archives?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: They slept in the other library, the ceramic library next to the porch, which was Matthew's original nursery. And his nursery faced Mrs. Butler's window, which was in the back. And they had a communication, which I'm sure broke the ice.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, very sweet.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And then Matthew eventually moved upstairs with Ilene, so Ilene and Matthew had the third floor. So they had their rooms and their bathrooms, and they had the third floor, which was great.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. But you have quite a setup there on the third floor, with all your archives, your—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Have you seen them?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I just walked through. When there's not a wall of snow domes, there's walls of binders and boxes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Did you see the little bathroom with the snow domes?

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, I did. Yes, yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.] That was the original installation.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes, yes. It's amazing there. But there are books everywhere, there's art everywhere.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But it's organized.

JANE MILOSCH: Yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Have you noticed—

JANE MILOSCH: The snow domes I didn't study that closely.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I'm not talking about that, but—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, the libraries are organized, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: The binders are organized.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, the binders are very organized, by artists' name, and then several artists have more than one binder, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's right.

JANE MILOSCH: I was sleeping in a room with binders. I was—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, were you?

JANE MILOSCH: —only studying the different names. I was trying to remember when I stayed here a while ago because I always got up and went to the library to look at books. [00:24:03]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I am not here using the books the way I should be, which really upsets me. But things have changed.

Oh, and then I can remember the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts calling me once and telling me that they had a special guest. And they had no money for residency, and could he stay here? And it turned out to be Kenneth Koch, the Beat poet. And he just kept wandering around. You know, I was leaving him alone because I wanted him to have his privacy, but then I found him in the dining room, and he—

JANE MILOSCH: It must be a little scary, Helen. You have so many breakable things in your house, ceramics. And people who aren't used to moving around slow—I'm a museum person, and I feel like I'm working in a museum when I'm visiting you. And I don't want anything to be damaged by—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't ever think about that.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, that probably makes people feel very much at home and not nervous. It's impressive.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't think anything is ever broken except by me. [Laughs.] Oh, no, that's not true. I had a dinner party once, and there was a well-known guest here. He was sitting on the couch, and he had picked up the Arneson cup, the Rocky Mountain cup, and he broke it. And he didn't realize I was watching him, and he put it under the sofa.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my goodness. That is a major faux pas.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: A very well-known scholar.

JANE MILOSCH: Was he ever invited back?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I see him. I see him a great deal.

JANE MILOSCH: And he never fessed up?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He doesn't have to fess up, because I see him frequently at meetings, and I have a very negative feeling about him. Because when Mark Dallas Butler was sick with AIDS and he was Leo Steinberg's student assistant, and he applied for medical support, this man who was head of the art history department denied it. So, I'm not placing his name in my tape. [00:26:17]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, that's fine.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But the karma that surrounds that act will never disappear. And then Mark Dallas, of course, died eventually, and he died on January 6, [1993 -HDE], I will never forget it, the same day as Rudolph Nureyev and Dizzy Gillespie. And I told his father that Mark planned it. He planned to march into heaven with Dizzy Gillespie and dancing with Rudolph Nureyev.

[They laugh.]

They died all on the same day. I mean [laughs], I did feel that. I felt there was some kind of joy in knowing that he didn't enter eternity by himself. He had good company.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my goodness. That's funny. So—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So wait, I have to tell you about Kenneth Koch, though. That was interesting. So, he was roaming around, and he kept saying, "Well, where did all this work come from?" I said, "Excuse me, Kenneth, but I do work with artists. I'm not just a woman who is a housekeeper and who's having a hospitality center for you." [Kenneth Koch died July 6, 2002. -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I said, "I happen to have a"—

JANE MILOSCH: Profession?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —"a professional life and I work with artists." And he says, "Well, who's this one that writes on the pots," and that was Rudi Staffel. Anyway, somehow or another—how it happened—it was in the late '80s, he convinced me to do a video of his poem on Agamemnon. To do a video and have Vincent Katz, who was Alex Katz's son, and his wife star in it. How I allowed myself to be—[00:28:12]

JANE MILOSCH: Was that done here in the house, or in the gallery?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. How I allowed myself to be seduced by this concept of, you know, bringing poetry and art together, he said. Because I was interested in poetry and I was interested in art. And I think it cost me \$5,000, and we painted sets, and we had a place in New York where we painted the sets in Vincent's studio. And they were acting, and we did this whole Agamemnon event. And after it was finished, and we had all the titles and everything, he called me up and he says, "You may not show it." [Laughs.] So, I have this hidden treasure of—

JANE MILOSCH: I hope that goes to the Archives of American Art too.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I am telling you, I often think that if there's ever a program on Beat poets, I should show it because he has since died.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I will never forget that.

JANE MILOSCH: That's wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was, you know—

JANE MILOSCH: One of those. But that all started here.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What?

JANE MILOSCH: I mean, you inspired it. He had an idea.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I didn't inspire. I mean, he's just—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, he saw you as a—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, he saw me as a possible donor.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, that's what I—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's what I think. You know, "Oh, this woman, maybe she has some money and she can"—you know, whatever.

JANE MILOSCH: That is a memorable guest.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But there were others, you know?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, the Peter Stern—not the Peter Stern, excuse me. Because you have these three Peters in your life that I keep—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Three Peters?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I think of Peter Stern, Peter Dormer, and Peter Skubic. And there's another Peter actually that I'm blanking on. But Peter Dormer is who I was thinking about. Because there was something that we talked about, residences for scholars, Dormer, and also the Dormer Lectures. [00:30:09]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I said that Peter Dormer just stayed with me.

JANE MILOSCH: Tell us how you met Peter Dormer.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I cannot remember the date, but I met him in Oslo, Norway, at a ceramic conference. And that's where he was the speaker, and we met there. He knew who I was, I knew who he was, but we had never really met. And we met before he wrote *The New Ceramics*, *The New Jewelry*, and *The New Furniture*. I actually met his wife first because his wife, Jane Smith, was working with some medical corporation, and she had a conference in Philadelphia. And I remember Jane coming to meet me, and I remember her sitting on the sofa in the living room, and we had this social meeting together. But then Peter came here to research *The New Ceramics* and to research American ceramics.

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK13.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And he came back to do *The New Jewelry*, to research that. And I introduced him to, you know—

JANE MILOSCH: What year was that around?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I'm trying to remember. It was probably the late—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, he died in 1996, Peter Dormer.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I think so. Wait a minute. [Peter Dormer died December 24, 1996. -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: That's what I have written down.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, it was—I'm trying to really—

JANE MILOSCH: So, *The New Jewelry*, he had finished that, and you did—when he was working on that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But he was doing it. I was not involved in writing these books. It was just a source of information, going through my archives, and going through materials, and becoming acquainted with works that he had not been exposed to before.

JANE MILOSCH: But you freely shared a lot with him.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Of course. Well—

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. But it seems that—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Like, I remember with *The New Jewelry*, we had Mexican chairs in what is now the breakfast room. But before my mother came to move here, we had Mexican chairs, and he had never seen a Mexican chair before, you know, with the rawhide and the wood. I mean, it was just a very exciting—it wasn't a collaboration. It was just very exciting to have him living here a few days, working on material, looking at material, having a dialogue. And then it was his idea that we should do the collection [. . . -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: The book *Jewelry of Our Time*, which was published in 1995.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And it was during the publication of that book that he became quite ill, and he developed cancer. And that's why I think the back structure of the index is not in great shape, because that was one of his responsibilities, but he was really dying at that time. He died eventually in December of '96. And I remember flying over to see him, and I can remember he had this tube attached to him with—I guess it was chemo, some kind of chemotherapy treatment. And he gave me a lecture on the design of the tube. I'll [laughs] never forget it. [00:02:35]

But he was much too young. I think he was 49 years old. And we had become really very great friends. And I always remember that whenever he wanted to give me a gift for being here, he always brought me a dictionary that I didn't have in my life, which was always very nice.

But, you know, I don't consider that a residency. What I do consider residencies—I guess, of course, the architects had three months residencies here. But I had, two years ago or three years ago, Tina [Khmelnitskaya]—and I can't say her Russian name—from The State Hermitage Museum stayed here for a whole month researching American ceramics.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, yeah, yeah. You allowed her to photograph the spines of your library.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What?

JANE MILOSCH: She photographed your library as well.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, she photographed a lot of documentations. And then the other curator also came about six months later and did something which I was extremely upset by, and there was nothing I could do. She photographed the house, which I thought was very invasive. [00:04:00]

And when I found out, I questioned her. She asked me if I wanted the photos back, and I didn't have enough nerve to say yes. But even if I had wanted them back, she could have made copies. She said she's only using them for her teaching. But I didn't think that she had the right to photograph the house, which is personal. And I felt that was an invasive act, which I do not tolerate.

JANE MILOSCH: Right. But—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Wait. Excuse me.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Alright.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Helen, you talked earlier about the Maurice English Poetry Award and the Peter Stern Lectures. But also, what's become really well-known are the Peter Dormer Lecture Series. How did that come about?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, I cannot say that I want to take credit for that. But I do feel that I conceived it and originally spoke to Jane Smith, his widow, about doing a lecture series. And then she brought it to the Royal College of Art, and together with Tanya Harrod, and David Watkins, and everybody else that was on the committee at that time—Martina Margetts was on the committee, and we initiated the Peter Dormer Lecture Series. And they began, I think—you know, it's over 10 years ago and—

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. He died in '95.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, excuse me.

JANE MILOSCH: No.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Could you put that down?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, no. '96, excuse me, strike that.

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, yes. I believe Peter died in 1996. And I believe that the first lecture was in 1997, and it was Charles Jencks. It was Charles Jencks and then Tanya Harrod spoke, and Marjan Unger spoke, and Rosemary Hill, and Edmund de Waal, and Malcolm McCullough, and Alan Powers, and Glenn Adamson, and Saul Griffith, and Edward Cooke, and Jorunn Veiteberg, and Grayson Perry. I was responsible, I know, for Grayson Perry. [00:06:20]

JANE MILOSCH: Was there a committee who selects?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, we are a committee. We have a committee. But I remember seeing the Grayson Perry exhibition at the British Museum, and I was bombed out. And I immediately came back and said Grayson Perry, and everybody said, "But he's too well-known here." Anyway, it was extraordinary.

JANE MILOSCH: And these lectures take place in London at the—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: They take place at the Royal College every year in London. In 2016, it was Alison Britton. Martina Margetts has also spoken. And this year, it was Alun Graves. So that's a fairly good legacy since 1997, I would say.

JANE MILOSCH: Absolutely. Absolutely.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I know it was my idea to publish a program, because in the beginning there were no programs. But I wanted a history of the lectures, and Tanya Harrod wrote this wonderful biographical essay about Peter Dormer. And she is co-chairman of the lecture series. I'm on the committee, but I'm not co-chairman. I don't have any kind of position of importance. However, I am responsible for the program and the current chairpersons are Tanya Harrod and Hans Stofer, and previous to that there was David Watkins, there was Glenn Adamson, et cetera. And it's been ongoing since 1997 so that's 20 years. [00:08:13]

JANE MILOSCH: That's amazing.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right?

JANE MILOSCH: Yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, you know, I feel that commemorating one's life and one's contributions is very important. And sometimes, the best way to do that is through honoring other scholars who give back to the audience.

JANE MILOSCH: I think that actually says a lot about how you've worked from the very time you began, engaged in contemporary craft and committed to seeing those individual careers grow, blossom, be remembered, and honored, and then also always reaching to the next generation. So, I'm thankful as a young curator and a scholar to have benefitted from so much of what you have done.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Thank you.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Helen, you were mentioning that you were in Vienna in 2008?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I was.

JANE MILOSCH: And you were talking about your friendship with Inge Asenbaum.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That is correct. I met Inge Asenbaum in 1980 at the World Crafts Council in Vienna. It was really an amazing moment for me because I not only met Inge, but I met so many other people. I met Paul Derrez. I met Martinazzi. I remember sitting at a table and having coffee with Martinazzi. He didn't speak English and I didn't speak Italian, and we were just drawing [laughs] to each other across the table. [00:09:55]

But Inge was sort of like, you know, a major presence in Vienna. She had a gallery called Galerie am Graben, which was extremely famous. And Peter Skubic had designed the door pulls for Galerie am Graben. Galerie am Graben was committed to showing contemporary jewelry by famous, well-known European artists. And if they weren't well-known, her exhibitions made them well-known. And she supported the gallery by selling antique jewelry, or Wiener Werkstätte, or the kind of work that had a community response. At the same time, Peter Skubic curated an amazing exhibition in the Kunsthalle in which he invited people from Europe and the United States to bring their works to Vienna. And he was wearing a white frock coat. He sort of looked like a medical doctor. I will never forget that.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, my gosh. He is really funny.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: He is very theatrical.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, I remember him in this white frock coat in the middle of the Kunsthalle, and there were cases and cases of works that I had never seen before. And the catalogue is really extraordinary. It is downstairs in the library.

JANE MILOSCH: And this is 2000?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: This is 1980.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, okay, okay. Before he gave his collection to the Neue Galerie. Peter Skubic. This is earlier?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He did not give his collection to the Neue Galerie.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, I guess that was their first—not the Neue Galerie—excuse me. I was thinking in Munich, Pinakothek der Moderne.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no, this is 1980. This is a World Crafts Council meeting. And it brought people in all disciplines—not just jewelry but in all disciplines—from England, and the United States, and Europe, and Asia to Vienna for the World Crafts Council meeting. [00:12:10]

But central to that meeting was this amazing exhibition of contemporary jewelry. Because in Vienna there was this great interest that was brought into the public domain by his activities, but also by Galerie am Graben, Inge Asenbaum. As a result of that meeting, I also met Paul Derrez, who eventually invited me to come to Amsterdam and to give a lecture. And during my lecture in Amsterdam, I was showing a Claus Bury brooch, and all of a sudden, I hear a voice in the back of the room going, "Oh, that's mine!" And that was Ida Bohlen.

Eventually, Ida Bohlen, Inge Asenbaum, and I became friends, because the three of us were very much interested in what was happening in the contemporary jewelry field. And because of our mutual interest, we became friends. And there were times when we would even meet together, either at conferences—and upon one occasion, I remember Ida and I taking a train from Amsterdam to Vienna to spend a weekend with Inge just looking at work and talking about ideas. There was a kind of passion to the relationship because every time we met, we talked about the works that we were looking at or the works that we had seen. And I remember, in Inge's bedroom, there were drawings and wonderful pieces on the table or in cases. And it was with incredible passion and fervor that we would meet and exchange. [00:14:04]

There was a moment in 2008 that there was an exhibition of Wiener Werkstätte work at the Neue Galerie. And in that exhibition was a great deal of material drawn from the collection of Inge Asenbaum. And I wondered why, at that time, there wasn't a lecture about Inge Asenbaum during that exhibition. And I suggested to the Neue Galerie that when the

exhibition moved to Vienna in 2009—to the Wien Museum in Vienna—that maybe a panel could be organized with Inge and with some of the contemporary artists that were central to Galerie am Graben. And that panel did take place in 2008, and Janis Staggs came from the Neue Galerie.

[Phone rings.]

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. So, the panel did take place at the Wien Museum. Janis Staggs came from the Neue Galerie and delivered a wonderful lecture. And there was a conversation with Peter Skubic and Fritz Mairhofer, and a casual conversation with myself, and Inge was there. I'm not sure whether [Gert] Mosettig was part of the panel or in the audience but Mosettig was certainly there, and I believe Helfreid Kodre was there. But it was surprising to me, at that time, that Karl and Heidi Bollman did not attend. And I had questioned them why, because they were great collectors of contemporary jewelry and friends of Inge's. And they said that when they heard about this exhibition, et cetera, at the Wien Gallery, they just dismissed it as not being important for some reason or another. It really doesn't matter. But they were not present. [00:16:18]

But the next day, we had lunch with Paul Asenbaum and Inge, and obviously having that conversation and that dialogue was extremely important to her.

JANE MILOSCH: Especially since she passed away two years after that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, not after that.

JANE MILOSCH: No? Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. About two years from now. I don't remember the exact date. [Inge died October 8, 2016 in Vienna. -HDE] But then during the interim, when a group from the Dallas Museum of Art went to Vienna to look at Viennese work and Wiener Werkstätte, and they met Paul Asenbaum—during the time that they met Paul Asenbaum, Deedie Rose was there. And he asked somebody if they were interested in contemporary jewelry, and of course, she has already been a collector. She had started collecting years ago. I think she began collecting with Reiben. I think she had begun collecting with Ellen Reiben who is the director of Jewelers'Werk several years ago. She was also interested through Eva Eisler.

But when Paul Asenbaum—and he did tell me this—opened the drawers and showed her Inge's collection, which the family had been trying to deaccession it for a long time. I'm not sure whether they were trying to deaccession it through acquisition, or a gift, or a sale. But I know that they had been trying to deaccession it for a long time. [00:18:13]

I know that the exhibition, the collection, was shown in Zurich, Switzerland, in one of the museums. The installation in Zurich was designed by Zaha Hadid. And one had to have a flashlight in order to see the work because it was so dark. You entered, and you got a flashlight. I remember Hermann Jünger calling me and saying to me, "You've got to get there. You have to see this collection, and whatever you need to do, you have to fly to Zurich." And there I go, you know. I'm off for, I think, two days.

The end of that segment of Inge Asenbaum and Dallas is that eventually Deedie and her husband Rusty, who is now deceased, did acquire that collection for the Dallas Museum of Art. And it is now in the Dallas Museum of Art, and it is now known as the Rose-Asenbaum Collection. It will eventually be exhibited, and there is a great deal of activity with a team of curators who are working with the museum to create a major exhibition and book.

I'm not sure—I know that the curators are Liesbeth Den Besten, and Damian Skinner, and Beatriz Chadour. I think that is the team that has been hired to work with the Dallas Museum of Art. And so, I would imagine in about two years, there will be a major publication and exhibition. But I do not know more than that. [00:20:08]

JANE MILOSCH: Since you mentioned major publications and exhibitions. Since the last interview, there have been a lot of major publications and exhibitions you've been involved with. So I wondered if we could talk about that, and then some of the people connected to them. I don't know if you want to start with *Poetics of Clay*.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Fine.

JANE MILOSCH: Because that was not long after the last interview—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, that was 2001, and it was scheduled to open September 11, 2001. You can imagine, we were on the verge of refining that installation when the great event happened in New York. It was nine o'clock in the morning, and I remember we ran to the hardware store to buy television set because we heard that the towers had been demolished.

JANE MILOSCH: It's horrific, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was. And then there was this big decision: Do we open? Do we not open? Do we close because of this amazing event? Or do we just put candles everywhere and let life go on?

But the *Poetics of Clay* exhibition was extraordinary. I must say that myself. I must say that it was probably one of the most important ceramic exhibitions that took place in the United States that was not documented, that was not received by the press, that was not critically analyzed. And that is a political thing. You know, there are forces out there that don't want you to succeed and don't—

JANE MILOSCH: Do you think it was because it took place at a commercial gallery?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was not a commercial gallery.

JANE MILOSCH: So, remind me where it took place?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Excuse me. It took place at the Philadelphia Art Alliance.

JANE MILOSCH: Thank you. Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And it was not a commercial gallery. It was a nonprofit gallery, and I had the entire—

JANE MILOSCH: Sorry.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —building.

JANE MILOSCH: My mistake. I couldn't remember—[00:21:57]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I had the entire building. I had loans from the Stedelijk in 's-Hertogenbosch, of all the Ken Price and Nagle material that they had collected. I had Rut Bryk loans from the family in Helsinki, Finland. The Philadelphia Museum of Art lent us works without fees as long as the cases were built according to their specifications. I had private loans from private collections across the East Coast in the country.

It was amazing. And I had three floors, the entire building. I had the Claudi Casanovas from Barcelona, Spain, that was shipped over through a contact [Renata Wunderlee-Munich -HDE] that I had with one of his galleries in Germany. It was amazing.

JANE MILOSCH: What were the parameters of the show? Was it time? Were there themes? Was it art—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: There were no themes.

JANE MILOSCH: There were no themes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No.

JANE MILOSCH: They were just looking for great work?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: There were totally no themes. No themes. No themes. Just 160 pieces of great ceramic art, post-World War II. And Homa Fardjadi was amazing. An architect who, as I said before, was the first architectural resident in [the house -Ed.].

JANE MILOSCH: A hundred and sixty pieces? That's a lot.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And Homa Fardjadi designed the second floor so that there was a sweeping plateau of different levels so that works could be seen without many cases. And then in order to adhere to the rules of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, some of those sweeping platforms swept up into a vertical case with a plastic case over it. I had loans from Guido Geelen in Otterlo, the Netherlands. Nobody had seen his work before. Nobody even knew his work before. [00:24:13]

JANE MILOSCH: Was it just Europe and the US? Or was it also other—Australia?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was, yes.

JANE MILOSCH: International?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was international, but it was extraordinary. And there was no recognition of it because the forces of politics when it comes to ceramics are extremely well-known. I'm not going to articulate that. You know, Friends of Ceramics didn't come, of course, because I'm not Garth Clark. You know, if I were Garth Clark—

JANE MILOSCH: Linda Schlenger didn't bring her group?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, because—why? Who am I? I'm just a lady in Philadelphia. You know what, let's—you have to read my memoir sometime, but this is not the place to put it.

JANE MILOSCH: No, but this is a big show.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But the point is, it's their loss. I mean, it was their loss because it was an extraordinary exhibition, and, if I have to say myself, it was so critically selected.

JANE MILOSCH: Were you the sole curator for the show?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I am the sole curator. And I must give myself—

JANE MILOSCH: —some credit!

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But to have Rut Bryk's work here. Her work had never been seen here. And the family—and that was through Marianne Aav, who talked to the family, and they agreed to ship the works to America. We had a black one and a white one. And she had just done the commission in the president's house in Helsinki, that entire wall that looked like a kind of Icelandic wall in the president's house. So, *Poetics of Clay* was extraordinary. We did get a photograph. However, we had no money for a catalogue, and that is a sadness. However, we have a complete file of photographs, which eventually will go to the Smithsonian as a support system for this interview. [00:26:14]

JANE MILOSCH: And then your friendship with Marianne Aav. You've done a lot of exhibitions and collaborations with her, right?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Absolutely. And how did that happen?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. How did that happen?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm going to go back a little bit. Okay? In 1984, after Maurice died, many things happened and changed in my life, you know? David Hanks came to me and talked to me about my collection of jewelry, and I said, "What collection?" And he said, "Well, just get the shoeboxes out from under your sofa," [laughs] right? I think it was—do you want to stop for a minute? I think it was—

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, where am I? So, essentially, before the collection went to Houston, it was widely exhibited in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Nobody really realizes that, but as I said, in 1984, David Hanks said to me, "Let's do an exhibition of your collection in Canada at the Château Dufresne. Luc d'Iberville [Moreau] is the director, and he is very much interested in presenting them." I believe at that time, there might have been 150 or 165 pieces. But in 1984 to 1985, the exhibition of the collection was exhibited in Canada. [00:28:00]

You know, it then went to Cleveland. It went to Hawaii. It went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. In a very subdued way, it was at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. But then Jarno Peltonen in Finland had heard about the collection, and he decided that he wanted to exhibit it at the Museum in Helsinki, at what is called now called the Design Museum in Helsinki. And he sent his chief curator to me to work on bringing the collection to Helsinki. And the chief curator was Marianne Aav.

And Marianne was extremely reticent. She was very quiet. She was almost non-participatory. We were working and putting the collection together and preparing it for shipment, and she was sitting in a corner. And I finally went over to her and I said, "If you're going to work with me, you're going to talk. [Laughs.] And you're going to become engaged with us, and"—

JANE MILOSCH: And this was not because of a language issue?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no, no, no, no. No. It had nothing to do with language. At any rate, the point was, that was the beginning of our friendship, which developed over decades, I guess, until she died. We remained good friends, and we worked on projects together. We worked on *Brooching It Diplomatically*, as I told you before. She was responsible for getting the graphic designer and for making a decision to publish the catalogue. And we worked on the *Châtelaine* exhibition. She did a wonderful solo exhibition of Rudi Staffel. She did Wayne Higby. She did Peter Chang. I mean, we did many, many exhibitions together. [00:30:12]

What I also realized during the course of our relationship, that she had a very strong emotional attachment to me, which I had to be very careful about because I cared about her as a human being. But her feelings and attachment to me, at times, were beyond my comprehension. But she also had problems, medical problems, and I arranged for eye doctors for her in Boston. We had a very strong relationship, but it began at the time that Jarno sent her to Philadelphia.

And that was the time that Mark Dallas Butler was also working for me as a registrar. He absolutely destroyed our sense of organization, but we couldn't get angry. He had AIDS and eventually, you know, he died. That was a very strong relationship, and we did many things together.

JANE MILOSCH: Can I ask a basic question?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes.

JANE MILOSCH: Did David Hanks then organize a show which traveled—

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK14.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, no, no, no. He did not organize the show.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He made the contact between me and Luc d'Iberville. And then I came up with the exhibition. And my student, who was working for me at the gallery, Suzanna Stull, also came with me, and then I installed the exhibition in the museum.

JANE MILOSCH: I just bring this up because, as I said earlier in our interview, I was in Zurich with friends and I was so excited when part of your collection was being exhibited there at the—what's the museum that's there on the—?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: The Bellerive.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. And I cannot remember what year that was, but I took people to see the show. I was so proud to say, "This is an American"—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And Peter Dormer was also there during that time. You know, the exhibition was shown in—

JANE MILOSCH: Was the exhibition called *Jewelry of Our Time* like the book?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But anyway, Peter Dormer was there and that was around 1994, right? I think it was around 1994.

JANE MILOSCH: That would make sense.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, it was about—

JANE MILOSCH: I was living in Italy, yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —1994, and that's when I met Bernhard Schobinger. I met Bernhard Schobinger when it was at the Museum Bellerive. And then it went to Oostende and then it went to the Stedelijk in the Netherlands. And when it was at the Stedelijk, Gijs helped me with the installation. They had the largest, largest attendance they had ever had for a contemporary—I think that's 60,000 people, something really amazing and wonderful. And Benno Premela was there, and Yvonne [Joris] was there, and Gijs Bakker was there. You know, it's sort of my Dutch gang, [laughs] coterie. It was really great. [00:02:05]

And it was also shown in Hawaii during that time. So, there were many, many venues before Houston. And then it was dormant. When it came back, I put it into storage, and it did not emerge again until 2002 when the negotiations with the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston began.

JANE MILOSCH: Let's talk about—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But it's very important for people to know that that collection traveled extensively in Europe and in America before it went into storage. And when it came out as *Ornament as Art*, it was the same collection. A little larger, of course, larger, but that was not the beginning of the exhibition of the HWD Collection.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And there was a transition point—I think this is good for the timeline sense—that the gallery, it came back. You closed the gallery in 2002.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I didn't close it. It had to be closed. The building was sold.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, thank you. Thank you.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I did not want to close the gallery. The building was sold to Talbots.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, so, all those people would wear more of the same look?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, Laura Ashley was on the first floor. I think it was Laura Ashley or—no, it was Limited Editions at that time. I'm not sure who was on the first floor. It was either Laura Ashley or Limited Editions on the first floor. It wasn't Limited Editions. It was another dress shop on the first floor.

I was on the second floor. My entire staircase was lined with posters, great posters of events that had taken place in the craft movement, which are now at the Smithsonian because Liza Kirwin picked them up maybe five or six years ago. [00:04:00]

And on the third floor was the *American Poetry Review*, and Stephen Berg was the co-editor with David Bonanno. And there were all these dynamics going on between artists and poets, not only here but also between the gallery and the *American Poetry Review*, which is the major periodical in poetry. And there were grand fights about work, and [laughs]—I mean, there were grand dialogues about, "Why are you showing this artist? Or that artist?" And poets coming in and out. It was really different.

JANE MILOSCH: But this is interesting. If 2002—and that's the same year that you also started the discussion with Peter Marzio. How did that come about, what eventually became the amazing *Ornament as Art* exhibition and the gift?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I didn't start it with Peter Marzio actually. What happened was Anne Tucker, who was the curator of photography at the Museum of Fine Arts was a—

JANE MILOSCH: In Houston.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —close friend of ours. And Matthew had joined the Menil as a curator.

JANE MILOSCH: I forgot Matthew was down in Houston.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And he said to me, you know, I should really come to Houston for this honoring of Anne Tucker's 25th year. And I thought about it, and I went down to Houston. I'm trying to remember the direct sequence. But evidently, when I went down to Houston, Anne Tucker showed the curator of 20th-century design and decorative arts, the *Jewelry of Our Time* book. Cindi Strauss, who had never seen it before. So, Anne Tucker showed Cindi the book. And Cindi became very excited and interested in the material and in the book, and initiated discussions with Peter Marzio. [00:06:30]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. The director?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He was the director of the museum at that time. I'm not sure of the exact time period. This was maybe slightly before I actually closed the gallery. But Peter Marzio made contact with me and said he would like to come to Philadelphia and meet me, and to see some of the works from the collection, to see them physically. I was very excited. I thought this was really interesting, and so we arranged the date. And I remember I wore a gray-and-white pinstripe suit. [Laughs.] Because after all, an important major museum director was coming to visit me and wanted to see—

JANE MILOSCH: One of the most well-paid museum directors in the country.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Really?

JANE MILOSCH: Yes. I think his salary topped out, yeah, of all the others.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, it's one of the wealthiest museums. That's why whenever they tell me they don't have money for acquisitions, I don't understand that. However, I do remember he came to the gallery, and we had maybe 20 or 25 pieces that were set forth in our display cases for him to look at. He asked lots of questions, and he seemed to be very responsive to the material. I know I had Paley, and Lechztin, and Skoogfors. And then he came back to the house with me. We walked back to the house and he came into the living room, and the drawings of Manfred Bischoff and Claus Bury were on the wall. And he had been the drawing curator at the Corcoran. But also, he had worked with Joshua Taylor— [00:08:22]

JANE MILOSCH: —at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, before it was called that. Joshua Taylor, when he was at the Smithsonian? Or Joshua Taylor when he was—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —in Chicago.

JANE MILOSCH: When he was in Chicago.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I'm pretty sure it was in Chicago. And he looked at the drawings, and I told him that these drawings were made by artists whose work he had just seen, and he said he didn't realize that goldsmiths also drew. And I said yes. And he's a drawing curator. And then on my coffee table was Maurice English's book *Midnight in the Century*, and he said, "Don't tell me." I said, "Yes." He said, "You were Maurice's wife?" I said, "Yes." "Well," he said, "I knew him in Chicago."

Anyway, the combination of connecting me with literature and poetry, and the combination of connecting me with Maurice and drawing, and the artists drawing beyond just brooches and necklaces, I think took me out of the leather-thong, handwoven-cape craft category. I think, suddenly, there was a different kind of recognition of the work and what I was doing. And, I think, within a month, I received a letter from him stating that he had to find a way to bring the collection to Houston. So, obviously, Anne bringing the book to Cindi, Cindi getting excited and bringing the material to Peter Marzio, Peter Marzio's trip to Philadelphia was the catalyst. [00:10:13]

And then he said to me, "Well, why isn't Anne d'Harnoncourt interested in this? You have to talk to her before we do anything." And I did talk to Anne, and she said it was too soon for them to take an international collection because, at that time, the museum was structured with American art and European art, and only in contemporary art was it international. But in European art, it was Europe. Where would you put Israel? Where would you put Australia? At that time, there was this structure, and she said I should go forth with Peter Marzio. And that's how it essentially happened.

And of course, Cindi was named as the major curator for the collection. And it came at a very

good time because the gallery had to close. I was concerned about the David Watkins neoprene pieces melting because it was summertime, and I didn't have air conditioning.

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.] And the conditions underneath the sofa weren't the same anymore.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, no.

JANE MILOSCH: It was getting really crowded underneath the sofa.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, whatever. You know? There were problems of housing everything, so we entered into more than a dialogue. We entered into a contract where the collection would go to Houston. And Cindi began making visits here, and going through my archives, and making notes, and we examined the works that were going. And that essentially is how the birth of the collection at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston began, and actually was settled. [00:12:10]

I made one mistake in my negotiations. I never asked for one permanent case to be on view at all times with maybe 20 or 30 rotating pieces. There were 804 pieces, but it was more than just jewelry. I went around, and I negotiated with people like Hermann Jünger and David Watkins to get drawings and to get sketchbooks. I got sketchbooks from Liv Blåvarp. I got drawings from Hermann Jünger. I went to his studio and I picked out six or seven drawings, and he said there would be no charge, and then he called me up and he said, "Well, maybe you can pay for four," [laughs] or whatever it was. The point was I started to really engage myself in getting supportive material. And then from—

JANE MILOSCH: But you've been collecting archival material all along.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, but I wasn't looking for supportive drawings. I had casual drawings that were in my life, that I would frame. But I was looking for master drawings. But I must say that I put a lot of energy into that and then the exhibition opened, I guess, five years later because she worked very hard to—

JANE MILOSCH: It was an amazing event. Everybody in the whole jewelry world was there. Craft world artists, collectors, in Houston. And I remember just what an exciting moment when I—those four years at the Renwick—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Were you there?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, of course, I was.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: In Houston?

JANE MILOSCH: Absolutely, because—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So why did you tell me that I met you at the Renwick?

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, I met you at the Renwick before your opening in Houston. [00:14:03]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: On what condition?

JANE MILOSCH: I think it was when I asked you to serve on the—I had to put together an acquisitions guideline for our collection, and you were one of the people I invited to be on it. And you were in Washington and we met. So, this is—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So you were in Houston then?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. In fact, that's when I realized that show was coming. And I told you I would love to bring you to the Renwick, and I presented it to Betsy.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I thought she had already negotiated that with you.

JANE MILOSCH: No, no, no. It was me, that's what I was telling you. Remember when I first brought it, she said, "I don't know. It's an international collection. At the Renwick, we show American craft."

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, right, right.

JANE MILOSCH: And I said, "But she's an American collector, and so what a great opportunity to show both international jewelry and American jewelry." Otherwise, I couldn't show international European jewelry, Australian jewelry. So you became the catalyst and actually fulfilled what you recommended. And our acquisitions policy is that the Renwick should be at least showing international craft to contextualize the American movement because it wasn't isolated from these other things.

So you helped me in my work, and you inspired me to continue to push that. That's why I was able, in the end, to have Lino Tagliapietra there. Never had they had a non-American artist, but because I could say he changed the American Studio Glass movement, and I felt the same way with the jewelry collection. There would be no international jewelry shown in the US if you—well, I may be exaggerating it, but I mean, you were the one—your gallery was the point in which everybody was discovering many of these artists. I was a curator in the Midwest at the time, but you were the point place for ceramics, jewelry, of course other things too.

So that opening was—the symposium, the speakers, what the artists had to say—was amazing. And then bringing it to the Renwick—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And Peter Marzio couldn't be there because he was—

JANE MILOSCH: He was ill, right?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He had cancer, and he was not well.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. That was a very sad part of it. [00:16:03]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. So, Helen, aside from the joy in bringing *Ornament as Art* to the Renwick—although I will always be sad that I wasn't the one to install it with you, because we could have done it together—I remember picking up the KBG catalogue at the Renwick when I was understanding our collection and what we had. And I looked at the catalogue and I thought, "Oh, my god, so many of these major ceramic works that we have come from that collection." And then in talking to you, I realized that you were not lightly involved. You were heavily involved in putting that collection together. So, talk about that, because there were some amazing pieces in that. The Wayne Higby we had that came from that, John Mason, Karen Karnes. There were all kinds of things.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That's true, because Jackie Bailey came to me when she had the assignment through her arts advisory services business to do the KBG American Craft Collection. And she came to me, and I was in New York at that time with the gallery for a brief time, and I actually selected all that work.

JANE MILOSCH: That makes sense to me because they were all great works by each of these artists. It wasn't just any piece by those artists. They were great works.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I selected the works. I brought them to her attention. I can remember, at times, putting works in a wagon and walking from the gallery to Madison Avenue where the KBG offices were in order to bring them up to the elevator. And most of the works were American, with the exception, I believe, of a sculpture by Claus Bury. Obviously, all these pieces came from the Helen Drutt Gallery and through the Helen Drutt Gallery. [00:18:05]

I must say that when the collection was given to the Renwick, that there was no indication in the catalogue that I had sourced and selected these works for her. She did not select. I selected the works, showed them to her, and she agreed. But there was no indication that the provenance of these works came from the Helen Drutt Gallery. However, the good thing is that you have a great Lizbeth Stewart, you have a great Higby—

JANE MILOSCH: And Michael Monroe was there, right?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes.

JANE MILOSCH: He knew right away when that was offered.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, he did not know it came through me because she didn't tell

him.

JANE MILOSCH: She didn't tell him either. Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. She didn't tell anybody. This was, you know, her collection that she put together for KBG. But even the Risé Nagin—you know, who else was showing her work? Anyway, that is the way history is, the revisionist history. We see what's happening with Peter in the revisionist history in Storm King. It certainly happened with me many times throughout my activities in the last 50 years. We can't lament it.

JANE MILOSCH: No, no.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: The important thing is that great works have taken their place in great institutions, and they will be preserved. And I feel that way about my collection at Houston also. I made a huge mistake not asking for one case, one case, where it would state that these works came from the HWD collection. You know, that's all. And they are dispersed, and they are taken care of, and they are sent off to other exhibitions. But they're just part of a larger scheme.

JANE MILOSCH: But it's been also one of your fortes throughout your career to facilitate that, again, museum-quality pieces end up in museums. Artists make a lot of work, but there are times when they really hit all the notes just right. And your eye is one that has always identified that. So, you've started projects recently. [00:20:07]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I am very interested in placing American works in international collections. Marjorie Schick died a few weeks ago. And shortly before she died—for the past year, as she was preparing to move from Pittsburg, Kansas, to her new home in California—I worked extensively with her to place major works as gifts from her in major museums: the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston; the Arkansas Arts Center; the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich; the Ilias Lalaounis Museum in Athens, Greece; the Honolulu Museum of Art in Hawaii; the National Museum of Sweden in Stockholm. She's not in the Hermitage Collection.

We worked extensively on the telephone. She would send me visuals. I would look at the visuals on my iPad. We would make decisions about which pieces to present to which institutions. And it was very exciting for me to help her implement the disposition of major works before she made that transition, rather than having them packed and stay in her studio. And I've done the same thing with Deborah Rapoport whose works are also now in Athens and in other museums.

JANE MILOSCH: I do have to say, I think it's really important because otherwise, people wouldn't know about that work. Even though we think there is the Internet and the exchange, the fact that those are in a museum and people can encounter it with the other artists of that region and time is important. [00:22:01]

Tell us a little bit more about your project in Sweden now with the museum there.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, the project in Sweden is in progress.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, alright. So, maybe you can't talk about too much.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It's not a matter of talking about it. Berndt Arell was the director—who just left in December 31, 2017—had seen the installation and exhibition at the State Hermitage Museum. And he was actually there upon the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the State Hermitage Museum. And he had seen the exhibition, so he knew it, and it actually stayed in his mind. About a year and a half or two years ago, at Schmuck, he was introduced to me through Inger Wästberg, who is a woman who lives in Stockholm, who is an expert in Swedish jewelry, and who has written about Swedish jewelry. And she introduced me to Berndt, and Berndt said he would like to have dinner with me.

So we had dinner in Munich, with the director Berndt Arell and with Inger. And during dinner, he said to me, you know, "I saw the exhibition and collection at the State Hermitage Museum. I would very much like to know if you would be interested in trying to build that for the Nationalmuseum of Sweden." And I said, "Well, you know," I said, [laughs] "I'm very old. Why don't you get somebody younger?"

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And he said, "No, we would like you to do it because we know you can do it." I guess I am the great pro bono of the Western world, you know?

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What is the name of the great pop star? Sonny Bono or something?

JANE MILOSCH: Sonny Bono? Yeah. Wasn't he married to Cher? [00:24:01]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, right. So, I'm, sort of, like Helen Bono. You know, "Come to Helen. She can get it for you. Not wholesale, but she can give it to you as gifts and find ways to do a 501(c)(3), and to negotiate with patrons and with artists."

And then about, I guess, not quite a year ago, I said, "Okay," because they came to see me with the consul. They had the Swedish consul come to call me and take me out to lunch, and I began to be totally wooed, which was very nice actually. I must admit that it's very nice to be appreciated for something that you can do well, even if you're not financially remunerated. Though your expenses are taken care of, and that was exactly what happened with the Hermitage. You know, expenses going there and staying there were taken care of and were certainly accommodated.

So I am now in the midst of putting together a collection of work for the Nationalmuseum of Sweden, which is in Stockholm. The building is currently being restored and—I'm sorry.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Ready?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. So Berndt explained to me that the museum was under restoration and construction, and that probably it would open sometime in late 2018. But the main exhibition at that time would be an American painting exhibition of John Singer Sargent. That he conceived—and this is not public at this point, you know—that there would be a John Singer Sargent exhibition. And he was coming back and forth to New York. He was negotiating with the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He was negotiating with other museums. [00:26:13]

And he thought it would be really great if simultaneously, with the major painting show of John Singer Sargent, that there would be a major exhibition of American crafts or decorative arts. And that he would like me to organize that, curate it, and put it together. You know, to facilitate it. And at first, I told you, I was very reticent because of the time involved because of my involvement with Peter. And also, I'm in the midst of trying to complete my book, which is five years overdue because I've lost three years of not working on the book. The book is very important to me because it's an important historical document. It is not a memoir [still not complete -HDE].

But I said, "Alright." I did say, "Yes," and then I said, "I would do it if you would allow Matthew to write the essay. And if you would allow me to fund an assistant to work with me, and to also fund an outside curator to do the biographical compilation that is necessary." And so, I began implementing this collection, I guess, in the middle of last spring. I have been very fortunate. All the artists except Bill Daley have said yes, but that's his loss, you know?

JANE MILOSCH: Bill Daley has not—well, it's just a matter of time. [00:28:02]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I will not ask him. I asked three times, and I went through his son. And I decided—you know, this is typical Bill Daley, when he said to me, "I have given you enough in my lifetime." And I said to him—

JANE MILOSCH: He's one of the artists that's still alive that you've worked with longer than anyone.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Anyone. And I said to him, "That's true. In 1969, you gave me a floor pot." I said—

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Wait a minute. And I said, "And then four or five years ago, you gave me another pot because you decided not to publish the essay I had written about you. And so, you brought another pot to me as a sort of, like, you know"—

JANE MILOSCH: Consolation prize?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, a consolation prize. "And then the man who was funding your book said that he wouldn't publish the book unless I had a contribution in it. [Laughs.] So, you sent your son," I said, "to sit down and negotiate with me." Anyway, it doesn't really matter. So, he will not be in the exhibition. I will not ask him again. [August 6, 2021 - Daley family and Bill donated a pot to Sweden. -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, you know, it's—

JANE MILOSCH: But it's something you're still working on, this project?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, yes. I mean, I have until June. I have until June to pull it all together. I have been waylaid with my complete involvement with my husband and my other duties domestically and professionally.

But I have begun to become successful in accumulating more furniture than I was able to do for the Hermitage. I only had a Nakashima chair in the Hermitage exhibition. And so, to date, I have Garry Knox Bennett, I have Thomas Hucker, I have Michael Hurwitz, I have Jere Osgood.

JANE MILOSCH: That's who we were trying to think of earlier, Michael Hurwitz, I think.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I have Michael Hurwitz. I have Jere Osgood. So, I'm working toward maybe trying to put together a segment of chairs by American woodworkers. [00:30:11]

JANE MILOSCH: With the Hermitage, I think one of the brilliant things was the fact that they could donate through to the Russian American Foundation here in the US.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Not the Russian American Foundation.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, what was—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. It's the American Friends of the State Hermitage Museum, that has a 501(c)(3), and patrons can donate through them and have the same tax benefits as they would have with the United States. And the Nationalmuseum of Sweden, as a result of my discussions with Berndt, has now legally become the American Friends of the Nationalmuseum of Sweden, and those papers have gone through. And I was really responsible—

JANE MILOSCH: This is amazing, Helen. You not only are bringing an American craft collection to Stockholm—

[END OF DRUTT18_10F2_TRACK15.]

JANE MILOSCH: —you've created a way for Americans to give American art, where a benefit —

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I did not create the American Friends of the Hermitage. That was already there. But I did act as the catalyst for them to look into the American Friends of the Nationalmuseum of Sweden. And that has been formed.

JANE MILOSCH: And did this idea—I mean, you're also part of the American Friends for the National Gallery of Australia.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I have removed myself from an official participation on that group, because I can do for Australia whatever I have to do without serving on that board. And actually, I don't have time to serve on meetings. I do not serve on the Swedish board. I

do not serve. I don't have time for meetings. I only have time for work.

But I'm also on the board of the Friends for the Ilias Lalaounis Museum, which is trying to build an international collection of jewelry. And I have been very successful with donations from Deborah Rappaport, Marjorie Schick, Doug Bucci, and [Bruno Martinazzi -HDE] other artists. But I'm taking my time slowly. My aim there is to get 25 works, internationally, for their 25th anniversary.

JANE MILOSCH: This is for Greece, yes?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. So, as I am sitting beside Peter during the day—

[They laugh.]

JANE MILOSCH: You're collecting American art to send abroad!

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I am sitting with my computer [iPad -HDE] and my telephone. And I must say that the artists have been wonderful. You know, Tom Hucker, I went to see him on a rainy day—

JANE MILOSCH: His work's wonderful.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —into Hoboken. And people have been really great. [00:02:01]

JANE MILOSCH: That's great.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know? So, there I am sitting, working away. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Russia, we have Sweden, we have talked about Vienna. Vicenza, and we've talked a little bit about Italy. Wait, Italy. Didn't you have a fellowship? Weren't you at the Academy in Rome?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, but that was in 1985.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. So, just wait there. How did the collaboration—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And Bruno [Martinazzi] came to visit me and spend a weekend with his wife [Carla -HDE] when I was in Rome.

JANE MILOSCH: That's fantastic.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, that was really great.

JANE MILOSCH: How did the Vicenza project come about?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Gijs Bakker is very involved with the Jewelry Museum in Vicenza and with Alba Cappellieri, and he lectures with them extensively in their school. She was looking for a curator to curate a contemporary section of jewelry. Every two years, it changes, and the previous curator was Graziella Grassetto. And she did an international collection, and I said to her when she invited me to do this, I would only do it if she allowed me to show American work. And she said—

JANE MILOSCH: Once again, the ambassador for American craft—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And she said to me, "But it's an Italian jewelry museum."

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: "And all my support comes from the Vicenza jewelry industry." [Laughs.] And I said, "I understand that, but American work has not been seen in Vicenza or in Italy." So she relented, and she is perfectly delighted because I have Art Smith, I have John Paul Miller.

JANE MILOSCH: These are historic pieces.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No kidding.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I did not only—I was able to get a John Paul Miller that is a gold, granulated beetle that was three inches high, from a private collector whose mother was one of the grand collectors of John Paul Miller. And Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu lent me their Art Smith, which was a major Art Smith necklace. And Nancy Worden and Fred Woell, and Stanley Lechztin, and Albert Paley—they're all there. [00:04:20]

JANE MILOSCH: Fantastic.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And William Harper, and Kim [Overstreet] and Robin [Kranitzky], and, you know—

JANE MILOSCH: Is there going to be a—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And there is a catalogue.

JANE MILOSCH: There is. That's what I'm thinking but—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: There is a great catalogue, and we wrote biographical data about each of the artists.

JANE MILOSCH: Is this out yet? This?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, the catalogue? Yes, it's been out for a year.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. I haven't seen it yet.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I can get it for you.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, great. Interesting.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. So that was my section. But I was very insistent about American work. Though, I am also interested in international work. Two years ago, I brought Barbara Paganin's entire *Memory* exhibition to the Philadelphia Art Alliance.

JANE MILOSCH: Fantastic.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I had previously brought the Dutch jewelry show with Yvonne Joris, the Gijs Bakker—

JANE MILOSCH: The Gijs Bakker show, I remember.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right?

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And the Dutch, and Nicholas Arroyave-Portela's ceramic exhibition from Britain. You know, I mean, I can't list everything. You'll have to read—

JANE MILOSCH: —your publication-in-progress, so to speak.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, you'll have to read the chronology that I'm working on, which will accompany this, I hope.

JANE MILOSCH: Which will trace from your early years of working—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Not from me.

JANE MILOSCH: No, no. The times that you—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: From 1960 to the present.

JANE MILOSCH: Correct. When you became involved with—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, no, not—it's not just me. It's the craft movement. It has more about the craft movement than more about me. I am involved in it, but it's not just me. It's never just me.

JANE MILOSCH: No, I understand that, Helen. But there's one other person we haven't talked

about—that when I think of the American Studio Craft movement as pillars and two points of reference, you and Jack Lenor Larsen are two major points of reference, especially because fiber wasn't something that you showed all the time. I know you did some, but how did your—[00:06:10]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I did do Lenore Tawney, and I did do—

JANE MILOSCH: That's major. Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I did pretty major. I had Lenore Tawney when they were \$400. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, but was it Snyderman? Was it because they picked up fiber?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It had nothing to do with Snyderman. I exhibited Lenore Tawney in 1974 with Toshiko Takaezu, Miye Matsukata, [Ruth Duckworth, and Patti Warashina - HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: The Cranbrook connection to—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Not Cranbrook.

JANE MILOSCH: No, no, no. I was thinking of—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: There's no Cranbrook involved.

JANE MILOSCH: —Toshiko's training at Cranbrook and Jack's—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It had nothing to do with the exhibition.

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, very good.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It had nothing to do with Cranbrook. It had to do with—Toshiko and Lenore were good friends, and they were women of great talent. And Miye Matsukata living in Boston was also a goldsmith, a great talent from Japan.

JANE MILOSCH: That must have been a stunning show.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was a great show, and I remember very clearly when *The King* and *The Queen* of Lenore Tawney's were hung in the gallery, and there was a white one and a black one next to each other, and she arrived by taxi. And as she came into the gallery, *The Queen* began to twirl. [Laughs.] I will never, ever forget that.

JANE MILOSCH: That's a fabulous story.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was so amazing. But I was also involved with Lenore when she had her exhibition in New York when I had that relationship and collaboration with Loveed Corp. [Ed Roberts -HDE]. Frank Weise and I mechanized the chest. It was my idea to mechanize it, and he was the genius that figured out how to mechanize the chest, so that people wouldn't pull the drawers in and out, and so that they came slowly in and out. And after the exhibition, she ripped out the mechanism. She couldn't stand the fact that there was a mechanical intervention in this very poetic piece. And that poetic piece is now a part of the permanent collection of the Whitney Museum of Art. [00:08:20]

JANE MILOSCH: That's great.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, I did exhibit textiles, and I was very supportive of Risë Nagin's work, always. And I didn't show furniture—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Françoise Grossen, you showed as well? Or not?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I did not show Françoise Grossen. And I was extremely supportive of furniture, but I didn't exhibit it, except once I had an Alphonse Mattia exhibition. But basically, I didn't exhibit it because Richard Kagan had opened his furniture gallery, and there was no reason for me, in Philadelphia, to try to also exhibit furniture. And I didn't exhibit glass because I did one Chihuly exhibition, maybe a James Harmon exhibition, but it was impossible to deal with the collectors who negotiated outside of the gallery.

JANE MILOSCH: I remember you talking about this in the first essay—the interview—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And, you know, I mean, you exhibited work, but you always saw the pieces in everybody's private collection. Afterwards, I do remember there was a dinner after the Chihuly exhibition, and I couldn't take people to the house. The dinner was too big, and I asked Arlene Love and Lee Lippman if I could use their Georgian Spruce home for the dinner celebrating Dale Chihuly's work, and they said yes, and I ordered 30 or 35 steamed trout from the Frog [laughs] restaurant on 16th Street. And I remember Dale and—

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, Italo.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So, Dale Chihuly and Italo Scanga came into the dining room, and Italo looked at Dale and said, "This is no airplane food." [Laughs.] [00:10:11]

JANE MILOSCH: That's great.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It was really great. But I don't know where we were beginning.

JANE MILOSCH: I was asking about Jack Lenor Larsen because he's someone that I know you've known for years. And both of you have quite a legacy of promoting American craft around the world in your own way.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I am not—

JANE MILOSCH: You're not a maker.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not a Jack Lenor Larsen, who is a major, major entity in the history of international crafts and textiles. I mean, I always felt that Jack was to fiber what Georg Jensen was to silver, that he had that amazing élan. I think I first met him actually in an elevator in 1967 at the Museum of the Philadelphia Civic Center, where *Craftsmen '67* was on exhibition. I was in the elevator when he came in, and I was panicked. I mean, I knew exactly who he was, and he sort of looked at me, and I was wearing a really great full-length argyle coat. [Laughs.] But I looked at him, and I said, "You're the person who just acquired the Wharton Esherick table and chairs." And he said, "Chair." [Laughs.]

And I don't think I saw him again—except that I knew who he was—until 1970 at the World Crafts Council meeting in Dublin, where he was a very prominent part of that meeting. He brought Magdalena Abakanowicz from Poland to Ireland for the 1970 Crafts Council meeting. I will never forget that [Olga Amaral came from Bogota -HDE]. I was with Yvonne Bobrowicz at a dinner party at Desmond Fitzgerald's house during the time of the conference. I think Jack was wondering, "What is she doing here?" [Laughs.] But I remember I was there. [He actually said, "Why are you here?" -HDE][00:12:14]

And over the years, we had a very, non-too-communicative relationship, until, I think, he began to recognize that perhaps I had a critical sense of the field and a concern for the field. And he respected my eye and what I was doing, and we slowly moved into a lovely relationship. I always respected and admired his incredible taste. And—

[Phone rings.]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Let's finish Jack.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright.

JANE MILOSCH: So, you were talking about—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. So, over the years, I think that there has been a greater mutual respect for each other, which I have deeply appreciated. I have been the guest at LongHouse over the years. I remember when it became publicly known that Peter and I were going to marry, or to be a public couple, that there was a dinner party at Jack's at LongHouse, and he got up and he said, "Everybody wanted [Peter Stern -HDE], but our Helen

got him." [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: That's hilarious.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I will never forget that.

JANE MILOSCH: One of your best acquisitions ever. [00:14:01]

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And, you know, we have—I spent Christmas—not Christmas Eve, but over the—

JANE MILOSCH: —holidays.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I—

JANE MILOSCH: His annual birthday parties are these amazing events. I got to go to the 90th.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, but I have also spent quiet evenings with him and Peter [often -HDE].

JANE MILOSCH: The filming of *Craft in America*, you were there with him?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Only in the showroom. Yes. Only in the showroom, but I think that our respect for each other—and I genuinely care about him as a human being. And I did write this very funny poem for him on his 90th birthday, which he absolutely loved, and he had it put in the journal. I don't know if you saw it or not.

JANE MILOSCH: No, I didn't.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I had written one for his 85th birthday and then I wrote one for his 90th birthday. You know, my poems are very quick. They're stream of consciousness. I don't work on them. I just do a stream of consciousness ode. And they've become sort of, like, expected. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: They are. They are expected in your annual one every year with the collage of your face and Peter's face together. I always am excited to see what's going to come out.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: I hope you give those to Archives of American Art too.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: My copies of those?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, or the original ones, if you could.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But they are on the computer.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, you actually work them on the computer?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I just work in [the iPad. -HDE]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, wow, okay, okay. They're wonderful. But then the poems, the poems come.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: They're all just very stream of consciousness. I just boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. I don't know how it happens. The one I would really like to get, that I don't have a copy of, because I wrote it in script because I was late for Barbara Fleischman's 90th birthday, which was put on the Web. And so, I felt so guilty that like a week later—because I was so busy with Peter, I couldn't do it. A week later, in script I wrote a long narrative poem, and I handed it to her at an Archives meeting. But I don't have a copy of that. So she'll have a copy of that. [00:16:16]

So, at any rate, I would say that since 1967, my relationship with Jack has burgeoned.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. Well, I was just thinking, as I was saying about the two of you for me

being historical points and living through the American Studio Craft movement—and not just longevity but really a passion for all of the international work that came here—that you went abroad, both of you traveled, collected, share your homes—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Nobody traveled the way Jack did.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, that's true.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, I said to him—I was in discussion with him a few weeks ago—

JANE MILOSCH: I think Lloyd Herman might come closest?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. I don't know if Lloyd Herman even comes close.

JANE MILOSCH: Probably not but—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But I said to Jack, "Where would you like to go next?" And he said, "Well, I'm thinking about maybe that new museum in"—where is it? In Middle East? The new museum that Jean Nouvel just did for, you know, the great Sheik. And he said, "Hey." I forget where it is, but—

JANE MILOSCH: Wow, to be traveling at 90. Well—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He does travel—

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. No, I know.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —a lot, and he still travels.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, he was just in Sweden and—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, when I met him in the showroom, I think the next day he was going to Seattle or Portland for one day, for an event in Seattle or Portland.

JANE MILOSCH: But what I was thinking about was just this question. I would like to end this round of the interview in the sense of just any thoughts you have about: How has American craft changed in your lifetime? I mean, it's a big question, or if you just want to comment on any of the ways, or maybe you're just—what would you like to make sure—[00:18:15]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't really want to critique the transitions and the transformations of what has occurred in American crafts during my lifetime. I mean, from some observations, I see that there is a growth from smaller objects into larger architectural involvements that have taken place. I do see less and less work that I want [laughs] or that I would really support. [That has changed since the interview. -HDE]

I see this amazing shift and transition between what is known as the mainstream arts and the craft world, as the mainstream artists develop interests and techniques in what the craft traditions have always supported, and feeling very unique about it and wanting to restrain acquisitions from the very society and segments that supported an interest in weaving, an interest in metalwork, an interest in ceramics. That they don't want to be acquired by the traditional institutions that have supported this kind of involvement. I see a kind of snobbish hierarchy—

JANE MILOSCH: You mean they acquire a piece in glass by Kiki Smith, but they might not acquire glass—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But Kiki Smith does not want the craft museum to acquire her work, probably. Or the way in which Betty would not allow the Renwick to acquire that major, major work.

JANE MILOSCH: *Aeolian Pyramid*, which I'm still determined—maybe posthumously.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, why should it happen if she doesn't want it, you know? Why should it happen? [00:20:00]

JANE MILOSCH: Well—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Let it go to the new museum in Asia. You know [laughs], I'm sorry. I don't want to spend my time fighting these ridiculous hierarchies and segregations. They make absolutely no sense to me. Totally none at all. I see more and more work that is derivative, and it really bothers me that there's no critical eye saying, "Wait, didn't we see something like this 20 years ago?"

JANE MILOSCH: Or this DIY movement, as if do-it-yourself—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: DIY is home economics.

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.] Well said.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Excuse me.

JANE MILOSCH: Well said!

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: DIY is home economics.

JANE MILOSCH: These kids didn't grow up with shop.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm sorry. Jane, when I was a child, I learned how to make a candle in a tin can. I learned how to make an apron. I learned how to appliqué on top of an apron. DIY is not the craft movement. It is home economics, and there's nothing wrong with saying that. It has nothing to do with the craft movement.

If you want to make a Christmas ornament, great. If you're an artist and you create an amazing Christmas ornament that should, in some way, become historically important, that's a very different thing. But sitting with cookie-cutters out of clay, and taking dried cantaloupe peels, and painting it to make a necklace is not crafts. It's home economics. Okay?

JANE MILOSCH: Well, you've always—we talked about supporting artists in the development of their work, and seeing them grow, and giving them opportunities. This is a different relationship.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What has to happen is that the art history departments in the universities, in their curriculum, have to broaden their base and include the great moments in contemporary crafts in their curriculum. Right now, Voukos and Tawney might be in there. But it is very important when you're training art historians to have them also learn about the major individuals and the major trends that occurred within the craft movement in the 20th and 21st century. [00:22:25]

And that is still not in the curriculum. I mean, they talk about Jansen, but the point is these individuals and this incredible growth in our field in the last 50 years is still not within the curriculums of major art history curriculums.

JANE MILOSCH: I could not agree more. I always sum it up as: The American Studio Craft movement has not been secured within the trajectory of 20th-century art. It deserves to be within that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. That's what I'm saying, alright.

JANE MILOSCH: But when I think about your son, Matthew Drutt, and the way he writes about artists who work in craft materials—when I think of a few other colleagues, they tend to be people who are attracted both modern art and had no separation of looking at material.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright, but Matthew was brought up surrounded by these people, and—

JANE MILOSCH: But I think the Internet—the European, the Asian aesthetic never separated these things out like in America.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No.

JANE MILOSCH: But your bringing this work back and forth has benefited so many places that it's part of the conversation there when you study art history. But I would agree. Why

hasn't it entered into the academy? I think that is an excellent observation. And now, there's this invention of what's called material culture. So, I really think that anyone who is going to delve into this field and include it should be reading all of the publications that you've written, and the artists who've been involved, and the events and places that you've helped to either document or enable. [00:24:17]

It's really amazing. And how many people continue to do that like you today, unrelented? I don't know of anyone in the field. So, thank you for all that you have done to make the world a more beautiful place—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Thank you very much.

JANE MILOSCH: —to live in.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Thank you. I'm very honored to be part of that generation that hopefully revealed aspects of the creative world that were not well-known.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, as I tell everyone, as I said to you before, often when I wear anything handmade, whether a hat or jewelry or—how many times I think of you when you said that you wore jewelry and you said, "What was I going to do? Carry a pot and a piece of furniture around?" But you could wear the jewelry. I always tell people, "Art isn't just something you hang on the wall, you can wear it too."

But it is amazing that you have these contemporary art collectors who buy this stuff, but they never think about that environment. And if anyone's lucky enough to stay at [the house -Ed.], they will certainly see what it means. Thank you.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Thank you very much.

[END OF DRUTT18_1OF2_TRACK16.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Now, we're recording. This is Jane Milosch on Friday, January 26, 2018, for the Archives of American Art, interviewing Helen Drutt English on the third day. We've been interviewing, with two earlier interview sessions in Philadelphia a couple of weeks ago. And today we are continuing our interview with a third session.

So, I'm pleased to be here in the New York City apartment right across from MoMA actually, which is a beautiful, sunny day, art all around us, all kinds of lecture materials around, books. So, Helen, I'm happy to be here. And I saw that you received a letter yesterday—you were telling me about—from Germany. And it seemed like a wonderful way to begin our conversation this time. We'll focus on, again, some of your relationships with artists and friends that came through the arts. And thought you might tell us a little bit about how these friendships have built up through the art you discovered and brought back and forth between Germany and the US.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You're referring to the letter that I received yesterday from Wuppertal, Germany. I received a letter from Heidi Wewer, W-E-W-E-R, who has become among the most extraordinary correspondents I have ever had in my entire life. For many, many years, I thought that letter-writing had disappeared, until my meeting with Heidi. [00:02:01]

That meeting had its embryonic birth in the work of Claus Bury. I had attended his retrospective in Nuremberg several years ago. And there was, among the works that were being exhibited, a very special drawing lead, which had just intellectually and emotionally mesmerized me. And I spoke to Claus about it, and I said, "Is this a work that is available?" You have to understand that my relationship with Claus began in 1973, and it has never waned. We have had a very strong relationship. I've never, never represented him, but I've always worked with him and supported him.

Getting back to this amazing piece, it was owned by Heidi and Dirk Wewer who lived in Wuppertal, where Claus at one time had taught. And they were interested in deaccessioning the piece. And because of this chance moment, I wrote to her, and she wrote back, and we arranged to have a meeting the next time I went to Germany. And I immediately called my friend Dirk Allgaier, and I said, "Listen, Dirk, when you pick me up in Frankfurt, do you think we could also go to Wuppertal?"

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right? And—

JANE MILOSCH: Where the Schwebbahn is.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What?

JANE MILOSCH: The famous Schwebbahn is in Wuppertal.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. So, more important than that in Wuppertal, of course, was Tony Cragg. At any rate, we did go, and we went to meet Heidi Wewer, who greeted us with her dog in her arm jumping up and down as if we had been a long-lost lover. [Laughs.] It was extraordinary. And she had also arranged lunch for us so that Tony Cragg would also come. [04:01]

It was a kind of moment in time that one never could anticipate. This amazing lunch, this wonderful person Heidi, and her marvelous husband Dirk. Their wonderful house in Wuppertal, with the sculpture garden filled with Tony Cragg's work, and also Claus Bury's work was also very much in evidence. We were all together. It was Peter and Dirk. My husband Peter Stern was with me, and it was a special moment in time.

And also, we then went off to visit Tony Cragg because Peter, as the chairman of Storm King, was very much interested in sculpture. And so, we meandered with Tony off to his studio, in his amazing factory, actually, and also the grounds, and also this special house, which he had been restoring [Villa Waldfrieden -HDE]. It was a culmination of many spirits. You know, Dirk and his publishing, Peter and his interest in contemporary sculpture, I in my absolute passion for the work Claus Bury.

But the unanticipated moment was the dynamics that occurred between Heidi and myself. As a result of that moment, I received a letter from her within a month following our visit.

JANE MILOSCH: What year was this again?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not really sure. Maybe it's—what year is it now? It's—

JANE MILOSCH: It's 2018.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: '18? So, maybe it's six years ago. It might be six years ago. I'm not quite sure. I can look up the date of Claus's Nuremberg exhibition [2010 -HDE], and it would be shortly after his retrospective in Nuremberg, within that year. [00:06:07]

But the result of this correspondence, which is in script—we don't have each other's emails, we only have our postal addresses—revealed a—it reminded me of Stefan Zweig in a way. It reminded me of *The World of Yesterday* because she began to write to me about what it was like to be a woman living in Germany after the Second World War, what it was like to walk through the woods, what it was like to encounter the GIs, what it was like to see the world—the romantic and intellectual world that she thought was going to be hers—changed by the Second World War. And these letters have come periodically. I'm not as great a correspondent as she has been, because she has much more time. I now know where she sits to write, but her letters are expansive and extensive.

And yesterday's letter ended with a very famous German poem that she felt I should read to Peter in German, because she felt it was one of the great German poets, by Matthias Claudius from 1745 to 1815. This correspondence is symbolic of the kind of relationships that I have been permitted to have during the past decades of my life. Two weeks ago, Peter and I received a postcard from Munich, from Gerd Rothmann, with our names, the name of our apartment in New York, and no address. [Laughs.] It was amazing to me, you know? We received a postcard. It has no postal address at all, just "Helen Drutt, Peter Stern, [. . .], New York 10019." [00:08:15]

And all I could remember was Carol Strauss, who lived in Houston and who is now deceased, telling me that she once received a letter that said, "Carol Strauss, Modern House, Houston, Texas." [Laughs.] So, you know, I reached back into my memory of that moment that I had maybe 20 years ago with Carol.

And I, continuously, am amazed at the continuous engagement that exists between myself,

Peter, and the artists. Claus Bury is constantly sending us drawings. Sometimes, they simply annotate a holiday like Christmas, or Hanukkah, or my birthday, or Peter's birthday. It's just a slip of paper with a painted symbol on it. Notes from Gijs Bakker, you know, continuously appear. Letters from Tone Vigeland because Tone does not have an email, and she does not have really technical support. She doesn't even want technical support.

But we are the recipients of communications that I thought ceased with technology, and that really embroiders my life. It enhances our lives, and it makes me realize that—it's not that there's life after death, but there is communication after one ceases to have a gallery. [00:10:08]

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That the relationships with the people who were central to your life do not end. It can continue, even though I must say, it did not continue in a lucrative financial manner.

That when the gallery closed, everything else closed too. I can remember when Bill Daley, when the gallery closed, made his son Tom his agent. You know, after I had, what, taken his work from the early '70s for \$350 to \$35,000—the doors closed, that relationship closed. Commissions came left and right for everybody. I did not participate in any of those major commissions. I may have structured how they should be conceived, but I don't even want to annotate in this oral history what occurred between me and many artists whose commissions came as a result of the work that I had done within the gallery. And how their entrance into relationships with patrons, or colleges, or universities, et cetera, ceased to involve me.

And I let that go. I was hurt by it, but I let it go, and I concentrated on friendship and relationships. I have amazing relationships with the artists with whom I worked during the active years of the gallery. I have amazing relationships with their grandchildren. You know, I am Tante Helen to Lucy. I am Tante Helen to Gijs Bakker's Zero and Zora, who are his grandchildren. I have a relationship with Thomas Vigeland. [Laughs.] [00:12:12]

But I'm also very careful not to forget their existence and not to forget that they are part of my extended and expanded family, which is very interesting. So, we're back to this letter. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. And back to the apartment where we are now, [. . . -Ed.] Because over the years that I've known you when you married Peter, this New York apartment was one of the second or third times I met you here, a while ago. And still have so many artists, writers, friends, and it's really just like [your home in Philadelphia].

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well that's true. Just last Saturday, Jamie Bennett was here for breakfast with Anat Shifan, his wife. On Sunday, Linda Sikoras was here also for breakfast, by herself, you know? And then I had a visit from Chris Cahill from the American Irish Historical Society. He came for champagne. I don't even remember who else came, but the point is that I am—at this particular moment in my life, I am unable to walk due to a fractured sacrum, but I have been receiving visitors. [Laughs.] I feel like Miss Havisham or something like that, you know?

[They laugh.]

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I think—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Is everything going to crumble around me? You know, I've never spent so much time in this room in years. But this house, this apartment, has become a kind of [like my Philadelphia home -Ed.] in many ways. [00:14:05]

I mean, not only did I have Jamie—and then Linda. Linda Richardson, who is a friend of mine and on many of the museum committees in Philadelphia, was here on Tuesday because she had a board meeting. On Saturday, Brian Harding, who is a British pathologist on staff at [Children's Hospital in Philadelphia -HDE], but one of the leading collectors of British ceramics and British textiles. You know, Magdalene Odundo, Lucie Rie, Hans Coper [Alison Birtton, Gordon Bawldwin -HDE]—oh, come on. What's the matter with me? I'm not thinking.

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. And Brian Harding, who's also a major collector of Jennifer Lee, among great weavings by Peter Collingwood and the American Warren Seelig. We really bonded over his interest in British ceramics, and also we've discovered that we had a joint passion for the opera. So he's going to the opera. I cannot go because of this accident, but he's going to [laughs] stay here overnight. And it will be, you know, a kind of wonderful evening in which we can discuss the world of clay.

In that respect, having the apartment and being confined to the apartment at this particular point—but also because Peter is extremely ill, and he is unable to navigate physically at this point in his life—having an internal life within the apartment has been extremely rich. [00:16:15]

JANE MILOSCH: Right. Well, let's go back to Philadelphia a little bit more, because it's amazing. You still continue to go back and forth very regularly.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Oh, I do.

JANE MILOSCH: Essentially weekly. And we left off, at our last meeting, talking a little bit about your relationship with the Philadelphia Museum of Art. But I was also curious about some major commissions you've been involved with, or discovered, or that you're particularly proud of and really want to share the story with us for posterity about how these discoveries come about. Because you're quite a sleuth and a connector.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I might say that I have been involved with commissions in a very peripheral manner. Because as I told you before, those commissions in which I have had active advice, but not consent [laughs]—right—have matured into reality without my participation. And so, I have observed the many, many commissions that have taken place in the decades under my aegis, but I did not participate in them in a financial manner. And I always allowed myself to have my relationship with the artists become a more important and supreme factor than what I could realize financially. And that was something that I chose to do, rather than to try to negotiate or intercept. [00:18:00]

There have been times when I have been extremely hurt when I've seen the fruition and the realization of a commission in a slide during a lecture, and when I knew [laughs] that I was involved in the embryonic conception of that piece. However, I would like to discuss the Staffel window, which was a commission that took place with the One Percent for Art in Philadelphia. That commission was implemented and initiated—oh, I'm trying to remember the exact date of that commission. But I could stop for a second.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Ready?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. So, Philadelphia was among the first cities to do One Percent for Art, which meant that one percent of the cost of construction for a building had to be allocated to the commissioning of an art project. And one of the major art projects that did occur during that time was a porcelain window, which was commissioned by the Magee Rehabilitation Center. They commissioned Rudi Staffel to do a translucent porcelain tile window in the lobby of the Magee Rehabilitation Center. That window was commissioned 1981 to '82. I believe it was installed around 1982 in the lobby. And his daughter, Abby Buchanan, acted as his studio assistant during the process of the fabrication of the window. It was 40 tiles. Each tile was fabricated individually in translucent porcelain with a copper oxide glaze. [00:20:03]

Around 2007, during the renovation of the Magee Rehabilitation Center, the window was removed, and I didn't know what had happened to it. I had spoken to the foreman of the building. Nobody really knew where it was, and he thought it had been crated. Somebody thought that they had completely dismantled it. Luckily, it had been crated and placed in the basement of the Magee Rehabilitation Center. In the spring, I think, of 2016—I'm not sure about the date, but I think that I might be right—I think it was in the spring of 2016, I received a call from the Magee Rehabilitation president or vice president telling me that my name was given to them, and would I come and appraise it? Because they would like to deaccession it. And I replied, "I will definitely come and look at it, but I will not appraise it because I don't want you to sell it." I said, "If this is the piece that I remember, this piece belongs in the museum."

JANE MILOSCH: That is so fantastic, Helen. I mean, honestly. We've talked about this a little in our last interview where this is something that's commonly happened. Now, people are finding things that were handmade in the past, and devaluing them, and either just trying to make money off them and not thinking they belong in a museum.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, my memory bank was strong enough to remember when the Ellsworth Kelly wall was discovered in Philadelphia. Anne d'Harnoncourt wanted that wall relief, desperately, to come to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. There was nobody there to facilitate or to fund it. And I'm not sure—I don't remember whether it was Ronald Lauder or Leonard Lauder who bought it and gave it to MoMA. [00:22:13]

And so it left Philadelphia, and I did not want this window—not to leave Philadelphia, but also, I didn't want it to go to auction because I didn't want some dealer or art consultant to buy it for zero and sell it for several hundred-thousand dollars. Plus the fact it belonged in Philadelphia. Rudi never, ever did a major work of art like this previously. Everybody was familiar with his amazing translucent porcelain bowls and vases. But this was really unique.

JANE MILOSCH: With the idea for creating a window with this porcelain tile—so he had not previously created anything like this?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. But he used his creative, aesthetic sensibility to realize that if he had to do a window, he could do tiles. These flat, translucent tiles would then apply to an opaque glass. So there are 40 of them, you know? And it's really quite amazing.

JANE MILOSCH: So, you went down to look at the window. The tiles.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I went. I called Jerry [Jaeger], our driver, and we went, and I looked at the window. We opened the create and I then called Elisabeth Agro at the museum, and I said, "Elisabeth—"

JANE MILOSCH: The Philadelphia Museum of Art?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, of course, and I said, you know, "Elisabeth, you've got to come and see this." And she said, "Well, you know, Timothy says we're not buying anymore Staffels." I said, "But this is not a pot. This is not a vase." I said, "This is a major architectural installation." [00:24:05]

And it turned out that she was in the midst of preparing a Staffel exhibition for the museum in her annual installation of two or three craftsmen's work at a time. And she was in the midst of doing a Staffel installation. When she saw the window, I think she was just blown away. She did not know about the One Percent for Art at that time. She had no idea that this window existed. She agreed with me that we had to find a way to get it. She said, "But the museum can't buy it." She said, "We have no money. We cannot buy it." I said, "I understand that." And then I spoke to Magee Rehabilitation, and they cannot donate it because they are a 501(c)(3), and they need to earn money from the removal of the window into a public space.

And then she was concerned about whether or not she could have it conserved or not. But before we had to do that, I had to talk to the Redevelopment Authority because I had to find out whether legally I could transfer a piece that was made for the One Percent for Art that now belonged to Redevelopment Authority. Could I legally transfer it from one entity to another? So I waited for them to have a meeting on the 31st of May, that day. This all happened—you know, I saw it in April. May 31st, the committee met, and they approved the fact that it could be transferred from Magee Rehabilitation to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

JANE MILOSCH: That's fantastic. Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That was fine. I called Elisabeth. I told her that the approval had been—you know, that there had been consent to the approval. She then told me that she wasn't sure that conservation could conserve the arenas necessary to stabilize the window before her installation in August. And I said, "Please, Elisabeth." She said, "I'm not sure about that." And I immediately said, "That's totally fine, Elisabeth. I'll call Barnes." And I hung up. [Laughs.] Minutes later [laughs]—[00:26:33]

JANE MILOSCH: Did she call back?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —I got a call back that she had permission to use an outside conservation individual. But, you know, I wasn't going to take no for an answer. I thought to myself, "Well, if they can't take it"—I had been negotiating with Magee. I came up with an arrangement where I would give them a certain amount of money over a period of time for their art therapy department. And that I would then hold the window, and I could do with it whatever I wanted. So, I was thinking, "Well, if the museum doesn't really have the conservation system, if they really can't take it, I'll put it on my back porch." [Laughs.] You know?

Anyway, I wasn't going to do that, but I held the reins. I then negotiated with Magee to pay them a certain amount of money over a period of time. And they were extremely generous with me because they wanted that piece to be in the museum. And so the Staffel window made its journey to the museum. It was installed for that wonderful exhibition during the year, I think, August 2016 to August 2017. It was total—

JANE MILOSCH: So, it's not a permanent view? [00:27:58]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. It's not. It was only there for that exhibition, which is an exhibition that she does every year. And then after the exhibition was over, it went into storage. And that's fine. It means that people can come and see it, and it's a promised gift from the Helen Williams Drutt Family Collection. But it will not be a promised gift until 2018. But it goes as a promise gift to the museum.

JANE MILOSCH: Fantastic.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And it's not a pot. [Laughs.] Right?

JANE MILOSCH: No, it's not a pot. And you can't carry it around, and you can't wear it. And you can't sit in it and bask in it.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But it is an extraordinary work of art. So, I feel that that is one of the great achievements I made in my professional career, post—

JANE MILOSCH: Like saving da Vinci, saving the Staffel window. It's—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, in a way, you know? It was a major, major act. And it was a major commitment that I also made to an artist whose work I have supported for over half a century. You know, Rudi was my teacher, and in 1948, he told me to leave the ceramics studio because my hands would never do what my brain wanted. [Laughs.] And he said, "Go home and read." [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: That's funny.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And of course, I did not acquire a Rudi Staffel pot until I met Gladys Myers in Gallery 1015 in 1961 or '62. And then, of course, when the gallery opened, I represented him throughout his career until after his death, until his children and family decided to move his archives and his work to a young private dealer. And I received a letter once that simply said, "We know that you have been a supporter of my father for over a half century, but now things have changed." [00:30:28]

JANE MILOSCH: Wow.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: *Da, da, darat, da.* [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: On the other hand, the story is so important because, again, it speaks to the legacy of your knowledge. And also, the fact that I'm afraid a lot of things are found today, and people don't know what they are. When these things get de-installed and put in boxes and crates, you know, it's not apparently obvious what they are. And you knew. Well, they knew to call you.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. But it's also very painful after half a century of working to be told by the family that you're no longer wanted. I went home. I was in such tears.

[END OF DRUTT18_20F2_TRACK02.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And I felt so badly. I was in Philadelphia. And when Rudi died, his children had actually given me a small container with his ashes in it, which I had always

[laughs] kept in my bedroom, with other accoutrements, on my night table. And I went home, and I took that little vial which contained his ashes, after receiving that email. And I said, "Don't worry, Rudi. I'm not going to forget you." [Laughs.] I remember I just sat there—

JANE MILOSCH: They could declare what they want but that doesn't mean—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: That I'm not going to forget you. And so I started to give pieces that I owned to major museums. I gave three to the Hermitage. We've given to Yale, you know? I said, "Don't worry, Rudi." [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: "I got you covered."

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Meanwhile, his new dealer is making lots of, probably, great funds for the family. That's alright. Just forget it. I don't want to denigrate anybody. I really don't.

JANE MILOSCH: But you continued to promote his legacy and that's—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely.

JANE MILOSCH: That's the posterity that goes with the work.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Absolutely. And even though I'm not in Philadelphia now, but you see even in the apartment, the presence of many of the artists with whom I've worked in the past half-century is very evident here. You know, there's Claus Bury, there's Wayne Higby, there's Rudi Staffel, you know? I mean, there is Gertraud Möhwald, who so few people know, who is from Germany and from Halle, in eastern Europe. Her heads and her work, as far as I'm concerned, was very influenced by the Pergamon, because she had a studio in East Germany. And if you look at her contemporary work, you can see the references to the Gates of Ishtar that are revealed in her work. Early pieces by Betty Woodman are infiltrated throughout the apartment. Nakashima. [00:02:27]

You know, it's not that there is a great collection of contemporary works here, but what is here also meshes with Peter's dynamic interest in Turkish and Indian textile. So, there's a kind of merging that has taken place in the apartment, which I really love. You know, that his aesthetic sensibility with Danish furniture and beautiful textiles meshes. I love the idea that there's a Turkish velvet on the wall from the 17th or 18th century, and standing guard beside this maybe four-by-eight Turkish velvet is a SunKoo Yuh sculpture. And they work together because aesthetically they live together.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, yeah. And that I have to say, Helen, is your eye. I mean, I've always been amazed at your eye and the things that you bring together in this apartment, which is—you know, in the open space, the eras, the different countries, the materials, the mixture. And yet, there's a connectedness through you and Peter, and your passion for similar and dissimilar things somehow unite quite beautifully.

[Audio break.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. Okay.

JANE MILOSCH: Alright. So, we talked about what we're seeing in this amazing apartment here of different things and the saving of the Staffel window, which went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. [00:04:04]

But upon your marriage to Peter, there's another amazing piece of art from a completely different era, as we're talking about bringing the contemporary with the past. Tell me about the piece that was donated in honor of your marriage as a promised gift to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: As I have told you previously, Peter and I met through Stella Kramrisch, who was the revered curator of Indian art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Upon our marriage, Peter wanted to present me with something, and I told him that there was nothing that he could give me that was as important as our marriage. I said, "But symbolically, I thought it might be nice to select a work of art in honor of our marriage and in memory of Stella Kramrisch," which combined our union and the beginning of our friendship in a symbolic way.

And so, he made the decision to give his 18th-century Pichwai to the museum, in honor of our marriage and in memory of Stella. However, it was not to go to the museum until his death. Over three years ago, it became evident that we would be leaving Cedar House and moving into New York permanently, because Peter had become quite ill and he was immobile. And his legal firm said to me, you know, "Don't place this major work in storage because if you place it in storage, something could happen to it, and it would lose its value." And so, the decision was made not to wait for Peter's death, but to give the piece to the museum at the time that we left Cedar House. [00:06:22]

I must say that when they started to take the Pichwai out of Cedar House, I began to cry. I thought to myself, "Peter Stern is truly leaving Mountainville, New York." Symbolically. And then I stopped the movers and I said, "Wait." [Laughs.] I went to the telephone, and I called the curator Dale and I said to Dale, "After it comes to the museum, how long will it be seen?" [Laughs.] And she said, "Well, you know, textiles are really fragile. They can't be up forever." I said, "But, you know, when you go to the Kröller-Müller, the Seurat is always there. You never go to the Kröller-Müller and not see the Seurat. People are going to want to see the Piccawai." I said, "I would like to know if we can have some kind of formal commitment." She said, "Well, Timothy is in Europe." I said, "Call him." [Laughs.] Anyway, they did contact—and I said to the movers, "Stop." They called him, and he committed that the Pichwai would be seen two to three months a year for a decade, you know? And off it went.

JANE MILOSCH: Wow, that doesn't happen too often anymore.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, it doesn't. But, you know, there I am, the Pichwai was being moved, and it was permanently installed for the reopening of the galleries in 2016. And it remained there for a year. And it has now been removed and then maybe in seven or eight months, it will go up again for three months. [00:08:07]

JANE MILOSCH: A beautiful publication.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. And they did this wonderful publication about the history of the Pichwai. We did two different Piccawais. And they also did, within the publication, a lovely essay about Peter Stern and the history of the movement of the Pichwai. I know that he bought the Piccawai in London many, many years ago, and it hung at the entrance of Cedar House for decades.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I have to say—you know me and provenance—I think it's really important that you tell the story and even more how it commemorates an event. And so, this—you know, the different locations that it's been—that it spent that time there. And then it was an event, a significant event twice, that led it to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What I really loved about it in the entrance of Cedar House was, in front of this 18th-century, amazing Piccawai was a Nakashima bench that Peter had commissioned, I think, in 1980 or '81. And upon that bench was an Edwin and Mary Scheier pot, a SunKoo Yuh sculpture, an Andrea Gill pot, and a Morten Lubnev Espersen pot, you know?

JANE MILOSCH: I think I remember seeing it. And what you did is, as you always do with art, you animate it in combination with other things. If something's on the wall, you always bring it forward. You've always had this eye to make the eye move and dance, so that the tapestries or whatever they are, the embroideries—I'm looking at an amazing—it looks like an embroidery, you know.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It's not. It's a Peruvian burial cloth from Six AD.

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, really? Unbelievable.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. It's a burial cloth. Next to the Gertraud Möhwald head. And behind the Gertraud Möhwald head is this amazing mermaid's necklace by Bernhard Schobinger. [00:10:08]

JANE MILOSCH: And a Wayne Higby sitting on your table, and above a brass sphere.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: An Indian globe, yes. A pure [cut-out Indian brass globe encompasses the light bulbs -HDE]—

JANE MILOSCH: But this Indian globe—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And behind you, Claus Bury's work. Right.

JANE MILOSCH: Which all amazingly work together in a way that really animates them. And —

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: The Schobinger necklace, *The Mermaid's Wedding*, was fabricated from 20 years of Bernhard diving into Lake Zurich picking up the fishing hooks, and saving the fishing hooks, and then composing that necklace of 20 years of saved fishing hooks.

JANE MILOSCH: It's amazing. It has that feel of antiquity about it, and also dangerous though with all those little hooks.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, you can't wear it. It's a conceptual piece.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, but still, it's this idea of, life has a lot of danger connected—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, I mean, he had offered it to many collectors, but nobody wanted it because it couldn't be worn. [Laughs.] And I thought to myself, you know, "It's really interesting." Not all ornaments have to be used for adornment.

JANE MILOSCH: And it's wonderfully displayed in a box.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, he fabricated the box.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. It looks like it really came ripped off of a wall of a fishing hut, that background with that crack and that color. The colors and the framing are magnificent in the shadow box. So, you continue to have many connections and partnerships with the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and you're currently working on a project.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Maybe when I play that last thing just to check—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: But you have a very strong voice.

JANE MILOSCH: No kidding.

[END OF DRUTT18_2OF2_TRACK03.]

JANE MILOSCH: I'm going to turn that down. So, Helen, we were talking about the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: I didn't make that clear. But now, I would like to transition to a project that you're currently working on, a book that's going to chronicle a lot of the things you have observed and worked on for decades. So it would be wonderful to hear a little bit about that.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right. I began to think about not just writing a book, but I began to think about having a book—just stop a minute.

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. It was my desire to document the history of the gallery for a long time, in order to set forth for research fellows or scholars a list of exhibitions in which all the artists were annotated and works that were major or central to the exhibitions had a permanent record. But that concept began to grow. As I began to prepare a chronology of exhibitions which began a little bit before 1973 when the gallery was first initiated, I began to realize that there was a great deal more information that was really necessary to make permanent. And that was that there were so many exhibitions within the Philadelphia area that really documented what was happening in the resurgence of the craft

movement in Philadelphia. [00:02:08]

So, I began with 1960, and I began with the first craft-defined exhibition that Olaf Skoogfors curated in the mid-'60s. And I started to research exhibitions that were outside of the gallery's activities. Exhibitions that took place at the Philadelphia College of Art, at the Moore College of Art, exhibitions that took place at the Museum of the Philadelphia Civic Center. I began to look at when *Objects: USA* first came into Philadelphia and traveled there, and also when there were these huge ceramic exhibitions that were attached also to the activities of The Clay Studio.

In the process of documenting this information, I realized it was also important to try to document when artists met each other. Like in 1971, when Rudi Staffel met Ruth Duckworth for the first time at the Cheltenham Art Center at *Ten Potters*. Because that information would be lost in the memories of this generation if it did not have a presence on paper. Therefore, this small chronology of 29-and-a-half years became rather extensive. And I have now reached a point where I have to say stop. I can't possibly get all this information together. It's not possible for one person without a support staff to really collate this information, but it is a beginning. [00:04:03]

I have also, in the process of doing the chronology, realized that there have to be essays to support the information. Sid Sachs has written a wonderful essay, not only on the history of the craft resurgence in Philadelphia, but how that history, in some way, has intercepted with mainstream art. Sarah Archer is writing about the so-called history of the gallery. There might be a little too much personal information in it. But we're going to relook at it, and possibly empower it with more information that deals specifically with what occurred in the gallery, to move it from a very regional gallery in the beginning to a gallery that became more national when the work of Peter Voulkos was exhibited, into a gallery that suddenly became international. And its international focus really had its birth in the connections that Stanley Lechztin and Olaf Skoogfors had made in Europe during the '60s.

My hope had been that this book would have been published upon the occasion of my 80th birthday, but that was seven years ago. During [laughs] the last seven years, there have been some major interruptions in my life, primarily the illness of my husband Peter Stern, who, for the past three years, has been quite immobile and in need of incredible emotional support as well as medical support. [00:06:02]

Therefore, the book laid dormant until I made a decision last year to pull myself together, and I hired Elizabeth Essner, who is amazing. And Elizabeth is working on the biographies of the artists, which had been begun maybe in 1980, but everything had been dropped. So she's working on the artists' pages, their biographies, statements. There's about 125 artists who will have double pages documenting three parts of their work. So, Elizabeth is really—she's not an assistant. She's working with me. You know, this is as much her project as it is mine. And I think that's really very clear, and she's really wonderful.

We're looking into finding someone to do a bibliography, and hoping that this book could possibly be published in my 88th year. I'm not positive, but I would hope so. I'm 87 now. It would be really great because I think it's time to put it to sleep. And if it's not perfect, and if it's extensive, it doesn't really matter. Maybe part one of part 10. [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: Just like your interview.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What?

JANE MILOSCH: On your interview, the last one ended in 1991. And here we are in 2018, and you're still going strong.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: [Laughs.] Well, so the book is a very central part of my activity right now. And if you go into the backroom, you'll see black books with incredible volumes of information in it. You know, I have artists sending me tapes. I have them sending me photographs. I have them checking their statements about their work with Elizabeth. And she's monitoring that and researching that. [00:08:08]

So, that's the book. You know, I don't want it to be known as a history because it is not a history. I was talking to Dirk about two or three years ago about the title, and I told him I certainly didn't want it be a history of the gallery from 1973 to the present, or a history of the gallery from 1973 to 2002, and then the epilogue. I did not want that. We have also

invited—[inaudible]—who's a famous German poet [Ulla Hahn] to write about the house.

JANE MILOSCH: The Cedar—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, about [the house in Philadelphia -Ed.]. And Grace Cochrane, who is a well-known Australian critic wrote an essay about Australia and Philadelphia, or Australia and the gallery. But that was done five years ago, and I'm sure now I have to send it back to her and we have to really rethink, because so many other things have happened with Australia since then. I have been very actively trying to bring American crafts and decorative arts to the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. And works by Staffell, and Marks [Graham -HDE], and Ted Hallman, and Marjorie Schick, and Paula Winokur, and Linda McNeil have arrived during the past few years. That's another part of my activities. You know, being here either in Philadelphia or in New York does not prevent me from working with the world. Before Marjorie Schick died, I placed major works of hers in the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. [00:10:23]

[Phone rings.]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, ready?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. Before Marjorie Schick died, I worked with her pro bono, to help her place major works into major institutions. She had retired from Kansas. She and her husband Jim were moving to California. She had an incredible body of important works in her studio. It was obvious that the acquisition of these works was not going to occur in this economic climate. And over two years ago, we began working together—as I said, pro bono—to place pieces in the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, the Arkansas Arts Center. The big Schiaparelli project went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Honolulu Academy of Art in Hawaii, the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, the Ilias Lalaounis Museum of Jewelry in Athens. How many? I'm not even [laughs] sure. And also the huge bracelet project with the four screens and the bracelets going to the Nationalmuseum of Sweden in 2018 [The project for the Nationalmuseum of Sweden was delayed until 2023 due to the change of directors and COVID. The x project entered the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia. Brauleis Screen replaced with Vibratims for N.M.S., Stolkholm. -HDE] In the midst of this, unfortunately, as we were discussing the transportation of the bracelets, Marjorie had a stroke and died. It was really terrible. Anyway. [00:12:12]

But also, I was working with Ron Kent, and I have never represented Ron Kent. I never had an exhibition of Ron Kent in my gallery. But he was at a point where he had been saving major pieces, and he wanted them placed in museums. And I began to work with him, and he sent the pieces to me for me to look at and to make decisions about their placement in permanent collections. One has already gone to the Cooper Hewitt Design Museum in New York [also LongHouse, N.Y. -HDE]. Another work is going to the Nationalmuseum of Sweden. And there is a work sort of waiting for the National Gallery of Australia to find a way to continue accepting other works, because they're in the midst of an administrative change.

What I'm trying to emphasize is that I'm extremely involved in assisting artists to fulfill the placement of major works so that they're not simply sitting in the studio. And there's this great fear that suddenly they'll see a body of work at auction. In this way, we control what happens to major works. So I sort of left the book in midstream in order to talk about this, and I'm not quite sure—

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, posterity. I think of the complexity and the importance of crafting how artists show and place their work in museums, which has been a part of what you've always done. And now you're still doing it. [00:14:10]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Right, and I'm doing it—

JANE MILOSCH: And chronicling these events.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —pro bono [laughs], right?

JANE MILOSCH: We thank you.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I mean, it's a great deal of work. Because you get the images, you have to look at the images, you have to present the images to the curator. The curators have to go to their director, they have to go to their chairmen, they have to—and we have been turned down [laughs] by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

JANE MILOSCH: But these connections, and your name when you contact these places, that's what carries the weight. I've seen it in Europe.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I have no idea. I don't—

JANE MILOSCH: You have no idea, but I can tell you, it is part of the—so really, this is what the American government should be doing. You know, you're making sure that these American pieces—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You know, this started a long time ago, when Yvonne Joris came to America and decided with Evert van Straaten to do *Who's Afraid of American Pottery?* That meeting became a catalyst for me to assist her in the building of that collection in the Stedelijk in 's-Hertogenbosch. I can remember driving with her to Atlantic City to get a Voulkos plate out of Edna Beron's garage [laughs], and have the museum buy it for \$600 instead of \$6,000. I can remember taking her to the greatest Ken Price collection and Ron Nagle collection in the country that nobody knew about. And that entire collection is now a permanent part of the Stedelijk in 's-Hertogenbosch.

So, it just didn't start like this. I've been doing this throughout my career, and I've been doing it always pro bono. I never received any commission. I'm not bragging about what a stupid businessperson I am. [00:16:01]

JANE MILOSH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I'm not bragging about it, but I always wanted the achievement of the placement to come before the financial remuneration. And I constantly gave that up. I cannot tell you how many times I have sold a piece to a major collection for perhaps 10 or 15 percent of what it cost me, just in order to get the work there. You know, in order to get the work in the collection.

I mean, I'm just looking back at Barbara Paganin's exhibition at the Philadelphia Art Alliance two years ago or a year and a half ago. I housed her, I paid for the brochure, Matthew wrote an essay. I paid him [laughs] for his essay. Linda Richardson helped me publish the catalogue. Three or four pieces within the exhibition sold, and I think less than 10 percent was remunerated, but it went to the Art Alliance.

So, what I'm really saying is that I have not been financially a strong businessperson, though everybody may think I am. And I'm not applauding myself because of that. I'm saying that my priority was always making sure that the works were placed appropriately. Very excited when Yvonne Joris wanted to have the best American ceramic collection in Europe. You know? And being on board with that and also her interest in American jewelry. I was so excited that she liked Kim and Robin, that she liked Bruce Metcalf, that she liked Rebecca Batal. These were all people that never would have entered into a European collection. [00:18:04]

I like being part of that catalytic behavior. I find great pleasure in knowing that I have been able to support in-depth collections, you know? And that was fully realized, obviously, with the Staffel window. I'm not sure where I am with the book, except that a few years ago, I told Dirk that I did not want it to be *A History of Crafts from 1960 to the Present*. I didn't think that that was a title that was possibly appropriate. I didn't feel that people would really want to acquire a book that had a kind of dry art history title. And I decided to call the book, which is not public but now that we're speaking—the book will be called *Conceived in This Bed* because—

JANE MILOSCH: [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —I sat on the edge of the bed in which I was personally conceived, on the telephone, most of my life, talking to artists, on that corner. I'm sitting on the right-hand side corner by the telephone for decades talking to artists, talking to the V&A wearing rubber gloves. Having Matthew pull off the avocado leaves as I'm on the phone with the V&A. Ilene standing there looking at me, laughing as he's pulling the leaves off of my

avocado tree in order to get my attention. But I've always sat on the corner of that bed, on the right-hand side of that bed. [00:20:01]

There are artists—David Watkins knows about that, Gijs Bakker, Georg Dobler. I mean, that was my corner and that was where I did most of my work. And it just so happens that I sleep in the bed in which I was conceived. I sleep in the 1929 Widdicomb bed that belonged to my parents.

JANE MILOSCH: Is that going to go to the Philadelphia Museum of Art?

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: They won't take it, I'm sure. They will not take it.

JANE MILOSCH: We deaccessioned Grant Wood's mattress while I was still a curator too.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No, they will not take it. It's a great headboard. It's rosewood and walnut with Romanesque arches. And as a child, I remember sitting by my father on a Sunday morning as he read the comics to me, tracing the Romanesque arches with my index finger.

But I was conceived in that bed. That was their wedding bed, and I have their wedding bedroom set in Philadelphia. I don't know what will happen to it. I'm sure that my children do not want it. [Laughs.] It's really—

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I'm sure we'll find it a good home somehow, Helen.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know. I'm not sure. I remember when my parents moved to Florida, my brother said they needed white furniture [laughs] so I got the set. And I was very happy. Anyway.

So, my title is *Conceived in This Bed*. And it's not a public title, but it will probably be that title. I told it to Martin Bergmann, who was the great Freudian analyst, before he died because I had my title before I had the embryonic beginnings of the book. And he thought it was great.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. And *Embryonic Beginnings* could be the subtitle. [Laughs.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: What?

JANE MILOSCH: Embryonic beginnings.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: So that is secret, alright?

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, got it. Got it.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. And—

JANE MILOSCH: It will be a while before this is transcribed and comes out. [00:22:00]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes. Well, I'm sure it's going to be a while before the book is published also, but whatever. So that is the book. And I must say that Matthew has been a great help in looking at the book. And I have been toying with the idea as to whether or not he should contribute or not, because as a young child he was very involved with the gallery. Ilene was by that time, you know, not really interested, and never has been really interested. Just wants everything to happen that will give me support and pleasure. She's an amazing humanitarian. I don't know anybody like her, nobody like her. Her value system, her sense of commitment to human beings. She is amazing. But she also trusts Matthew and his knowledge and his art history knowledge, and she knows that whatever happens with everything, he will be fair.

JANE MILOSCH: That's great. That's great. Well, this sort of summarizes some of the things we've talked about at our time in Philadelphia. And now, again, how you really have championed with fervor so many artists in their work to change the face of museum collections in the United States and internationally. And that is going to be the thing that carries the weight, together with your book. So, I can't wait to see this historical document. And your commitment to deep research and scholarship is really what helps people understand why things happen when they happen, where, and how. And especially even the meeting of people, as you try to piece together the provenance of works and the biographies

of the people who are connected to those objects. Those stories are exciting. I'm just thinking about what we might talk about next.

[END OF DRUTT18_2OF2_TRACK04.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay, ready? Tell me when you're ready.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, I'm alright. As I have been discussing the book, I realize that there are so many artists with whom I've had incredibly deep relationships, that it's not even possible to discuss what has occurred in the past half-century. I mean, you know, my relationship with Sharon Church, my relationship with Jill Bonovitz, my relationship with the Winokurs, my relationship with Bill Daley. You know, my relationship with so many artists in Europe.

When I think of my relationship with Georg Dobler, which led me finally to Manfred Bischoff, who did not want to have any connection with me because I was an American and he didn't approve of the American political ideology. And I had seen his work. And finally at Ornamentum—I think it was around 1989 in Pforzheim when the big Ornamentum exhibition took place—Georg Dobler introduced me to Manfred Bischoff. And we sat in the garden, and we had coffee together. And we began to talk, and he told me a story about a moment in his life in which he was in Scandinavia. And I believe he was in Sweden, and he was sitting on a bench, and it was dusk, and he was contemplating on that bench. And when he woke up, it was almost dawn, and he looked across the bench and Samuel Beckett was sitting there. I never questioned the validity of that story. [00:01:58]

But because I believed him, and because I allowed that story to enter into my consciousness, we developed an amazing friendship and relationship that continued until his death a few years ago. We spoke regularly. I never miss speaking to him on his November seventh birthday. He totally, totally adored Peter, because Peter was born in Hamburg. And so, when I was speaking to Manfred on the telephone, you know, he would then transition to Peter, and they would have long discussions about Rilke. They would talk about Celan, they would talk about Goethe. They would have deep, philosophical discussions, which I know empowered my relationship with him as far as his artistic work is concerned.

I began to show his work in America even against the cries from some of my community that said, "Oh, doesn't he have strong Nazi ties? Wasn't his father, in some way, involved with maybe Hitler Youth?" I said, "I don't know about these things. I only know that my relationship with him is critically dependent upon his work and his art. And I also know that those rumors, you know, are not rumors that I can justify. And I cannot talk about his parents because he doesn't live with his parents. And he is solely the person that I know, and the relationship that we have is very important to me." [00:04:02]

You know, I am very much involved, historically and emotionally, with what happened during the Second World War. I'm very emotionally involved with what happened with the life of Stefan Zweig. I am very emotionally involved with the atrocities that occurred. It took me decades to go to Germany. I think it was 1952 when I went to Europe for the first time. I stood in Basel at the brink of the Swiss-German border, and I did not enter Germany. That's how strongly I felt about what occurred during the Second World War and the atrocities. My husband is a refugee who lives because he was wealthy enough to escape Hitler.

Therefore, I have to allow my relationships with artists to be based on the present and not on the rumors of their past generation, their fathers, their grandfathers. You know, we all have those rumors. I mean, I know that Claus Bury's father also was very difficult with him when he married a Jewish woman. I feel sorry for those people who harbor that emotional baggage and carry it on when we are now with people who no longer have it, you know? My publisher Dirk Allgaier took Peter to Worms, where his mother was born, to see the Jewish archives and to investigate the Jewish archives. I know I'm rambling. I'm talking about Manfred Bischoff and suddenly I'm in Worms. [00:06:09]

JANE MILOSCH: And you shared that story before. And I think it's symbolic of how you could transition to the present with a complete awareness of the past, but not taking those atrocities and assigning them to someone who was never involved with those.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Or I've never met, you know. But it was Hermann Jünger who led me to Dachau, who put me on a train and said, "You must go by yourself and you must read Victor Klemperer." I mean, it was Herman who did that. And Hermann who was in the

Hitler Youth. But he talked about that.

However, my relationship with Manfred remained very strong on a very personal level, not only because of our personal and emotional friendship. I am also probably one of the major collectors of his work. And I hold that body of work together with incredible knowledge that I am also holding the history of an artist who has not yet been really discovered and recognized. Though he has had a major exhibition two years ago in Munich, there is still a great deal of work that must be done on the work of Manfred Bischoff. He had an exhibition once at the Isabella Gardner Museum. It was reviewed in the *New York Times*. I saw this half-page review, and I thought, "Well a New York gallery is going to capture him." But it never happened.

I suppose what I'm really trying to emphasize is that my relationships with artists are deep and, in many respects, go way beyond the work. Paula Winokur had a brain tumor removed December 13, 2016. I have called her almost every single day. It is now—what year am I in? 2018? [00:08:15]

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It is now January 26, 2018. She is still not well. I don't represent her work; I don't have work to sell. But I am on the phone every single day speaking to her family as she goes through this major transition. And I have an amazing correspondence with Sharon Church. You know, I have wonderful dialogues with the artists, and it's very important to me.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah. But we talked about earlier—I think since you did the interviews in 1991, and now we're in 2018, how many of the craft artists that were part of that early movement in the last five years, 10 years have passed away, especially in the last couple of months.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You mean to talk about what has happened in 2017?

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: We have lost my generation. My generation is leaving. We are, what, three score and 10? That's 70. Because of technology and health, we've been able to live to 80, 90, 100. But in the past months, a major part of the generation which was the fulcrum of our movement has died. You know, beginning with the curator James Jensen in April. One of the great curators—the chief curator of the Honolulu Academy of Art, which is now the Honolulu Museum of Art—who really connected Hawaii and the mainland together, who connected the international world. It was Jay Jensen, it was Jim Jensen—had the most extraordinary encyclopedic memory. If any of us couldn't remember anything about any aspect of the history of art, we would say, "Call Jay. [Laughs.] He'll tell us." So, Jay died last spring. [00:10:28]

Elisabeth J. Gu. Defner, the great Viennese metalsmith, died last April. Barbara Cartlidge from Electrum Gallery died during the summer, and Ralph Turner died. And then Ron Ho, our great northwestern metalsmith, died in September. Peter Chang died in October. Marjorie Schick died December 17th. Jo Jünger, the widow of Hermann Jünger, died this year. Betty Woodman died in January. And then just last week, Wendell Castle died, I think, on the 20th of January. And in the midst of this, the great architect Hugh Hardy—a wonderful, wonderful charismatic, architectural genius who built theaters and who understood life—died this year. And then followed by the untimely death of his wife Tiziana Hardy.

So, it has been a really difficult year, 2017 verging into 2018. But this is our cycle. It's not to be unanticipated. This is the cycle of life, and that cycle that centered around *Objects: USA* [laughs] and all the energy 50 years ago is beginning to move on. And what is next? [00:12:06]

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I wonder what's next. What do you think? Do you want to talk about—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: I don't know what is next. I think what is next is that we have to be empowered with great critical eyes. We have to really wander through all the studios and to find out: What is the next *Objects: USA*? You know, what is this generation that is emerging or in its fulfillment? Where are they going? What are they doing? You know? Recently, I was in the studios of Michael Hurwitz and Thomas Hucker, and I was so excited to

see what they were doing. You know, I was so pleased to see that here were two major woodworkers really moving forth.

JANE MILOSCH: And still making furniture.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes.

JANE MILOSCH: I mean, that is the one medium. We were in Philadelphia, and we met someone who made a beautiful table for you, and he said, "What about the studio craft?"

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: No. He said, "What happened to the craft movement?"

JANE MILOSCH: Yes.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He came in, it was John Kennedy.

JANE MILOSCH: Thank you.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: He walked in—

JANE MILOSCH: But it sort of summarized—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: —and he said to me—he was a student of mine and he came in while we were there. And he said, "So tell me, what happened to the craft movement?" [Laughs.]

JANE MILOSCH: But at least you were at Hucker and Hurwitz's studio, and you could see they're still making and selling.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Yes, right. Right. Absolutely. Thomas Hucker made a cane for me in December, and he delivered it while I was in this transition of not being able to walk. I was using it steadily, and I finally put it away back into the umbrella stand because I told him that after two weeks, it was beginning to look like a family heirloom.

[They laugh.]

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Because I was tripping and banging with it. Right, but this is something that really has been weighing on my mind. I asked the American Crafts Council if they would address this during their next meeting. Because I think it's important to do that. [00:14:14]

JANE MILOSCH: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, would you want to talk about another project that you're working on with the Philadelphia Museum of Art plan for 2020? Because you talked about your collection of Manfred Bischoff, and I saw so many beautiful pieces in Philadelphia and here. What's planned for your—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, nothing is really planned. There is a conception in the air. Nothing is definitely planned. Timothy Rub, who is the director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, came to see me—I think it's a little more than a year ago—to talk to me about the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and to talk to me about what makes the Philadelphia Museum of Art special. And one of the things that he said that makes Philadelphia special is that the museum is really a collective of Philadelphia collections, which is very different from many other museums throughout the world. If you look at Philadelphia, you see the Johnson collection. Then you see the Stella Kramrisch collection of Indian art. And then you see the Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz collection of outsider and folk art. And then you see the Keith and Kathy Sachs collection of contemporary art with Howard Hodgkin and Ellsworth Kelly. [00:15:56]

So what you really see is a conglomeration of major, major collections all centering from Philadelphia collections, like even the McIlhenny collection. So that there is this great concentration in the museum that addresses itself to the collections in the Philadelphia area that have enriched the cultural life of the city, and as a result have entered into the Philadelphia Museum of Art. And as he looked at this, he said he realized that there has been a hole. And one of the holes is that they haven't really addressed the contemporary craft movement. And he came to discuss that with me and to see if I would consider talking to them about possibly having an exhibition center around the artists that I've championed, drawn from the sources of my house.

So we're in discussion about that. I'm not sure whether I have reservations or not. I do not want it to be a Helen Drutt exhibition. If it does occur, I want it to be about the artists, and I certainly don't want to see a pot on a pedestal. And I'm very strong about that. I have certain sensibilities that would have to be addressed, but this is a project that he is extremely interested in. And I have named the project *Project 2020*. That is my name, and I gave it. I gave it the name of *Project 2020*. [00:17:48]

So in the past five or six months, I've been going through the house and the objects in the house, trying to decide, you know, which objects, in some way, if exhibited, would enhance the artistic presence of artists. And they have given me—right there, I have these books that I'm studying, which has the complete list of their entire collection. So that I can look and see where their voids are and whether objects within my own environment, in any way, can fill in those voids, or not fill in those voids, or complement the voids. So it's an interesting project.

JANE MILOSCH: Yeah, because how could you ever transport the amazing ceiling or the—

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: It can be done.

JANE MILOSCH: —Paula Winokur? It will be a challenge, but I mean, they do it with period rooms. The Whistler Peacock Room was moved from London.

[Phone rings.]

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay. Alright.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright.

JANE MILOSCH: Helen, as we wrap up our interview today, I'm just really struck by how much you continue to accomplish since the last interview until now. And I look forward to when the next interview will take place, together with the book that will come out and *Project 2020*. As we wrap up, is there anything else you want to leave us with to think about in regards to the importance of the artist, the work, the friendships, the meaning of it all, you know? Why you pursued this for your life? You've poured so much of your life into it, and you've shared it so beautifully with many people. And as you look forward or look back, do you have any insights you would like to share with people who also have similar passions? Because it's been inspiring for me to hear your story.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Well, I'm not really quite sure how to answer that except that I did not select to have the life that I have. I think that I'm extremely fortunate in the sense that I was able to—[00:20:07]

JANE MILOSCH: Oh, hold on. It's not recording—wait. I'm sorry, go ahead.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: Alright. Obviously, nobody has the opportunity to select the life that they have. I was extremely fortunate in the sense that I was very much involved with the embryonic beginning of the craft movement, that I was part of that generation that was subjected to the rising of independent studios and the resurgence of handcraft. I was extremely fortunate in the sense that I could develop friendships and relationships with the individuals that had not only something to do with their work but also because we became friends as human beings. And that we developed family relationships with each other's children, with their grandchildren. And that we cared not only about the work, but we deeply cared about each other.

I can remember when Peter Dormer was dying of cancer, and he was in the midst of receiving chemotherapy. I flew to London for one day, and he gave a lecture to me about the design of the vial that was attached to his body. But flying to London for one day had nothing to do with my career or his career. It had to do with the kind of energy our friendship had developed. And in that sense, I feel extremely lucky. [00:22:01]

I think if *Project 2020* becomes what I hope it will become—Timothy Rub said to me, "Well, what do you want it to achieve?" I said, "I want somebody to walk into the gallery and say, "Wow." I want them to realize that these works, and the individuals who were the source for creating these works, have the integrity and have the historical—

[Audio break.]

JANE MILOSCH: Okay.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: And that they are an important part of the history of ideas and the history of art in the 20th and the 21st century. And that they are just as important as artists who do video, conceptual art, painting, sculpture, architecture, whatever. That there is no separation. That one creates, and if one's creation is worthy, it has a validity, and it should not be denied. I want somebody to say, "Wow." That's why I don't want a pot on a pedestal. I would like to see a fusion of ideas collectively coming together.

What do I want for my future? I would like to be able to continue working. I would like to be able to continue documenting ideas. I would like to continue visiting artists in their studios, and sitting with them, and smelling the glue or smelling the clay. I would like to be there when a kiln is opened. I love the idea that Ted Hallman will call me periodically to tell me how he's restoring a piece that he created in 1967, and that on the telephone, I'm right there with him. These are the things that are important to me, and these are the values that have made my life as rich as it has been. [00:24:05]

And I would like to continue having guests coming in and out, never knowing whether there's an architect, or a poet, or a painter, or a potter sleeping on the floors. We've changed the sheets three times this week in the apartment [laughs] and we were laughing. Three times we've changed the sheets in the sofa bed in the apartment. I would like that to be a continuous part of my life. And I love the idea that it has not stopped. It has not really stopped. And I'm looking forward to the spring, you know, when the emergence of the Poetry Award continues. And also, the idea that the H. Peter Stern Lecture will take place in February and will address his interest and passion in world monuments and in civilization.

So, this is what I really want. I would like, hopefully, to have another interview in 15 years, but that may not be possible because I don't exercise. [Laughs.] However, I would just like my life to continue the way it is. I have no great expectations. I just want it to be stabilized and comfortable. I would like Peter not to have pain, and to be able to live his days listening to poetry, listening to music. And I'm not hoping to have any kind of embarrassment of riches.

JANE MILOSCH: Well, I just want to say thank you for sharing all of these stories. For me, it's been a real honor to hear these stories. Because, basically, you're constantly celebrating friendships alongside the great art, and how that has enriched your life and has enriched so many people's lives and continues to do so. And how you are determined that this memory not go away, that things be commemorated and written down and shared because that's the only way you'll inspire greatness in the future. [00:26:29]

And I've found it so inspiring. So personally, I thank you, for also your hospitality, which has also been a big part of this interview, as well as your cultural ambassador work for the United States. For me, I saw you brought part of the country's—I've spent a lot of my life here in the US very early on. And you took American artists there, and you continue to do that. And you never stay in one genre of art. You move between poetry, and music, and food, and life. I think that there will be another interview because you just don't slow down. And I'm sure for a lot of people there will be a lot to read when those books and that project come out. So, thank you so much.

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: You're welcome.

[END OF DRUTT18_20F2_TRACK05.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

Addendum written by Helen W. Drutt English on October 27, 2021

On September 5, 2021, I received an email from Timothy Rub, director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, saying that *Project 2020* was dissolved. This was four years after I received the letter, dated January 2017, stating that the PMA wanted to organize an exhibition centered around my craft collection and to research a gift/acquisition plan that would culminate in an exhibition. This cancelation occurred after countless months of work and research documenting essential works in my collection had transpired. One week earlier, in late August 2021, Rub had been waiting for curator Elisabeth Agro to present him with an

adjusted list, which was always delayed. From the beginning she was not the appropriate curator. She chose to select from a personal perspective rather than consider the objects' historical connection, which was essential to an aspect of the craft history of Philadelphia reflected in my collection.

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This interview ends shortly before Peter's death on November 12, 2018, during the Breon O'Casey exhibition at the American Irish Historical Society in New York—an exhibition whose contents were offered to the PMA but "turned down" by Elisabeth Agro. She informed Timothy Rub that it was not necessary to have an expanded body of O'Casey's work at the PMA—and she never came to see the exhibition. But Philadelphia was a center for O'Casey's patronage in the United States. From our initial meeting in 1981, Breon and I established a professional as well as deeply personal relationship. Anne d'Harnoncourt, Ann Percy, and Stella Kramrisch were among his devoted collectors.

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After Peter's entrance into eternity in 2018, I concentrated on organizing his archives that were not related to Storm King. In the summer of 2019, I began to reorganize and restructure my library, removing an old bathroom from 1874 to create in 2020 a catalogue library adjoining the monograph library. Plans to donate my library to the Charles Library at Temple University in Philadelphia upon my death were executed. In the interim, I have gifted all "doubles" to the Charles Library, as well as the papers and correspondence of Maurice English, who was the first director of the Temple University Press.

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It is difficult for me not to be engaged with my friends and colleagues. Countless phone calls, emails, and postcards (reminiscent of the Surrealists) are shared internationally on a daily basis. By chance I met sculptor Charles LeDray at The Metropolitan Museum of Art during a ceramic conference in late December 2018 (my first public venture since Peter's death), and we became instant friends and developed an epistolary relationship, which continues to this very day. Our postcard correspondence will be a wonderful addition to the Archives, as will the unique cards of Gerd Rothmann.

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During my trip to India with my son, Matthew Drutt, in January 2020 (just before the pandemic took hold in February and March), I met Henry Noltie, a well-known botanist from Edinburgh and coincidentally a close friend of Ruby Palchoudhuri, our host and a great scholar of Indian crafts who has been central to my life since 1986 when she resided at my Philadelphia home. By chance, Henry Noltie is close friends with Dr. Dora Thornton—though I had met Dora at Wendy Ramshaw's eulogy at Goldsmiths' Hall in December 2019, another amazing coincidence which led to my renewed involvement with Goldsmiths' Hall.

In 2020–21 I facilitated works by Eleanor Moty and Marjorie Schick to Goldsmiths' Hall in London. In April 2021 I was informed by Sir David Reddaway that I was appointed an Associate of the Goldsmiths' Company. I'm certain that Dora Thornton, curator of the Goldsmiths' Company Collection, whispered in his ear—this amazing connection occurred.

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In May 2020 the SNAG conference was to convene in Philadelphia, and I conceived a ring exhibition drawn from my holdings; private loans from artists were added to enrich the exhibition. Because of COVID-19, however, the 2020 exhibition was canceled; it was physically installed a year later at Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, *but presented virtually* to the public. Within the past months, two invitations to travel the exhibition have been received and accepted: *RINGS!* will be exhibited at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft from January 2 to March 12, 2022, and at the Metal Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, from March 27 to June 12, 2022. A potential European venue is "in the wings."

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Thom Collins, the director of The Barnes Foundation, met with my children, Ilene Weiss and Matthew Drutt, and suggested that the Barnes host my 90th birthday celebration on

November 19, 2020, via Zoom. (I was the second-oldest alumni.) It was an extraordinary program that brought together poets, friends, colleagues, and family, an amazing gift shared by an international world. Breakfast that morning began with another Zoom meeting with personal greetings from everywhere, all organized by Elizabeth Essner, Bella Neyman, and Barbara Gifford. How fortunate I am!

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Throughout the pandemic, in addition to maintaining continuous contact with curators, I was able to facilitate gifts from America to international institutions—primarily the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, where works by Marjorie Schick, Ted Hallman, Lewis Knauss, Debra Rapoport, and Risë Nagin entered the permanent collection. I consider it vital to place American crafts internationally, and I executed all these gifts during COVID while working from my home library.

I am curating an exhibition of American crafts for the Nationalmuseum of Sweden in Stockholm, rescheduled to February 2023. An accompanying catalogue will be published and the works will become part of the Nationalmuseum's permanent collection. This project was inspired by The State Hermitage exhibition *Gifts from America*, which opened in December 2014 and is still on view in 2021!

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Though COVID has altered schedules, the lack of travel and fewer distractions have created a forum for work. American poet Susan Stewart will read at The Rosenbach Foundation in 2022 (2021 was canceled) under the auspices of the Maurice English Poetry Award, which began following Maurice English's death in November 1983. The H. Peter Stern Lecture under the auspices of the World Monuments Fund will be rescheduled in the near future.

New projects do not cease. In November 2021, I will install a collection of bracelets for the Museum of Art and Design for New York City Jewelry Week. Work on my book continues slowly but surely. It will include a history of my gallery and a select chronology of the craft movement from 1960 to the present documenting the lives and deaths of the associated artists; hopefully it will be published in my 91st year. The Pinakothek der Moderne has invited me to deliver their annual lecture in Munich in March 2022—and so it continues. My commitment to my field is never-ending.