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Oral history interview with Corrado Parducci, 1975 Mar. 17

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Corrado Parducci on March 17, 1975. The interview took place in the artist's studio and was conducted by Dennis Barrie for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

[Tape 1, side A]

DENNIS BARRIE: Today is March 17th, 1975, and I am here in the studio of Corrado Parducci, who has been and is an architectural sculptor. My name is Dennis Barrie and this is the first tape we are doing about Mr. Parducci's life and career. I call you. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Joe is. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Joe, okay. Dennis, for the taping.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: Joe, I'd like to start off with just talking about your background. I mean exactly where were you born and what type of family were you born into?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I was born in a small town near Pisa.

DENNIS BARRIE: Italy.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh, about ten miles east of Pisa. A mountain village there. Buti is the name it, village. And I had a very strange beginning. We were a large family: thirteen children. And I was about the middle, about the fifth or sixth child. But my father left the family in Italy and took me—I was four years old at the time—took me along. I might have been a problem child for all I know.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But, yeah, he took me along and when he got here to New York, he couldn't take care of me, so he put me in a Catholic asylum or an institution. And there I forgot my language, I forgot my mother and brothers and sisters. I was there about 18 months. And one day my dad finally brought the family over. I had to be reintroduced to these foreigners. And it didn't take me very long to learn the, you know, to communicate with my parents. Well, I lived on MacDougall Street.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's MacDougall and the corner of Manetta Lane. Are you familiar with that?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I'm familiar with that.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It's a tenament right on the corner. I had lived in other places before that, but that's where one, we lived there the longest. And it was right, just a half a block away from Eugene O'Neill's theater group. You know, just half a block north of Third Avenue, there's an elevator there?

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And that was my playground, that and Washington Square, and also MacDougall Alley, where all the sculptors and all the great, you know, Saint-Gaudens and [Daniel Chester—Ed.] French, you know, that generation are all in that area.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you see these people? Like you mentioned Saint-Gaudens and _____ French?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, at the time, of course, I didn't recognize their stature; you know, I was a child. But there was a Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney at that time that was very much interested in the slum children, and she inquired at the school and got the names of a dozen or so boys that had showed aptitude in the arts. And she came over to the house and asked my parents if they would not permit me to attend a class at the settlement house on MacDougall Street. A class was formed and there was sculptor, very able sculptor, by the name of Albin Polasek. Did you ever hear that. . . ?

DENNIS BARRIE: Polasek.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: He had just come back from the Academy in Rome, and he took charge of the class there.

DENNIS BARRIE: How old were you?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I must have been about eight or nine.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see. Very early.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Let's see. The only way I can figure is I was in the fifth grade.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And Polasek took a liking to me. He invited me up to his studio and they got me interested in his work and his manner, besides being in his class. At the time he was working on a large portrait of J.P. Morgan. I recall that. Well, of course I grew up, and in about 1915. . . . I continued classes.

DENNIS BARRIE: At the settlement there?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh yes. First for a couple of years there, and then the class moved in the basement of a public school, which was taught by a man by the name of [St. John Hissing]. And then from that, when I was about 15, I graduated from elementary school, and the same group that was interested in me persuaded me to continue my art interests, you know, with a sort of a scholarship.

DENNIS BARRIE: Who was this group that was interested?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, [I doubt if I knew; Or a name?: Eye-del-co-new] was the settlement worker who was working for the group, but Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, I had enough evidence to know that she was in back of it. She established a club there on Fourth Street, between MacDougall and Sixth Avenue. I became a member of that club. And I was—I forgot what they call it; it was the forerunner of the Modern Art Museum.

DENNIS BARRIE: Museum of Modern Art? Oh really?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. There was a forerunner, before that, see. But that was Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney too. Well, I didn't continue with that scholarship very long. My parents needed my assistance, so I got a job where I earned more money than the scholarship gave me.

DENNIS BARRIE: What was the scholarship to?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, any school of my own selection. I chose the Vocational School for Boys, which had a sculpture class, and it had an instructor by the name of Yurick, so I had regular high school courses besides the sculpture sessions. And I quit there and I got a job in a factory that manufactured flowers. In the meantime I got this settlement worker to try to find me a job working for some architectural firm. At the time I had been reading about della Robbias and all—applied art.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: My friends were all—I was the youngest in the group—they all were working for different sculptors and they were like janitors. They'd run errands and _____. They didn't do, they didn't progress very much, and these sculptors were actually exploiting these boys. And I didn't want any of that. In fact, I was offered a job to work for Karl Bitter, and I turned it down.

DENNIS BARRIE: Because it was in the same sort of thing?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. He wanted a janitor. Sculptors financially could never afford very much. Karl Bitter at that time had a studio in Weehauken. That's across from 42nd Street. His studio was cantilevered out over the Palisades. And that's where, I would have to live there, you see. And that was one of the reasons why I also turned it down. And he died shortly after that. He and his wife were run over by a taxicab on Broadway.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That was about 1915. And also Adolf Weinman. I could have had work with him. I didn't want to. And I met Adolf Weinman later on where we did work on the same building, a different part, different sculpture for the same architect. But these people finally found a job for me working for Donnelly and [Richie, Ricci]. Now I don't know whether you've heard of Donnelly and Richie.

DENNIS BARRIE: No, not to my. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: They were a firm. They employed about fifteen artisans. They were from casters to sculptors, ornamentalists. They also did carving. At the time I started to work there as an office boy, they were carving the large group over at Grand Central Station, you know, that particular _____ over there.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And they carved. . . . Oh, that granite work! They had an enormous studio and an enormous business. And they had different departments; they had the sculptors and. . . . And that's where I really got my first training, because I was in charge of the blueprints, and all these sculptors and all these ornamentalists would call on me to furnish them ther the drawings they needed to proceed to do work. And I was able to listen in on these architects that came in to inspect the work—the most renowned architects in the country. You know, Carrere & Hastings and Warren & Wetmore, McKim, Mead & White, and Cass Gilbert. Every day there was so much going on, and there I was, you know, a youngster listening. (chuckles) And at the same time, when I wasn't busy running, you know, serving these people, I was permitted to copy models. You know, models from different fragments that were around. So I modeled there.

DENNIS BARRIE: In clay?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: In clay. Well, the firm there broke up. There was a DiLorenzo in the firm and there was a Ulysses Richie. The owner of the. . . . Richie's uncle was one of the partners; it was Donnelly and Richie. But Ulysses Richie. . . . They palm off all the figures [statues—Ed.]. He had like an annex studio, and his uncle would subcontract to him the statues that the firm had contracted for.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh, to Ulysses Richie?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, Ulysses Richie.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see. All right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: So while he was working independently, but the work was commissioned to him by the firm.

DENNIS BARRIE: Of Donnelly and Richie?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Of Donnelly and Richie. Well, after about a year—I became an apprentice there after the first few months of being an office boy, I became an apprentice—and then there was an upheaval in the firm. The artists that Richie had brought over—he was a terra cotta man to begin with, and when Donnelly needed talent he established connections with Richie's uncle, and that's when the firm started Donnelly and Richie. But Donnelly was primarily a stone contractor and a carver.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And he needed a modeler and a sculptor. So this group from Perth Amboy [New Jersey—Ed.] were all moved over to Manhattan to work for the firm of Donnelly and Richie. Well after I was there about a year, it was discovered that Richie's uncle had been receiving money from these men that he'd brought over, above what the corporation paid him.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And Donnelly discovered that, see, and threw him out of the—it was a criminal offense to begin with; it was a crime against the corporation—so Richie was thrown out of Donnelly and Richie, and the nephew of course moved out. I saw the opportunity then and I moved with them, because he offered me a better opportunity of developing. So I. . . . He started his studio on Lexington Avenue, right across from the Metropolitan Tower, you know, the insurance company.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It was a studio that was formerly occupied by Paul Manship.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh really?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Paul Manship had just moved out and Richie moved in.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And I was Richie's only employee for about eight months.

DENNIS BARRIE: Now, what did you do as an apprentice to. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: To Richie?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, the only job he had during those eight months was large allegorical panels for the Ellerton Rotunda. He had modeled them, and I worked—most of the time I was alone in the place—he had made small models, you know, sketches, and I glued them up and I worked with [him, them] you know. The work was never installed at the time because the war came on then, and the work was warehoused, and after the war it was finally carved and installed in the Ellerton Rotunda. What do they call it? Rotunda is it?

DENNIS BARRIE: Rotunda, yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. Well, Richie—that's Ulysses Richie—he got a lot of ornamental work besides sculpture, so he got his old pal DiLorenzo to go in with him to do that part of the work. So I became an employee of Richie and DiLorenzo.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And then later on they got Aldolino. Aldolino was a stone carver. He's the one that had the contract for all the Goodyear's work, you know; he did the reredos of the St. Thomas Cathedral there. You know, you're familiar with that wonderful work.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, that firm became Richie and DiLorenzo and Aldolino. And later on they got the uncle, so there were two Richies there, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles) I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And then later on, they broke up again. Richie left the DiLorenzo. Richie, Senior, also left. And they had a man by the name of [Zowery]; he left. And Ulysses Richie opened up a separate studio. I didn't go with him. I remained with DiLorenzo because DiLorenzo was an ornamentalist and I was more interested in the sculpture. So I had the opportunity of doing all the figure work in DiLorenzo's contract.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: While Richie, he did sculpture. . . . York and [Soile, Sawyer]—you know, [York and Soile de al]—they gave him a lot. They had the Bowery Bank and they did a lot of very fine work. And DiLorenzo also had fine work. I got to know Kahn _____ at the time. You know, Kahn used to come at least once a month to New York, you know, Albert Kahn?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And he got interested in me and he started to give Lorenzo contracts providing that I should do it. So work that was indirectly for Albert Kahn through DiLorenzo.

DENNIS BARRIE: All right. Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And other [artists; artisans] did the same thing. So I got so that—DiLorenzo paid me a flat salary a week and I did work on contract—at the end of the year, I had a surplus coming to me, because the contracts were over and above my weekly wage. So even as a youngster, I was the most highly paid sculptor in New York City.

DENNIS BARRIE: What types of things were you doing there at DiLorenzo's?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, almost anything you could think of. You know, architectural decoration always had some figure work, ornamental work. The last work I did for them before I came here were the two banks on Griswold, across the street where the old city hall was, the [Debra Dierra]. Romanesque bank that they ruined with that addition up above. And there's a corner bank, which is the sort of classic, you know; it's sort of Roman.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I know _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But the two buildings were built at the same time. They were designed at the same time,

and they went up at the same time. But that was just about the time, just before I came to Detroit. In fact Albert Kahn, the carving on the corner building—up above you see those figure patterns and all that—it was carved during the wintertime, and they had it enclosed with canvas. And Albert Kahn didn't want to climb the scaffold to inspect the work, so he had me do that for him. (laughs) And I couldn't do it very well because I couldn't get away for more than three feet. The scaffolds was right up against. . . . A fellow, a carver by the name of Bertie, carved this work—there's quite a _____ up above—from plaster models that [I'd, I'd had] made in New York. And you can't judge anything when you're up against it.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But that was during the middle of the winter. I remember at the time it was very, very cold, and so that was that.

DENNIS BARRIE: Before we get on to what happened in Detroit, will you back up just a minute and. . . . During this period, when you were at Donnelly and Richie, did you also go to the Beaux-Arts School for a while?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh yes! Yeah, yeah, yes. I started to go to Beaux-Arts in about 1916, and I continued there until I came here. I was there about seven years. But during that time, I divided my courses with Art Students League. There was George Bridgeman there. I was in his class for three semesters, you know, drawing. I thought at the time that drawing was very important, and you didn't get that at the Beaux-Arts. They had sketch classes, but they did have any anatomist teaching, anatomy, you know, like George Bridgeman. So I divided, I attended both places, see. I went a couple of times a week at the Art Students League and the rest of the time at the Beaux-Arts. At the Beaux-Arts, they had classes both in sculpture and in ornament. And on the second floor there was a class which was taught by invited instructors. Every month you had a different instructor. That was the case also in the sculpture class. They had all these instructors. They didn't actually instruct; they had. . . . You did things very much your own way, but if you wanted any suggestions you'd ask the invited artist. And I think we learned more from each other, because there were students of every age, up to the age of sixty. They were, they used the place as a studio, the artists there. That was an open-house affair.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see. Were most of the people, were they working like yourself with firms?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I worked in the daytime, and then go there at night. And on Sundays, once in a while, I'd hire a model to get the benefit of the daylight, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: A few of us would get together and pay for the model, which wasn't furnished by the school. But Beaux-Arts was entirely free of any academic instruction, and there wasn't any fee to it. Lloyd Warren was the benefactor of the school. You know, he created the school, and he was there almost every evening, giving advice to students. I had a lot of conferences with him. And he'd have a. . . . For instance, on Mondays he'd bring some flowers—roses or fresh flowers—and he had an artist by the name of Chamberlain, Toles Chamberlain [an artist who had studied at American Academy at Rome—Ed.], and a very fine artist, and he instructed us on the anatomy of a flower, you know. Most people wouldn't think that a flower has anatomy, but it does have.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Leaves grow in certain way, and flowers form. So I got a lot of that from that class. And through Chamberlain I met Solon Borglum. Solon Borglum and Chamberlain were very good friends, so we used to meet at Borglum's studio—it was on Sixth Avenue at that time—on Saturday afternoons and we used to discuss Nietzsche, you know, Friedrich Nietzsche, and all kinds of. . . . Schopenhauer and all of that kind of stuff. But [we didn't get into; we did get into] Omar Khayyam's philosophy; that was very instructive. Solon Borglum was a wonderful individual.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: So different from his brother, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: Gutzon, yeah. Where do you you think you picked up most of your skill? Was it actually as being an apprentice, or was it being at these schools and [dealing, being] with people like Chamberlain?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I think most of my skill became from starting very young. When you're very young, you're like a blotter; you absorb things. And when I was still in my early twenties, instead of being a student, I was a dean in my profession. (chuckles)

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Due to the fact that I started as a child, you see, rather than starting after you've graduate school.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see. What was the thrust of people you knew, like Chamberlain and so forth? Were they basically interested in ornamental sculpture or were they. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, no. Solon Borglum was, he did, you know, you're familiar with Frederic Remington, that type of sculpture.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: He did horses and cowboys and that sort of thing. And Chamberlain, his paintings were, he did a lot of beautiful screens with all kind of fantastic decorations on them. But at the time, we were a group that started at that settlement house, continued to see each other. There was a fellow by the name of Benjamin Buffano. I don't know whether you ever heard of him.

DENNIS BARRIE: No.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: He was, in recent years, he had a—I don't know whether he's still alive now—he was connected with the Art Institute in San Francisco. I don't know whether he was the curator, or what he was, but he was a sort of a free soul that had fantastic ideas. And we were a group; we used to meet every Sunday night at the Metropolitan Museum. It was like going to church on Sunday, you see. We did that all year round. And there, I recall, we used to meet. . . . Manship used to go there also. He'd be alone, but we'd run into him, and he stopped and chatted with us. But there was that kind of environment that kept my interest in what was being done, what was going on. Well, when I came here. . . . I only came to Detroit for two months.

DENNIS BARRIE: Wait. Could I ask one more thing.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: I'm sorry; I hate to go back, but. . . . When we talked earlier, you said that your generation, this group or this generation, was trained in a certain style of architectural sculpture, as opposed to the generation before.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes, yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: What was your style, particularly, and what was that older style?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, of course there was actually no style. It was a revival or resurrection of a number of styles. We worked in the Greek, in the Roman, in the Romanesque, in the early Renaissance, late Renaissance. Very little of the French, but we did do work in the English Revival of the seventeenth century, and also in the Adams, the later Georgian. And all these styles were at our fingertips, which is very unique. I mean, it was a unique experience. So when you. . . . That revival, that resurrection, occurred near the turn of the century, several generations before I came along, and it took continuous development. The people I was working for were the pupils of the previous generation and they. . . . You know, Stanford White started something you know when he. . . . You know, before there was Richardson Romanesque. You know those?

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And Stanford White came up with the Greek and the Roman and, you know, he [built; rebuilt] the Madison Square Garden. You remember the old, with the terra cotta? All that terra cotta work was all done by the Richies at Perth Amboy.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And they were actually the pupils of Stanford White! Because he brought photographs, and he wanted a literal interpretation of the photographs, and that was almost like going to school, for that generation. And of course the younger people learned from. . . . You know, it progressed from that, and it took several generations. Now, I happened to be the last of that group, because I was about ten years younger than my peers—that's in the early twenties. There weren't any apprentices any longer. There was one apprentice, I know of, that came after me. He's dead now. Abbrizzio, Herbert Abbrizzio. In fact, I was instrumental in getting him the job. And he died a couple years ago. But I actually was the last one, and after myself, there wasn't very much. There was, you know, in 1929, there was a Depression, and then there was very little built there then.

DENNIS BARRIE: True.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And some of the old designers were still alive, were still doing some work, but it was

always diminishing. And then the war came along, when there was absolutely nothing. And, you know, when twenty or thirty years go by without any apprenticeships, it becomes a lost art.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. Right, very much so. Was it a really tight community? Like you say you went on Saturday nights to the Metropolitan and saw Paul Manship from the _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: Was there a lot of interaction between everybody, a lot of, between the. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, not outside of our own interest in what we were doing.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It was a very vital interest. I can't imagine anybody today being as vitally interested as we were at that time. But we had, there was a criteria then which isn't in existence today. Today, everyone wants to create something new. So, at that time we had something. There was something that already had been developed. We were just carrying on.

DENNIS BARRIE: Carrying it on, yes, as part of the tradition.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: We had a base. I don't see any base today.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, it's very different.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You see, there isn't a base. And I believe each generation tries to account for itself by refuting its elders. That's what causes the cycle really. The present generation is on its own; it has nothing to do with the past. And the next generation will want that prerogative.

DENNIS BARRIE: Were most of the people involved Italian-American?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: At that time?

DENNIS BARRIE: It sounds like it with all the names.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: There were a lot of Germans.

DENNIS BARRIE: Germans?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh yeah. On the library there's a fellow by the name of Oswald Hoffner. He was a German and he did—he was a very able artist—he did all those large [hodia], the signs of the Zodiacs up on the main frieze, and he did the work on the Scott Fountain in Belle Isle. He was a very skillful artist. And the [bronto-stars] on the library were made by a different sculptor, Grendellus, a fellow by the name of Grendellus. He also did the flagpoles at the New York Public Library, you know, those beautiful [pair of poles].

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's Grendellus. But he worked in Donnelly and Richie at the time. And he also worked with Manconi. It was another studio that did architectural work. But architectural work is so different from easel work, or the work that was done in MacDougall Alley—they were all statues for public squares.

DENNIS BARRIE: Why is it so different?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, it's applied work. You have to have an understanding of scale, and you have to have understanding of the style, and of the period. You know.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You can't make a Greek figure on a Gothic building, or vice versa.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And it's a specialized sort of work. The average sculptor that tried—even Daniel Chester French. I got in my scrapbook somewhere something that Daniel Chester French had to do on an architectural building. It was simply amateurish. But when he made a complete piece of sculpture in the [soap] without application that was his field.

DENNIS BARRIE: How did you gain the knack or ability? Was it just year upon year of training? That you could see

what was right for let's say a Gothic building, you could see what was right?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, first of all, I studied the styles at the Beaux-Arts, and then when I came to Detroit. . . . I came here only to stay. . . .

[Tape 1, side 2]

DENNIS BARRIE: . . . to see what it was like?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, first of all I studied the styles at the Beaux-Arts, and then when I came to Detroit I came here only to stay for a couple of months. DiLorenzo had a job here, and the architects insisted that I come out here and do the job. And while I was here, George D. Mason and Donaldson and Meier and Smith, Hinchman & Grylls and Albert Kahn just showered me with work and I couldn't get away. I couldn't get away, and it kept up and kept up and I finally called my wife. I said, "You'll have to come here; I haven't even got time to come to pick you up." And I stayed here. I had a studio on Congress Street, not too far away from the Marquette Building, which is only two blocks away. And I used to Albert Kahn visit me once or twice a week. He'd, you know, I always had work for him.

DENNIS BARRIE: Now, were the. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Smith, Hinchman & Grylls were in that building too.

DENNIS BARRIE: When you came to Detroit you were under the employ of DiLorenzo.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. The first eight months.

DENNIS BARRIE: First eight months.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I was sort of an associate. We had a business arrangement. But work came to me, not to him. And I made short work of that association.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: So my file here shows the work I did under his name, and that was 1924. And in the middle of 1925, I was on my own. I gave him $5,000 for anything, for any interest he might have had in the work I was doing, and we called it quits.

DENNIS BARRIE: What was the architectural sculpture scene like in Detroit? I mean, there must have been people in Detroit doing it, doing architectural sculpture.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, there were. Let's see. There were two or three other firms. There was Bill Gehrke. He had the contract for the exterior of the Masonic Temple, and he had a man working for him that did that work. And there was Sieloff. Sieloff, he was a contractor and he did mostly wood carving and once in a while he did modeling. And when I came here, why he would have his carver work from my models. There was Jungwirth. Jungwirth was also a woodcarving contractor. He had a farmhouse on Larned. He was old. When I came here, he must have been close to ninety years old. He had been here many years. His son is teaching or has been teaching up at Michigan State [University—Ed.] in sculpture.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm, yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You know of him?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I know the name.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. And his name is Leonard, Leonard Jungwirth. In fact, his father wanted me to put him on as an apprentice when I was on Congress Street. And there was Detroit Decorator Supply Company. They had a place on 14th Street, and they employed some modelers and sculptors. It was Beaver Edwards was the ____.

DENNIS BARRIE: Beaver Edwards?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Beaver Edwards was their apprentice. That's about all. There were other places, but they didn't last very long. They always seemed to come to me at the exclusion of these other places. For instance, any work that was for Carrier Plasterwork, I would make the models and then Detroit Decorators Supply Company would duplicate them. Now all the interior of the Masonic Temple. . . . I better talk about that to you because that's kind of interesting. There are about a dozen large rooms, very large, you know, lodges, and every one is a different style. There's a Greek and there's a. . . . The ballroom is Renaissance, and there's a cathedral

in there which is Gothic, and then there's some Tudor rooms, there's an Egyptian room, and there's the Doric room, [Masonic, Ionic] room. Now all these rooms are in the character and style of a particular period! And I had them all on my fingertips.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The auditorium has no identity. The auditorium, you know, the shape of it doesn't suggest anything. But the work has a little bit of the Greek in it.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I tried to give it a, you know, simplify some of the. . . . There's nothing too, that screams too much in the room. I remember Mr. Mason was very disappointed that I was doing the work, and he wanted it Gothic. I said, "How can you have Gothic in a room like this? It's just like a drum! There's nothing suggestive of Gothic."

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: So some of the, a few of the details I put little lumps on it, to make it. But I pretty well had control of the work. I had responsibility of all this work. It was a tremendous job at the time. In today's equalization, it would be the equivalent. . . . Well, you figure, I had about $80,000 worth of work, and today it's about seven times, seven or eight times that much.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right. Just an amazing amount of [time].

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. So besides doing that work, I had other work on the boards, you see. My day was about 18 hours long. I remember a couple of years where I had dinner at home only twice during the year.

DENNIS BARRIE: This is the twenties, now, when there were a lot of. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: In the twenties, yeah, in the twenties.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Even at the time when I was working on the Meadowbrook Hall, I had other work on hand.

DENNIS BARRIE: How many jobs did you do at once, let's say?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I could best tell you by referring to my worksheets. But just like a musician who has to get the key, I had to engross myself in a particular period through the books before I could jump from one to the other. Before I could jump from some Tudor work to some Greek work, I had to condition my mind.

DENNIS BARRIE: So you would, what, look at material, look at books?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: Paintings? ____oes?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And immerse myself in a period. And then under that trance, or under that influence, I could work in that. Perhaps the next day I'd be doing something else.

DENNIS BARRIE: All right. Now I'm curious as to how a design is arrived at. Let's say, George Mason came to you for. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I can show you a drawing, see, and show you just. . . . Now this thing is probably something that's going to come with me. [referring to tape recorder microphone?—Ed.] The art. . . . They suggest something. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I'll bring it in there.

DENNIS BARRIE: Okay.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: See, this is the way a job is usually presented. Now I get this, and this Gerald Diehl calls me up at house. He said, "I got a little work. Would you be interested in doing it?" And so he mails me this and wants an estimate. These are nine different panels, see. That's as far as that. Now I have to think of something. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Appropriate for the panel.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: . . . appropriate for the church and the panel. I had to think of a theme, and I have to design the thing. And the same thing with this Lutheran church: I made a scale model and I presented it to [Hyram, Hyro Fisher] the architect, and he in turn presented it to the committee, church committee. They've had it now about three or four months. And I think on my sketch. . . . It's a sketch which I even fired; it's ceramic. It's a sculpture about 32feet in size. Has a number of figures, Luther and Christ and Holy Ghost and the four Apostles, all on the corner of a building, reaching from the ground to the top of the roof. And that thing is selling, has sold the job for the architect! And it's going to go ahead. I saw him last week, and he said that they finally are getting enough money to proceed with the work.

DENNIS BARRIE: So the general situation was that an architect would come with a very general sketch saying we want something for this cornice?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's right.

DENNIS BARRIE: In a particular style.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, the building itself would suggest the style, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now Albert Kahn would never permit his design—he had good designers there—to indicate anything, because he wanted that for himself. And it when it came to. . . . He'd separate the cost of the modeling from the contract. He'd have an allowance. Then he'd call me in and tell me what he was dreaming about or what he would like, what preferences. We'd have a meeting about it, and then I would proceed to develop on that theme. Now I must tell you this very strange thing about creative designers. First of all, they're individuals. I've known hundreds of designers, and I don't believe two of them ever agreed on what is right, good, and what is bad. As a creative individual, they each had their own ideas. And from my own experience with them, they each thought their competitors or their fellow architects as horses' rear ends, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I mean, that's the psychology of these people that create buildings. I remember one architect that I was driving a client around to the Roseburn High School, and there was a piece, a key block with the name of the architect and then AIA. So the client asked [Orwenzo, Lorenzo] "What does that AIA mean?" He says, "Well, that means Another Horses Ass."

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I mean, that was the way they felt about each other, see. But I learned from the architects, because I didn't deal with the. . . . I dealt with the designers of the architects, you see. And their ideas rubbed off on me, as well as my ideas rubbed off on them, because they would consult me as I would consult them. We worked together as a team.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you often, would submit a drawing that they wouldn't approve of, or vice versa?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No. No, I don't recall. In most cases, it went through. I remember the Times Building I made some drawings of some of the figures of bambinos all around—you know, the Times used to be a newspaper building here—and I made a drawing and Albert Kahn thought it was very fine, then I made the model, and he came to look at it, and he said, "I think they're too large." So he said, "It'll be all right, but make another set about eight inches smaller." And I did. There were quite a number of them; there were about eight or ten panels. And each one has a, you know, oh, there's aviation, printing and different subjects pertaining to newsprint. When they were installed, when they were carved on the building, they were too small. They would have been all right in the first place. And I got paid twice for the work, and then he had to have a carver carve a band around them.

DENNIS BARRIE: To make them larger?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: If you look at it, you'll see what I'm talking about, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles) Most of the architects you worked with, did they have a sense of design for building—I mean, of decorative design—or did you really have to supply it?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I really had to supply. . . . The architect was involved in things [possibly] more important than just the decorative portion of their buildings. And I got so that they would ask me, rather than the other way around.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm, for instance, you would come up with suggestions for a treatment?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, that's right. In New York, it was different. Now McKinley and White would never delegate any of their responsibility. They would furnish detailed full-size drawings of everything they had done. But that was a very unusual firm. They had very good men there, and they figured they didn't trust anyone. But other firms, like York and Sawyer—they did very fine work, by the way—but they recognized that their draftsmen were not specialists. I mean, a draftsman may be talented, but he's doing other things, you see. And the modelers and sculptors are doing it all the time. It's like when you see a fellow playing the piano, you know, you think it's easy, but it takes years of development.

DENNIS BARRIE: You once said in the conversation that Kahn was very active in design. Who else was very active in securing the right ornament for their building?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The right. . . . Well, most of the designers. You take Wirt Rowland, you know, Wirt Rowland; I don't know whether you've heard of him. He was responsible for the Guardian Building that Penobscot designed. He was Albert Kahn's designer at one time, then he went with [Spinnetra's] in order to free himself from the restrictions that Kahn imposed on his designers.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And then there was Herbert Wenzel. And there were a number of architects that. . . . Schilling, you know? Edward Schilling. And there was [Ford Doman]—just died last year; he did a lot of churches. And there was Walter Meier, with Donaldson and Meier; he was a designer. And there was Cleland from George D. Mason. There was Dave—what was his last name?—Williams, Dave Williams, was with Mason. He had a lot to do with the Masonic Temple.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But I can go on and on. There's hundreds.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I mean, there's a lot of people involved in past work. The present work I'm not too familiar with, because it's mostly glass buildings, glass and chrome. And they don't have any need or any use for my type of experience.

DENNIS BARRIE: Let's talk about your firm in the twenties. Now, when you worked, did you make a model exact size of how it would look on the building? Do you make a clay mock-up?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It's _____. Now this particular job I spoke to you about, this Lutheran church that is forthcoming, I'm going to make half-size models.

DENNIS BARRIE: Half-size.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And because. . . . First of all, I don't have the energy I used to have to work on the ladder, to work on a 32. . . . I wouldn't accept the work if I had to make it full size. But most sculptors work to scale. Now you see these monumental statues. They're not, the sculptor doesn't make them. They're like the Statue of Liberty. A sculptor by the name of, a French sculptor by the name of [Frederic Auguste—Ed.] Bartholdi, he made a 10-foot model, and then it was broken down and each fragment was mechanically enlarged in sections.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And that's the way. . . . You hear of a sculptor making a 50-foot or 75-foot, that's done by mechanics. The statue that Marshall Fredericks did for the county building. He made a small model, then it was enlarged in Norway.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And the whole thing is a process of, commercial process. But he furnished the form, the idea, their shape.

DENNIS BARRIE: In your own firm, though, you basically did work to scale, though, didn't you?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes. Now, besides making models, I also made scale models. Now I made a scale model of the Fisher Building. I made a scale of the Edsel Ford residence. I made a scale model of the, I made two scale models of Penobscot Building. Donaldson and Meier, they had the original contract for the architecture. And then the owners changed their minds and they had Smith, Hinchman & Grylls.

DENNIS BARRIE: Huh!

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And I made a scale model for both firms!

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles) How many employees did you have in the heyday of the business, would you say?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh, I don't believe I ever had more than a dozen. See, I had to have pattern makers that prepare the mechanical portions, you know, where the modeling is intertwined with, and then I have to have casters, and then I have to have one or two laborers for cleaning, for shipping, boxing, and melting [gloon, boon] and handling plaster. There's muscle work involved, which I delegated. And the scale models, I had a very good German model maker. I think I got a photograph of that _____ scale model _____. [moves away from microphone—Ed.] The scale, today's scale models are very easy; you make them out of. . . . Oh, here's a photograph of the rotunda, you know, one of the figures on the rotunda. That was destroyed, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: When the Ford was _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I made this originally, I made a number of figures for the rotunda when it was built for the World's Fair in Chicago, and one day a bunch of crates arrived at the studio. No one had written to me or spoke to me about them, and when I opened them, I found these models, after the fair was dismantled. So I called up Mr. Kahn and said, "What's this about these. . . ?" Well, we're going to build a permanent rotunda here, and we want you to patch these models up." I said, "I wouldn't do anything of the kind. These models were just temporary [staff]. They were just for an exposition."

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: "We'll have to have new models." So I gave him a price—I forgot what it was—and I made new models. This is one of the new models; this is sort of a. . . . It's metal, enameled metal. This is the head of the Indian on the Penobscot. This is the photograph of the Penobscot.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now this gives you an idea—now this was published in 1931—and it gives you an idea of the work I had done prior to that. It's mentioned in that; it was a free-press article.

DENNIS BARRIE: Your firm, was it instantly successful here?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh, there's no question about it, because I had no intention of settling here.

DENNIS BARRIE: Why were. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I was just overwhelmed. Overnight.

DENNIS BARRIE: Why did they all bring their work to you?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I give you a very simple reason. It was economics. The architects, before I came here, used to furnish full-size drawings to firms like Gehrke and Sieloff, and they had their workers measure and duplicate what was on the drawing. Well, Albert Kahn for a number of years went to New York and had these specialists do his work, and he did not furnish drawings, full-size drawings of the details. Now these architects heard about this, and as soon as I came here, they took advantage of it. They saved thousands of dollars, you see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, instead of having to draw all the details.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's right.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: They just put the work on my lap, and you go ahead and do it. Before that, they had men working weeks and months on detailing. That was the key; it was economics—primarily.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see. What was your first job here? First job as an independent organization.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I'd have to look it up, because. . . . I think there was two Fisher houses. Two Fisher boys were building [Palmer] Park, and Richard Marr, the architect, came down and he had me, he handed me a contract to do all the ornamental work for both houses. [moves away from microphone—Ed.] I think that was one of the first. And there's [Shillingham] Church, St. Thomas Church, or I don't know, one of the churches. I have the work sheet here.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I have to go way back [in record book—Ed.]. Let's see. Yeah, that Schilling, Nativity of Our Lord, that was the first. And the Second National Bank of Saginaw was the second. That was Smith, Hinchman & Grylls. And there was an educational building. I don't know where that was. And there's St. Thomas Church, that was Schilling. And there was a Webster Hall. I did a lot of work in Webster Hall. Have you been in Webster Hall? You know, Webster Hall is on Cass Avenue, right across from Wayne.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, okay.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, you go in the, there's a woman's lobby and a men's lobby, you see a very fine delicate ceiling on that. I don't know if it's still there; I haven't been there for years. Webster Hall and. . . . Masonic Temple starts here. The first, the order was $22,700, and then later on the orders kept growing on me. But there was a Standard Club of Chicago. That was Albert Kahn. You remember the case of Leopold and Loeb?

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: They were the organizers of that Standard Club.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh, I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And when the work was in progress, they got involved in that murder. So the work was stopped for a number of months, until finally someone else took it over.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But if these buildings would talk, there's an awful lot there. (laughter)

DENNIS BARRIE: What. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But that first year was $56,000 worth of work!

DENNIS BARRIE: Which is. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: On a 24-year-old youngster.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, a considerable amount of work for that year.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You translate it to today's labor, and you'll find out what that amounts to.

DENNIS BARRIE: Would you say then you had the majority of the work in town?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I had all of it.

DENNIS BARRIE: You had all of it?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: All of it. Not only in town, but out of town too.

DENNIS BARRIE: So in other words, any building going up in the twenties, any major building had some of your sculptural work.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's right, yeah. Yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: What were the most challenging buildings that you worked on in the twenties? Why?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I couldn't say, really.

DENNIS BARRIE: What were the most interesting?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I find everything interesting, even if it's a little lousy, little lousy thing. When you look at this: I got here 160 churches, see. And a hundred buildings, the commercials. Eighty residentials. Now how can you say which is the most challenging?

DENNIS BARRIE: Well, what did you find, where did you find your designs to be the most innovative to you, the most exciting designs in these early buildings?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: [pauses] I had a lot of challenges where I had to use ingenuity. I'm trying to think. [pauses] Well, I don't know. You get any building, you take the downtown library? You know that little library

there? You look at that.

DENNIS BARRIE: That's quite lively.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. You take the Historical Museum. I got a little work on that, building flagpole and the drawings over the entrance. And you take Kresge Building had a lot of challenge there. And I know, there's so many, so many jobs. I know during the Depression, the city of Grand Rapids, they built an auditorium with scrip. And at the time I wasn't doing very much and they called me in on a job and I had to do the work on condition that I do it in Grand Rapids, and I was the only one that got paid in dollars.

DENNIS BARRIE: (laughs)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And I had to do the work in a stoneyard! I made models in a stoneyard.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh my gosh.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And that's the auditorium. It has a lot of sculptural panels, music and drama, and the arts, you know. I mean, everything is challenging. How can you say? It's like choosing between an apple and an orange and a banana. I mean, there is. . . . Of course, the Masonic Temple, which came in 1924, you know. . . . It was actually DiLorenzo's job, which I took over when I bought him out. That was challenging in the sense that every room was different, you see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right, right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I had to skip from one generation to another. I just had to hop like an acrobat. And at the same time I was doing that I was doing other work.

DENNIS BARRIE: What are your favorites, how's that? Do you have any favorites of the work you've done?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I don't know. Everything is my favorite.

DENNIS BARRIE: (laughs) I guess I won't _____ _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I show you here. Now, you see. Now you take this interior, see. [consulting book—Ed.] You ask me what are your favorites? I think this is my favorite.

DENNIS BARRIE: Which is an interior. Where?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Of my home.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: [looking through photo album?—Ed.] These, everything. I don't know. This is a job where Weinman. . . . Weinman made these figures, see, and I did this—that was in 1922—and these. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Figures over the door and you did the door. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, I did the bronze and these figures on the reveal.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I got photographs of those. I did some factory work, figures for a factory work. Here's a mausoleum. But it's very difficult for me to. . . . Oh, this is a Beaux-Arts.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's yours truly there in the front.

DENNIS BARRIE: From very early age.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. Now, here's a mausoleum, working on some bronze work, see. A mausoleum in, I think it's Columbus.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This is yours truly at the Beaux-Arts. This is a figure at St. Louis. But I don't know, I. . . . Oh, these are some of the details on the Federal Building.

DENNIS BARRIE: In Detroit.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, now those panels were 40 feet long, 8 foot high. Eight foot in height. They have eight different ones. They had seven tons of clay on each model.

DENNIS BARRIE: Didn't you have some great difficulty with the Federal Building?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. I didn't have any change or any. . . . The difficulty was that I had to wait a long time for [approval]. I'd mail the photographs to Washington. See, they had some architectural politicians there, and the paperwork was bad, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Was the Federal Building part of the WPA?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No.

DENNIS BARRIE: It wasn't.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, it was started under Hoover, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: In fact, I made a tablet with Hoover. . . . Now this [another photo—Ed.] is Temple [Num] in New Orleans. The temple was 75 foot long. This is the martyrs, you know, the different martyrs. But it's very difficult for me to say which is. . . . See, I made it this size first, and I [rode, wrote] that time. And this is half size.

DENNIS BARRIE: Were most of the. . . . All right, the work was done in very traditional style. You worked on some buildings, though, that are still kind of pacesetters in Detroit. Didn't you work on the Fisher Building, for example?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: Now, were you the major worker on there, or was someone else?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, I was not. I did one-third of the work, DiLorenzo made one-third, and Richie made one-third. The building went up within twelve months, and the work was divided three ways. In fact, four ways: Gisa Morotti had the, he did the murals and he also made sketches for some of the work which he. . . . I finally had to finish, had to do. Oh, the granite carving, you know, that? He just couldn't handle it, because the work, the pace of the work was too fast. And. . . .

[Tape 2, side A; 45 minutes/side]

CORRADO PARDUCCI: . . . I did a lot of miscellaneous for the interior bronze and the plaque on the floor.

DENNIS BARRIE: How did you divide up the work, with four of you working?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, Kahn divided it. I mean, Albert Kahn divided the work. He decided where. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Who would do work.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: _____ Richie did work you don't see; it's the marble up above. DiLorenzo did some work for the [store fronts] and the entrance bronze, you know, over the entrance?

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I didn't have anything to do with the division. Albert Kahn decided for himself who was better at what.

DENNIS BARRIE: Ah hah. Well, did you often work with other architects? Excuse me, other designers, other sculptors? Well, you know, you worked with Richie here, and you worked with Weinman on this other building. Was that often the case?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No. No, it wasn't the case. You know, that flagpole on Belle Isle, Sam Cashwan. . . . You know, there's a flagpole that Johnson—is it Johnson?—they had the schoolchildren put up dimes for it. The committee in charge of that flagpole gave the job to Sam Cashwan. You know Sam Cashwan?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Very talented. And Albert Kahn was on the art commission, and he didn't like his design.

So he asked me if I would make a sketch of that flagpole. And Sam Cashwan had a rectangular base. At one side he had a figure, see? So I made the sketch of what that thing is; I made a clay, a rough clay model, while Kahn was in the place. I just did it very fast. And they gave Cashwan the medallion of a portrait on it—that's all he did—to pay him for his. . . . But the work actually drifted to me, you see. Albert Kahn, who was on the art commission, he had the, just didn't accept the scheme that Cashwan had, see. But I don't recall very many jobs where I collaborated with some other sculptor, outside of what I mentioned to you.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. So basically it's all yours.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: Now, that leads me to another point. Again, getting back to innovative interest in buildings. You also did the work on the Guardian Building, with the. . . .
[Break in taping]

DENNIS BARRIE: Now, as I was saying, you did do the work on the Guardian Building, which, for those of us who know Detroit, is very different in its style.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. Yeah, that's Wirt Rowland. I used to see a lot of him, and he drew there his dreams on the tablecloth. We used to have lunch together and. . . . Of course that building, it was an innovation in the sense that you had a thirty-degree angle on almost every detail.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Which was different from the rectangular, circular lintel. And it has sort of an Aztec, Mayan, sort of a Mayan character to it. Well, I applied my work. . . . You see, I made clay sketches, which met Wirt Roland's approval. But in making them. . . . I always worked for fitness. In other words, I don't impose my will. I try to immerse myself in the character of the building, you see. Because the way I judge a piece of work is it doesn't scream. If you don't know it's there, and it's still functioning, that's good, see. Very few people know there's any carving there.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You see what I mean?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I know what you mean.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now, if that was all character, people would know there's carving there.

DENNIS BARRIE: Well, it's an incredibly impressive building. All right, design-wise, he came with the idea of this sort of Art Deco/Mayan Aztec building, and. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And it isn't Mayan, but they suggest that, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now some of the authors, like Bill Kapp, used to call my work a la Parducci, no matter what style I had, and I always protested. I said I don't want to, I don't want that identity. You know, because I did have a. . . . We all have a hallmark of our characters in whatever we do. We can't help it.

DENNIS BARRIE: What was your hallmark?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I couldn't say myself. But I know if I look up my handwriting of 50years ago and compare it to today, it doesn't change. So from that angle I say that we all, every one, we're, subconsciously you do have some difference. I could make, I can do Greek. . . . Like the Greek on the downtown library is not Greek—it's Parducci Greek. If you know what I mean. This thing with the Greek work on the Rackham Building in Ann Arbor. That's my personal interpretation of Greek. I couldn't make book Greek.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That was my trouble with the Kirk in the Hills (Church). I did work for Colonel George, and then a new pastor came, and the architect—Cleland was the architect at the time; Wirt Rowland originally started the design. I asked Cleland, "What do you want? Book Gothic, or you want Modern Gothic?" There is a difference. He said, "No, don't have book Gothic." So I made a few pieces, you know, giving an individual interpretation of Gothic, rather than. . . . I can get Pugins and copy Pugins. I never believed in doing that. Just like you can get a [Ben-ure] and just copy every, you know, copy the plasters. I have never believed in that. I believe in expressing the mood rather than the actual thing. And the minister—I heard he died recently—the

Minister, DeWitt, he came one day and said that he wants book Gothic; he doesn't want the kind of Gothic I've been doing there. Well, that was toward the end of the job; I only had very few pieces left. And I got very angry at the fellow and I begged off. I wrote a letter to the trustees telling them to relieve me of the balance of the work. But I was angry not at DeWitt so much as the architect, because the architect was working on a time and material basis, and whatever the minister wanted, it was right. So here he steers me down the wrong track and then when I go to him and say, "What shall I do about it?" He says, "Oh, we'll have to please the minister." I said, "To hell with that!"

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. Was it often the case with a client. . . ?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You take this [moving away from microphone], now. You see this thing was done about 1926, long before this Impressionistic work was done. And now that has a style.

DENNIS BARRIE: Very much so.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Today you wouldn't think it had much style, but then in those days it did have a style.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, very much so.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Just like the Indian in the Penobscot Building.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I did. . . . Oh, this is one of the figures in that building that I did with Weinman. It has about eight or ten different figures. Now I was just 22 years old when that thing was done. This is something; that's an insurance company. See that _____ thing?

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But there's so many of those details that you can't go into them. But I cannot answer you what is the most innovative thing I've done because everything is innovative. I try to make it so.

DENNIS BARRIE: But with the Guardian Building, which was so different, you couldn't draw on your old. . . . You said you'd been trained in the Renaissance and the Classical and so forth.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: This is a different style. Where did you draw, you know, where did you come up with these. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I attuned myself to the building. Just like. . . . At the same time I was doing that I was working on the Penobscot which is entirely different.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right! Very much.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Both works were done in the same time. I made both, I sketched out the detail before I. . . . When I submitted, I submitted a small clay model. But I tried to blend my work with the character of the building. And I did that. That bank building on the corner of Griswold and Jefferson, you know, that Standard Savings Bank, I think. If you look at that, there's very fine work in that. In fact it won a medal in New York, the. . . . And you go in that banking room, see some of the bronze and the screen between the hall and the banking room, and now the character of that work is different from any other character. It has a little touch of Greek, a little archaic touch to it. But it isn't a book style. You see what I mean?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I understand.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Some of the work has a little, is whimsical in the sense that I was having fun with it.

DENNIS BARRIE: How often did a client decide to enter into the design? I don't mean now the architect; I mean the person for whom the building was being designed. Like you mentioned here the minister did not like Modern Gothic and wanted book Gothic.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did this often occur?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No.

DENNIS BARRIE: That you had a change of design?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No. No, most architects accepted my interpretation of what I was doing.

DENNIS BARRIE: And most clients did too.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yes. Well, the clients. . . . Clients entered the picture very, very seldom. They would come once in a while to see what was going on, but I never had any difficulty with them. They usually accepted the architect's recommendation. Now, I did work for Frank Couzens. He was a tough guy to do work for, but I never met him! You know, Frank Couzens used to be mayor here.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And he built a mansion up on Lone Pine Road somewhere. And he had a lot of work on his house. I did a lot of modeling for [Grinn-i-gin] style for him. And the owners put the responsibility in the hands of the architects, and the architects in turn put the responsibility of my own specialized work in my hands.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you. . . . I think particularly of an incident you once had with Father Coughlin. Didn't you do something—or didn't do something?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: Could you just relate that some way?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, he was very pleased with my work I did for him for his church, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: Shrine of the little flower.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, and two years later, he had this, he built a school there, parochial school for the lower grades, just young children. And he had two blocks of stone, eight foot square, flanking the entrance, and he wanted, he gave me the subject matter. On one of them he wanted an execution scene of a martyr by the name of Father [Probe; Prowe] facing the firing squad. On the other side he wanted Saint—oh, I forget what the saint was. I made a model of one of the panels, and I submitted it to him, and the model I had was Christ and the little children—you know, suffer [the—Ed.] little children, the Biblical. . . ?

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And I thought that would be appropriate and I submitted it to him, and he got very angry at me. He got very angry at me and says, "You know what I wanted." And I said, "This is what I propose." So he walked out on me and I walked out on him, and I didn't see him again for thirty years. And just about four or five years when he had this lectern that he wanted. He was retiring and he wanted a lectern, a very elaborate lectern, and he turned to me and I made it, a model of that. It has a lot of little figures and all that ___ays. And when I went to see him, he put his arms around me and says, "We're long lost friends!" Thirty years!

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles) So that was a rare occasion when you really _____ _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. Well, at the time I could have used the work. I would never be a part of that sort of thing: a firing squad! (laughter)

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you work much in the Art Deco style?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: In the art. . . ?

DENNIS BARRIE: . . . Deco style that was so popular. Well, the Guardian is sort of an Art Deco. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh. Well, I. . . . At first in the Fisher Building, I did a lot of work in the style of Edgar Brandt. You know, Edgar Brandt, the metal, worked in metal? I think I've got a photograph of a grille that I made. It's very, very dainty. Albert Kahn wanted. . . . Oh, here's a picture of Edsel Ford's house.

DENNIS BARRIE: Scale model.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Let's see if I. . . . I know I saw it. These are some grilles on the Federal Building, metal grilles. They're work you don't see on the building, but they're there. There's a lot of work. Let's see if I can get. . . . I think you'll be interested in seeing this.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I would.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This was a very good designer: [Leo Colley]. He was at my house and I took that picture. He worked for, he was George Diehl's designer. These are some of the figures I did at the Beaux-Arts—many,

many years ago. [pause while searching through album—Ed.] That's the scale model of the mausoleum in Chicago. These are all Fisher Building models. This is in my driveway at home. I actually made that for the Player's Club, and I made a copy for my driveway. This is at the Zoo.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I know that one.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I didn't like that. I made it against my will. They wanted, Mrs. Rackham was sold on that, bears on the. . . . These are all Fisher Building ones, loads of them. See if I can see some of the Edgar Brandt stuff. This is Edsel Ford's house. This is a monument that Father Couglin was going to build, until his money stopped coming in. It had seventy-five portraits, figures, and he had two Popes, and he had. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: My God.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This is one of the Penobscot Building. I think that was Donaldson and Meier's.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oops. [evidently referring to dropped papers—Ed.]

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's all right. This is the Fisher Building. Guy did the work they _____ there.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh my God.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And this is, I think it is the bank in Saginaw.

DENNIS BARRIE: Well, that's all right. If you can't find we'll look at it later.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, sorry. This is, I keep this out of sentiment. Oh, I was about seventeen years or eighteen when I made this, but Ulysses Richie made this panel. He was in my day. He did very delicate work. Beautiful work.

DENNIS BARRIE: Which building is this?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This is in Ann Arbor, but let's see what building it is in Ann Arbor. This is that building I was talking about where I was up on the scaffold to. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: To inspect the work?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. This is the inside of that Standard Savings and Loan. If you look at some of the stuff you see that it has a styling. . . . The grilles here are very fine, but they don't show too well. But you see it has a Greek. . . . Here's the front entrance grilles.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It has a Greek character, but it's my own interpretation of it.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm, very much so.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now this is one of the many different type. They're for schools, you know. These are _____ figures for schools. Now I told you about the Masonic Temple interiors, the different styles. Well, this gives you some. . . . Well, this is Grand Rapids. I did some work, the same architect, for Wirt Rowlands designed this. I think it has a lot of character.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh yeah. Here's some detail in the Stanley Club, that was the Leopold and Loeb job, you know. It has fireplaces and it has. . . . This is the Maccabees Building. Oh now, this is one of the very first jobs I worked on. You wouldn't hardly believe it. It's the old Temple Battelle on Hobart Avenue. It's not in use any more.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, I know that one very well.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This is the Wilson Theater. You know, they have music. . . . I did all this work. I even furnished the castings.

DENNIS BARRIE: Music Hall.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, Music Hall. Somewhere I got all these different rooms from the Masonic Temple. I think I've them in the other room.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But this is Lee Plaza.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm, beautiful work.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But you get dizzy when you look at the. . . . This is a showroom here on Cass Avenue, where is Stewart Warner. I don't know who occupies the building, but there's a very fine ceiling there.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I'll gather these later. I've got a couple of thousand photographs in the other room.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles) I bumped. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Here's some work from 1922.

DENNIS BARRIE: Beautiful work. When did. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This was Hudson's. You know the Hudson Factory on Jefferson? They tore it down.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, the Hudson _____ _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I made four of those panels and Chapin, the present Chapin's father, he was the owner.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: In fact I remember asking him, he came with Albert Kahn to visit. I'd made this work in New York City, and they had four panels and they only had three models of cars. I asked, "What shall I do with the fourth panel?" He says, "Well, put the emblem." This is the emblem.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The others had the different models of the cars.

DENNIS BARRIE: Different models of the cars. Did you ever work directly. . . . Excuse me. Did you ever work directly on the building, or was it always from models?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The only. . . . Let's see. I did. You know, Henry Ford, the Senior, as a gift to his grandchildren, he built a playhouse on Grosse Pointe. And the playhouse was a miniature Tudor building with pargetting. Are you familiar with English parget work?

DENNIS BARRIE: Not very. In fact, I _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It's modeling done directly in cement with a spatula.

DENNIS BARRIE: Okay.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now in order to do that work, I made clay models first, and I cast them. And then I went to the building. The building is a miniature home. The doorways are about four feet high and the rooms are all low ceilings. The children were young. I went to the job, the plaster put the grounds, the cement grounds, and then over the grounds, I copied the modeling that I had made—Mother Goose rhymes—right in cement directly. And that's one of the very few occasions I had to work directly on a building. It's a very rare, the thing, I mean it dates way back, but you asked me the question. That's the only thing that comes to my mind at the moment.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you ever free-standing? Did you ever do a free-standing piece?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh yeah. Well, sure. I did a statue, I did some statues. There's a fountain at the Zoological Park, and then I did different statues for different churches, the free-standing statues—many of them. Different saints and. . . . There's quite a few of them.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, but basically you did do decorative. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I didn't do, I didn't, I don't believe I ever did a monument, what we call a monuments, just [like the McComb], or that sort of thing I never did. Because my work was almost entirely architectural. But I did do some free-standing figures.

DENNIS BARRIE: When did you notice the market decline for architectural sculpture?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, the decline was very sharply abrupt in 1930. 1929, I had a lot of contracts that were cancelled. But during the thirties, I had the Federal Building, I had the Couglin's Shrine, I had Louisiana. . . . There was some work I did on Louisiana State Capitol for Huey Long. And other out-of-town work. But it was not enough to have any help. The work kept me busy but I couldn't, it wasn't enough to rub off in employees. And I kept on dimishing. And right after the war I got very busy all of a sudden. But I didn't have any help. I used to have men come from General Motors, and Ford's former employees come and cast the work. You know what I mean by casting?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I'd make a clay model and they'd come on a Sunday and cast. I had figures I made for cemeteries that I could do [mandala; Mondollup], cemetery standing figures of different things, and different saints. I would have these people come because any employee I ever had was always to happy to come. I always treated them very well and they would reciprocate. But there was the seminaries, St. John's Seminary in Northville. That has a lot of my work there. I must have had over $50,000 worth of work on that place—more than that. And of course there's the mausoleum. But I was able to cope with that work without very much assistance. I used to. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: I see. But the heyday was over by the mid thirties?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Before that.

DENNIS BARRIE: Before that.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. The best stuff I had went to work for General Motors and they went to work for, some of them went at Ford's. And they made out very good. There's one fellow, Chris [Clan], he's retired now, but he was in charge of a department. And a fellow who was an apprentice of mine—an apprentice in the sense that he was a model maker. I don't know whether you're familiar with the meaning of model maker? Well, model maker prepares. . . . For instance, if you have any amount of sculpture it must be involved with the building, so there are mouldings and there are—even a doorway. If I have to make a piece for a doorway, I've got to have the background of the piece in order to tie it in in character.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: See, now you take this building here, now Amedeo Leone's building here on Park? It used to be [the Carney Club; a carny club] was it? You look at the entrance there, it's a very, you'd swear it was a seventeenth-century Italian cartouche over that. But before I made a cartouche, I had to have the lintel run by a model maker.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: See, in order to key it in. And I think. . . . I'm very fond of that. Every time I pass it I say, "Gee, that looks good." After all these years.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. I know the doorway you're referring to. You, for the fun of or whatever, ran a modeling class, didn't you, or a sculpture _____?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: We, I had a drawing class that was more of a social than anything else, but we used to meet on Fridays. That was during the Depression. We used to meet and have dinner, and then we'd all of us sketch from a model, you see. They were mostly architects. And we enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun. It lasted a number of years.

DENNIS BARRIE: You said mostly architects, but who were your students in this class?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I wouldn't call them students. There was all the designers attended there. Clare Ditschy, Richard Marr, and Herb Wenzell, and there was this fellow just retired from Lawrence Institute. What was his name again? He was there. And Wirt Rowland was there. We were about a dozen—sometimes more, sometimes less. And it was more of a social; it wasn't an academic program. I used to hire the models and to end the evening we'd pay for the services of the model.

DENNIS BARRIE: What, did you have much contact with other sculptors in the Detroit area? Now, you mentioned Sam Cashwan.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I never had too much contract [probably meant contact—Ed.] with him. For many years, he had a hard time, you know, and then he finally got the job at General Motors there, in charge of the different displays. In fact, I did some work for that department. They had an overload once they couldn't take care of, and I made a number of models of cars that they had for an auto show. I made a large Pontiac emblem.

And Sam Cashwan was in charge of that department for a number years. I guess he's retired now.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And he. . . . I know. . . . He made, you know, on the St. Aloysius Church, he made those Apostles. You know, those twelve figures in the niches?

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I did all the rest of the work: the bronze and the rest of the interior. But he got away from that sort of thing. Just now he's making some of these abstractions, you know. And I don't know, he's sort of hypnotized with this work. I was never hypnotized with it. I like new things, but I think they've gotta speak for themselves. You shouldn't have somebody there to tell you what it is, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm. So who else did you. . . . Did you know Carl Milles, for example?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, Albert Kahn wanted me to meet him when he first went up to teach in Cranbrook. And Albert Kahn drove me from his home to Milles's studio, and then he left me with Milles, and then he came back, picked me up later, late in the afternoon. So I spent a good part of the day with Carl Milles. I saw him several times after that, but at that time I got to know him, you know, and I wasn't too impressed with him. I fantasize over his wonderful talent, but when I met him personally, I realized that his talent was. . . . He expressed himself naively; that was the beauty of his talent. He wasn't a complex, his mentality wasn't complex. He was just what his work is. I can't put into words, but you probably know what I mean.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I think I do.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: He was a simple man. He was very unhappy there. He told me at the time that when the Booths employed him he asked for a contract, because he was leaving his home—he had a beautiful home in Stockholm—and they said, "We Booths never give a contract. Our word is our contract."

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, then the Depression happened and he had to beg for his expenses. He said it cost him more to live there than what they gave him! And they did not live up to his contract, and so he was very, at the time, he was very much disillusioned. And the man before him, Morotti, Gisa Morotti, he was disillusioned there too.

DENNIS BARRIE: Why was he disillusioned?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, he said they'd, they opened the door, walked through his place, and without even nodding, and treat him as though he was a servant in the place. He was used to being honored and being made a fuss of, over. And the group up there didn't suit him.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That's why he got away, and he got this Fisher Building job, which he got well paid for. But he was not happy about his pay there either.

DENNIS BARRIE: You're talking now about not the other faculty but the Booths and the people who ran the place. Is that was he was mentioning?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. I got a letter from Henry Booth not too long, last year. He read an article about me in a Pontiac newspaper, and he wanted to know, he said he has a room up there—oh, I forgot what he calls the room—that was made by Ulysses Richie, and in the article it mentioned that I was Ulysses Richie's apprentice, so he wanted to know—I think it was about Ulysses Richie. I answered him; I gave him particulars. He said that room, he said his brother decorated it, Henry Booth, [I mean]. He's deceased now. But I didn't remember the work. Ulysses Richie. . . . The work is almost ornamental; it has some [Pompeian; Pompaigne] character figures in it. And DiLorenzo did the ornamentation on that and Richie made these very delicate figures. He had a very delicate touch, Ulysses Richie. Almost like Nellie Brinkley—there used to be an illustrator by the name of Brinkley years ago, they used to have. And Richie had the same kind of delicate touch.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you ever do any work at Cranbrook other than that?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No.

DENNIS BARRIE: No.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I visited Morotti when he was working on some doors, some figures, up there. But I did not have any work to do there. I have Swanson, you know. Swanson is the son in law.

DENNIS BARRIE: Robert Swanson.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: He was the [architect] of my home. So I dealt with him. I did a few, some work for him. And at the time—it was before he was in partnership with [Youngsign], and then later on he went by himself. I saw him about fifteen years ago. So I guess he's retired, because his son seems to be running the place.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm. Did you know many of artists, say at the Scarab Club, in _____ _____?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No. Years ago I gave a talk there, to the [artists]. They had a meeting there. But after that it was mostly photographers and advertising men that overwhelmed the club. And I lived the other side of town. I was invited a few times to join the club, but I never, I could never see the, that I could ever use it. Beaver Edwards is up there, has a room, he's been there all these years. I haven't seen him in years, but I know he's up there. You know him?

DENNIS BARRIE: I know of him. I have never met him.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. Well, he started working with Detroit Decorator Supply, and then he went into, after the war, making these rubber gloves, rubber hands for these [ap-ti-dees; after these; actors to use]. And he's been doing that ever since.

DENNIS BARRIE: The sculpture community was never very large in Detroit, was it?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No. Never. I don't know of any. Up at the Arts and Crafts, there's Walter Midener.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And I don't know of any other sculptors. There's some, there are a lot of [women, woodmen], lot of students that exhibit.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right, but never professionals.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: But they make a model for a whole term, you know, in the school term, and they exhibit it, see, like a whole term on a portrait or little figure or something. But there isn't any active sculpture being done here. I don't think there's much anywhere. I get the sculpture—I got today, I got the issue of the National Sculpture Society. I could show it to you. All their illustrations date back to the turn of the century. Would you like to see it?

DENNIS BARRIE: I know it does. (laughs) I do know it does.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, do you get that?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, I [did] see it.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The present issue is all the work of Daniel Chester French, and Saint-Gaudens, and they have that figure by Adolf Weinman that's on the Municipal Building, you know, that's falling apart and they tried to restore it. You got this issue?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I've seen it.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You must have gotten it last couple of days. I got mine today.

DENNIS BARRIE: I get every issue, read every issue of all these things.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh, I see. So you know what I'm talking about.

DENNIS BARRIE: I know exactly what you're talking about.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: They have about three sculptors there that in almost every issue. You've got [DeLou], is it? Donald DeLou. You've got Gallinsky, [Bessom Gallinsky]. Now, when I left New York, I didn't think I was leaving it permanently. So I left all my studio and equipment with Gallinsky, thinking I'd go back. I asked him to take care of it. I never went back! (laughter)

DENNIS BARRIE: Do you think, career-wise, was it better for you to have come to Detroit than to stay in New York? Was it too closed in New York to really go far? More opportunity there?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I don't know. I think I was a victim. I think if I'd remained in New York I would have done better, at least for a few years. But I thought at the time—I was doing a lot of work for Detroit while in New York—and I thought at the time that this was a coming city, and that I had better opportunity. There was less, fewer hungry dogs after the same bone. And I did consider that angle of it, but not too much, not terribly much. I had planned to get back to New York, and I was very simply overwhelmed here, that's all. It was my destiny. Only way I can figure it out. I lived at the hotel here, for a while, and I wasn't established for several years. I just. . . . Until 1928—I built my home in 1928. Up to 1928 for four years I was just renting here and there.

DENNIS BARRIE: So, it wasn't a planned move, would you say?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, it was not at all. I had in mind of going back until you reached the point, of course—reached the point of no return. When the Depression occurred, why there was no thought of going back. I did go back to visit. There's one sculptor there by the name of [Randy, Ronnie; Runny Chumbellum; Champella], see. He and I had parallel lives. Randy Chumbellum, we went to Beaux-Arts together. He was a little older than I, and he. . . . Lloyd Warren, during the war, he had the soldiers relieved of their military duty and study, put up a sculpture class in Paris! And a few of my friends that were in army—I was too young; I was seventeen at the time. I had my papers. I was just about to be inducted when the war ended. But Randy was in the war and he met some of the architects there. The Beaux-Arts really was run by architects, and they had a branch in Paris. So when he came back from the war, he worked for some architects on a salary basis, instead of on a contractual basis, on a salary basis. And he did very well. So I was in New York about ten, fifteen years ago, and I spent a day with Randy comparing notes, and it was surprising what parallel lives we had. Financially we both did well, and also we developed in the same way. Now, the only thing thing that you may, the only work of his that you may be familiar with is. . . . You know, at the Rockefeller Center there's a fountain that goes down the stairs. And there's that little Tritons, bronze figures?

DENNIS BARRIE: [In favor there; near favor there].

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Randy made those. Of course he did a lot of other work, but I mean that's one thing I happen to know now. He passed away a few years ago; he had high blood pressure. But I had a very fine visit with him. He was one of the fellow students of the Beaux-Arts that made good, and most of the others had to go in other lines of work.

DENNIS BARRIE: I was going to say, how many architectural sculptors do you think there were, let's say in 1925? Hundreds, thousands?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, it depends. There are different levels, you see. There are specialists in just ornaments, and specialists in figures, and there are those that did both, and then there were woodcarvers, that just carved from models. There were stonecarvers that carved from models. You know, there were literally thousands of people engaged in architectural work. But there are different strata or different levels. Now a woodcarver would just carve from models that were made by others. And the same thing with the stonecarvers. Now in the city of Detroit, there isn't a single stonecarver; there isn't a single woodcarver. Outside of the students that do a little carving. But I got a set of tools there—before you go I'll show them to you—and I got them from a woodcarver that died, and the family, it was like a family. . . . I bought them from the family, see. And those tools are very hard to get. They're very fine steel. There's about 200, 280 of them. And every one of them is important for a professional. I'm not a professional woodcarver. Any carving I do is just for, you know, fun; I had fun. I get interested. Just now, I'm interested in making parts of an old clock, this clock here. Some of the parts have been worn out; I'm making the parts for it. But that's as interesting to me as anything else.

DENNIS BARRIE: So there were many levels of it, but on your level, which I think is a very high level of architectural sculpture. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: On my level there were very few, because when. . . . There was Lumen and Evans, that did all the modeling on the New York Library. They did other work before, before they went classic. You know, they was more in the French styles. They worked in Louis 13th, 14, 15, 16. That generation had passed on, when I. . . . In 1915 they were all going, all gone. Some of them tried to adopt [probably meant adapt—Ed.] themselves into the classic style. They couldn't do it. They weren't. . . . There's a flair to that French work that is not in the Italian or even the Gothic work. Classic work is more organized, you see, while the French is more like music is, just. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Right, yeah, it flows.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: It flows. And the generation that worked in French styles could not adopt themselves to the Classic styles.

DENNIS BARRIE: I see.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And my generation was about the third or fourth, [from] at the turn of the century, you see. If you get ten years, five or ten years to each generation. And they're all developed, you know, they improving all the time, all the way down the line. They started very crudely, and as they had experience they progressed. Then they passed their ability on to the next generation. That's why I say it's a lost art today, because I don't think there's any expectations of any revival. But if there should, there isn't anyone to do it. It had to start that learning process all over again.

DENNIS BARRIE: Right.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Which took many years.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. Just a couple of final questions.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I didn't answer that one. There was Ralph Manconi. He had a studio that did architectural work. Of course, Adolf Weinman did architectural work. But he was one of the very few of the monumental sculptors that did architectural work. And later on there was Richie and Zowery, Anthony DiLorenzo, and there was. . . . These are the only ones. John [DiCellori], he was a peer of mine, and he went into business while I was in Detroit. He had his own studio. He did very well. He had a studio on 21st Street. They condemned his studio and he got enough money out of the condemnation to retire. (laughter) I met him. He was in Detroit. He's older than I am, and he was telling me that on the Empire State Building he made a model, a model of an eagle, and the whole multi-million-dollar building had a $200 piece of sculpture on it. (laughter) That's what architectural sculpture has come to.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: _____. There's a sort of a pylon with an eagle on it.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes, I think I've seen that.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And John DiCellori made that. And he said. . . .

[Tape 2, side B]

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And John DiCellori made that. And he said. . . . When I saw him in New York, I left a model. And here I found him behind a storefront in a little place—it was about 10foot square—and he was carving a little tablet. I said, "John, what are you doing?" He said, "[This is all the work they gave] me." (laughter) And you ask me how many architectural sculptors are there? There aren't any!

DENNIS BARRIE: Yes.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I'm the last of the line. (laughter)

DENNIS BARRIE: Who was your favorite architect to work with and why? And the most interesting to work with.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I liked Wirt Rowland because Wirt Rowland, he reached out, rather than looking back, you know. A lot of architects, their work was, referred to something. Well, Wirt Rowland was departing. He had a background of classical work, and he was a revolutionary in his ideas and his effort. Now you may not think his work is very revolutionary now, but it was at that time. You take the color he used in the Guardian; that was. . . . Architects didn't use color!

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You see he was very progressive, and I held in very esteem.

DENNIS BARRIE: Hmm. And what about George Mason? What was your opinion of him?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, George Mason and I became very close. And at one time I spent an afternoon with him, and he took out a box full of old photographs that dated way back into the last century, and he showed pictures of his different employees. And he told me in his day he used to have to draw full-size drawings of doorknobs and lighting fixtures and all that. He said nowadays an architect needs Sweet's Catalogue, see.

DENNIS BARRIE: (chuckles)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And they design by numbers.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, that's true.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: That's very true.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You take the sash, and everything, all the components of all the select different catalogues. A lot of ornamental work was done by catalogues. I got a couple of catalogues here, from Jacobsen. . . . You heard of Jacobsen?

DENNIS BARRIE: No.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: They used to get models from Donnelly and Richie and then put them in their catalogue.

DENNIS BARRIE: Ahh.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now, Detroit Decorating and Supply. . . . You've heard of Bill Kapp.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, this is a catalogue mailed to the architects, and Bill Kapp brought it to me and say, "You get this. I'll give it to you." He had his name written in gold on the cover. Let's see whether you see Bill Kapp's name. Yeah, you see it here. There's William Kapp, barely make it out.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now, Bill Kapp went page by page. . . . [something fell, probably the tape recorder—Ed.]

DENNIS BARRIE: That's all right. [It's pretty tough.]

CORRADO PARDUCCI: He went page by page and he told me all the work I've done that they use in their catalogue. Now these two panels were in the Masonic Temple. They were stone. I [don't] know how they got the models, but they. . . . I think it was artificial stone; they reproduced it.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh my God.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And Bill Kapp was able to point out everything that I've done that was in this catalogue.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh my! _____ _____

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Work that was special work, that was. . . . You probably could identify some of it, because. . . . Most of the work is very crude there, you see.

DENNIS BARRIE: They had a right to do this? They have a _____?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: They had no right, but there's no way of defending yourself.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. So they literally. . . . The designs you had designed. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, now I'll give you maybe an idea so you could more or less. . . . I got a page where it probably is very definite. But you see, they went bankrupt because this catalogue was printed about 1928, and it cost—what's his name, the fellow, the owner. . . . Now here, here's an example. They get a pilaster that I have modeled, and they get a frieze I have modeled, and they make a fireplace out of it.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Now if you look at it very closely you'll see that this character of this work is different from the work in other pages.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. All right. That's incredible that they just took it, took your design.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah. Now this was done for the Masonic Temple, one of things. But this is the type of work they used to do, and then when they got these models, they incorporate them in their catalogue. Now here's a page that I recall. Now these models here are all, I made all of these. I didn't and now there's no. . . . I made that. But you look at the character of these as against the character of others.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You see, there's a refinement there in the design that does not exist in the work that they had been, that they'd been doing. There's some pages which are more definite. But I just mentioned to you what

they did. Now Jacobsen did the same thing. He gathered, you know, he had the contract for reproducing the work, and then when he got the model he kept it and sold it to others.

DENNIS BARRIE: Unbelievable.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: You know the Cass Theater?

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: These people. . . . There's a centerpiece there, you see. And I made it for one of Kahn's jobs. And when they opened that theater—the owner was [Stair]; he used to own the Free Press—Kahn went there and got very angry. He saw something I'd made for him in the theater that had incorporated a lot of cheap ornament. And that centerpiece was distinctive; it was made for him. And he got very angry and that firm never did any more work for him.

DENNIS BARRIE: [It really is.] I didn't know there was all this sort of stealing of ideas.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh, there is! There is, because. . . . If I would ever try to merchandise anything, you see. . . . I could do that, but I know that it wouldn't work, because there are people with that, who would buy it in the store and would reproduce it at very low cost.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And you get nothing for it. You could have a copyright but it doesn't do much good, because these people don't have too much capital. You can't get anything out of it, and it just costs you money to get a judgment.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah. Very interesting idea. Well, I'm trying to think of a few final questions, but. . . . Oh, yeah! One other thing. Did you ever meet Saarinen, Eliel Saarinen?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The young one.

DENNIS BARRIE: You met the young one [Eero Saarinen—Ed.].

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I'll tell you, this will interest you. When I moved into my house, Saarinen's mother and sister and young Saarinen came to the house, and he was undecided whether he wanted to be a sculptor or an architect. I get the names of the father and son mixed. One is Eli and the other one's. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Eero. [pronounced Arrow—Ed.]

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Eero. And at the time, he wasn't decided. I discouraged him. I happened to know. . . . I was approached. . . . You know there's a lumberman's statue that Robert Aiken, up in north Michigan. There's three lumberjacks, a large statue. The lumbermen approached me first and I asked them how much money they had to build this thing, and they said only $25,000, and [for those dollars] you have to have something monumental in scale. I told them the best thing they could do was to build a sort of plain, large plain monument and have a plaque, you know, honoring the lumbermen. Well, evidently they got more money after that. And through the news, young Saarinen was also approached. And I don't know what transpired but he thought if he got that job he'd go into sculpture. That's when he came to see me. And I told him, "Well, have you been approached for that lumberman?" He said, "How'd you know?"

DENNIS BARRIE: (laughs)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I happened to be familiar with it, see. Well, Robert Aiken, the sculptor, a very good sculptor in New York, did that. There are three large bronze figures that must have cost over $100,000. But you ask me if I'd met Saarinen. I did meet him at the time, when he didn't know whether he wanted to be a sculptor or an architect! He became a very good architect! (laughs)

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you advise him against being a sculptor?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: Why?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, at the time it was just about the time things were breaking, you know. Things didn't, the outlook was very bad. I had discharged some of my assistants and I had very little prospects. I suppose if he had, if that probably had come up a couple of years sooner, I would have, you know, different advice.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you ever deal with Marshall Fredericks?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I met him a few times. I never dealt with him. I know people that have. And I always found him to be a very fine person, but the people that have dealt with him think he's something awful.

DENNIS BARRIE: Um hmm.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: A bronze man, that [I] used to cast bronze for him, he used to reject their work and have it done over again, and then he'd keep the rejection and then use it and sell it—things of that kind. Earl [Chressen; Pressen] worked for him, and he said he couldn't speak very well of him. Earl Chressen's experience with Marshall Fredericks. . . . Do you know Earl Chressen?

DENNIS BARRIE: [probably negative response—Ed.]

CORRADO PARDUCCI: The experience he had with Marshall Fredericks, you know, at the zoo, they made some fixtures for the apes. Well, Earl Chressen made those, but Marshall Fredericks promised. . . . He couldn't pay him very much, but he'd get publicity. When the newspapermen would come around, he would make sure that he gets the credit for it. Well, Earl Chressen never was around when the. . . . And he thought that Marshall Fredericks arranged that so that he would be missed out on that payment, what he considered his payment.

DENNIS BARRIE: I think that's. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And then another fellow did the Mercury, he made a head of Mercury for Ford's. And the fellow that cast it for him. . . . It was a very hot summer day, and the seams of the gelatin mold sort of got soft and they showed. So he made a number of castings for him. I guess he sold them; I don't know. But he took the rejections. He said they weren't any good and then he fixed them but he didn't pay for them. A fellow by the name [Seam-y; Seemy]. Well, those are reports that came to me, you see, but my own experience with him is that he was very fine and very capable and a very talented individual.

DENNIS BARRIE: You never worked on a building together?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No.

DENNIS BARRIE: Because I know he did reliefs on the Rackham Building and. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: This Rackham Building here, I was supposed to do it, you see.

DENNIS BARRIE: Oh.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And Malcolm [Sturten], at that time, became very enthused about Marshall Fredericks, and. . . . I had an in with the trustees, because I did a lot of work for them and they liked me. But they gave the job, the responsibility to Sturten and he gave it to [Frederick]. I've done a lot of work for Sturten, but that was one job which I didn't do.

DENNIS BARRIE: Very interesting.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah.

DENNIS BARRIE: I wondered if you had worked on that _____ _____.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, I didn't. I was asked by the contractors, [W. E. Wood], you know. There was an Austin that was related to the Rackhams. They got the job, and he wanted me to do the work. And even later they had regrets that I didn't do the work. They talked at the time, but the architect was very firm on that.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you work. . . . We're almost out of tape. [This tape was originally recorded on reel-to-reel tape—Ed.] Did you work on the Detroit Institute of Art?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No.

DENNIS BARRIE: No.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: That was done. I saw the work being done by a French sculptor. I visited him in MacDougall Alley. I can't remember his name now. But he was imported just for that work. Craig what's-his-name, the architect. . . .

DENNIS BARRIE: Paul Cret.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Paul Cret. He had him do the work and at the time I did pay a visit to MacDougall Alley to

see his work in progress.

DENNIS BARRIE: Did you, you know, that brings up another point. Did you go back to New York quite often for. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, not too often. I went about, in all these years, about a dozen times, you know.

DENNIS BARRIE: So you weren't going back constantly to MacDougall Alley?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No, no.

DENNIS BARRIE: You weren't interested, to discuss work or. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: No. New York is a very peculiar place. You want to get there, but when you're there you want to get away!

DENNIS BARRIE: (laughs)

CORRADO PARDUCCI: I have that; I get the strong feeling to get away every time I get there. I don't know whether you ever had that feeling.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, I've had it.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: New York is a place to go, but it isn't a place to stay.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah, this is very true. It is that way. Well, one final thing. I know we just mentioned briefly and you were a kid, but do you have any impressions of the studios that you saw in MacDougall Alley, like Daniel Chester French or. . . .

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Well, I. . . . No, outside of the fact that I used to see them. On hot summer days. . . . They were actually stables, you know, one-time stables, and they had stable doors and they used to keep them wide open in the summertime, and I used to look in on them. And of course I visited like MacMonnies' studio, because MacMonnies was away half the time. We used to, he had a studio in Paris, you know, Frederick MacMonnies?

DENNIS BARRIE: Right, right, yes.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: And he was away half of the year, and his apprentice—or whatever you wished to call him, worked for him—I used to visit him there. I used to see MacMonnies' work, but MacMonnies never paid wages. And this fellow used to go to MacMonnies wife and try to get living wage, and the wife used to tell him, "I don't get any money from him. How could you?" (laughter)

DENNIS BARRIE: So you visit the studio, and you saw work in progress?

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Oh yes.

DENNIS BARRIE: Yeah.

CORRADO PARDUCCI: Yeah, and I had a letter, you know, letter from Weinman. He had some work he wanted to, he couldn't handle and he was familiar with me, you know, through other work, and he thought I'd give him an estimate, you know. (laughs) When I told him what I was making at the time, he said, "My God! I can't pay that kind of money." (laughter)

DENNIS BARRIE: That's pretty good. Well, we're just about out and I don't want to leave it go to the end. I should say thank you. I think it's on. . . . Let me turn. . . .

END OF INTERVIEW

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