Smithsonian
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Oral history interview with Jean Lipman, 1973 June 19

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Jean Lipman on June 19, 1973. The interview took place in New York City, and was conducted by Paul Cummings for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

This interview was recorded on two sides of one sound tape reel. Side 1 of the reel was transcribed in 1977. In 2024, Side 2 was transcribed, and Side 1 was retranscribed and reconciled against the original transcript in an attempt to create a verbatim transcript of the full interview. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

[00:00:03.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Say, it's the 19th of June, 1973. Paul Cummings talking to Jean Lipman in her apartment in New York City. Side one. Let's just start from the top. You were born in New York City, right?

[00:00:16.24]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes.

[00:00:16.69]

PAUL CUMMINGS: And what kind of schools did you go to? And what was life like growing up in New York City?

[00:00:24.61]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I lived in a brownstone that was—a big double brownstone, because my grandfather had eight daughters. And he built this house, I don't really know when, in what was considered country—almost country in those days.

[00:00:43.39]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Where was that?

[00:00:44.32]

JEAN LIPMAN: It was at 42 East 69th Street— what is now 42 East 69th Street. And this is where I was born and lived 'til I was eight years old. And I went to Lincoln School. And the only thing I remember about it, because it was an anecdote of my parents that amused them to no end, I came home from school in third grade one time and I said, "I don't want to go to school anymore." And my parents asked me why. And I said, "There's a horrid little boy with warts on his hands who wants to hold my hand." And they said, "What's his name?" And I said, "Nelson Rockefeller." And that amused them to no end. Nelson and I were schoolmates at Lincoln.

[00:01:27.08]

PAUL CUMMINGS: [Laughs.] Oh, marvelous. Marvelous. Well, was your family interested in art or literature? Music?

[00:01:33.70]

JEAN LIPMAN: Uh, no.

[00:01:33.75]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —and all those things.

[00:01:34.73]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I would say no, except that my grandfather was sufficiently interested in having an important painting or two in his house. And Henner was the artist he most admired. And he had a large Henner woman—a nude woman, I think, as I recall it, with red hair. And he was sufficiently interested in art to have the kind of—I really don't know what period it is—the large, white marble sculptures. There was a room down in the basement that was the music room. And all there was in that was a piano, and large, white marble sculptures, like a full-sized little boy blowing a horn in the ear of a little girl on a pedestal. And these were rather scary things, because they were covered with muslin cloths in summer. And we weren't allowed down there very much. A cousin of mine and I, who lived—a cousin and her mother and father lived in the house also, and I can see every one of these white things. I think Café Nicholson is the place that looks very much like—

[00:02:48.15]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I see. Standing all around.

[00:02:50.14]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. All the things in Café Nicholson look exactly like the scenes of my childhood. And the only other thing I remember very distinctly—I remember the whole house more distinctly than practically any other place that I've ever been, with all the granite—not granite—the stone bathtubs. And I remember our large, large Christmas tree, which was lit with candles. And then I think of that as a fire hazard, little, tiny candles on a huge Christmas tree. But—

[00:03:21.77]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What were some of the other sculptures? Do you remember?

[00:03:24.77]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, no. I really don't. As a matter of fact, I seem to remember this one. The others were—they were all figurative sculptures, a woman lying on a long couch. They were marble sculptures. And I don't—I really don't remember. This little boy blowing the horn in the little girl's ear is the one that I remember very distinctly. But there were about half a dozen of them on pedestals. And I think later that was the billiard room, and the marble sculptures were removed. But I would not say that my grandparents or my parents were the least bit interested in art, in the sense that we think of it. Certainly they weren't collectors, or anything of the sort.

[00:04:11.84]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Who was your grandfather, if he had all of this activity going on?

[00:04:15.74]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, he was a—his name was Heidelberg. He was born in Heidelberg, and came to this country when he was about six years old with his family. And I really don't remember him too well, but he was a very intelligent and interesting man. And—

[00:04:42.67]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Were there—

[00:04:43.66]

JEAN LIPMAN: He came over here, made a lot of money. [Laughs.]

[00:04:46.01]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:04:47.96]

JEAN LIPMAN: Known in Germany as the millionaire American. [Laughs.] Which, one million made somebody a millionaire in those days.

[00:04:57.25]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah. Well, were there books around the house?

[00:05:01.69]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, yes.

[00:05:02.32]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Were people interested in music, or things?

[00:05:04.36]

JEAN LIPMAN: No. I don't think so. I mean, I remember that I was asked whether I would like to take piano lessons, because we had a piano. And I said I would not be interested in taking piano lessons. And I think I took three piano lessons. And I have never appreciated music in any way whatsoever, I'm ashamed to say. I think I'm tone deaf, music blind. [Paul laughs.] I have never gotten beyond maybe the feeling that I just couldn't master—simple scales on that piano did it.

[00:05:33.52]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What did—in going back to the books, did you read? Were there books around for you to read?

[00:05:38.18]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, certainly. Well, I had a French governess, and I read the whole *Bibliotheque Larousse*. And we also had a German Fraulein at one time. And we read all the *Struwwelpeter*, and all the little German books. And I don't remember—I can't speak German at all anymore, but the French seemed to stick. It was helpful.

[00:06:06.08]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Good. Good. Well, where did you go from Lincoln, as far as school goes?

[00:06:11.78]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, we moved to Long Island when I was about eight years old, I guess. As a matter of fact, I didn't go to school— I really don't remember why— until third grade. We had governesses and tutors, and so on and so forth. I think in those days if a child looked a little bit pale, and was an only child, somebody decided that they were not quite strong enough to go to school. And I—

[00:06:40.43]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Took care of them.

[00:06:41.24]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. But in any case, I went through high school in Long Island. We lived in a house that was on the edge of Woodmere and Hewlett Bay Park in Long Island. And I went to a school called Woodmere Academy. And then I went to Wellesley.

[00:07:08.54]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. How did you pick Wellesley? Was that—

[00:07:10.40]

JEAN LIPMAN: No idea. I haven't the faintest idea.

[00:07:12.31]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —parents or you—your choice?

[00:07:13.85]

JEAN LIPMAN: I have no—I don't know. My mother graduated from Hunter College, which was somewhat—was higher education in those days. She learned sewing. They had sewing courses at Hunter, and she was an expert seamstress. And she—my father came from Philadelphia. And I have no idea what schools they went to. But college was not the usual, accepted—everybody didn't go to college. And I have no idea why I picked Wellesley. I have a feeling that one of my cousins had gone there, or something. I just don't know. In any case, you had to apply long, long ahead in those days. And I went to Wellesley, where Alfred Barr was instructor in the art department.

[00:08:06.90]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

[00:08:08.48]

JEAN LIPMAN: Let's see now, he went to the Museum of Modern Art in—

[00:08:11.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: '29?

[00:08:12.71]

JEAN LIPMAN: '28.

[00:08:14.09]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:08:14.81]

JEAN LIPMAN: I was there while he was there, but I never took a course from him. I didn't take an art course until my senior year. And that was a survey course in the history of art, which stopped at about—Matisse was mentioned. Matisse. I don't remember Picasso being mentioned. But it was mentioned at the end of the whole course, which started, of course, in Greek and Assyrian times, and so on. But there were some painters—

[00:08:46.04]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Still.

[00:08:46.46]

JEAN LIPMAN: —working in France at this time. And also some painters were working in America. And that was about as—in a sentence, that was about as far as it got. The teacher was Myrtilla Avery, who was a very, very good art teacher. And the reason I went on to take a master's in art was that my senior paper, she wrote on it, "A—Why don't you continue in the history of art? How about taking some graduate work?" And I was so flattered that I thought, what a great idea. So that was what I did.

[00:09:25.39]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What had you majored in? Well, what was your main interest?

[00:09:28.09]

JEAN LIPMAN: English and French literature.

[00:09:30.13]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, so that was good preparation, anyway for it.

[00:09:32.89]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I was—I was evidently always flattered into things. I was flattered to think that I spoke French well enough, and read it well enough that I didn't have to take the freshman grammar course. So I started with an advanced course for my freshman year. And I went on and with French and English literature.

[00:09:54.49]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. It was fun? You liked Wellesley?

[00:09:56.02]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, yes, I thought it was great. And I've had quite feeling of affection for plaster casts because my one course. In senior year, we went to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and carefully studied the great masterpieces, which was all that we were studying. It didn't go much beyond Greek things, but the Ludovisi Throne, which was there, and a plaster, a very accurate model, I thought was one of the most hair-raisingly beautiful things. We spent quite a few hours—days, I think, looking at that and writing a long essay about everything that we saw in that. And this was the way things were taught then.

[00:10:40.48]

I felt since that if a museum that had only third rate—that could only afford third-rate things like our Phoenix Museum— where we spend quite a lot of time now— it has a great study collection of third-rate works. And I have often thought that if it had a great study collection of first-rate works in plaster, it would be more to the point. And I still think that.

[00:11:06.83]

PAUL CUMMINGS: They may come back again.

[00:11:08.03]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I don't know. It seems to me that a study—a collection of things that cannot possibly present the feeling of excitement of greatness is not the way to prepare students for anything. I thought that if the Phoenix Museum spent their money possibly sending students to the Museum of Modern Art, and the Metropolitan, and so on—people only go once or twice to a museum. Students don't go six times to look at things. They look once at a third-rate collection, and that's what they have seen in the Phoenix Museum. And it would cost no more to send them to New York to look once at a great collection, instead of buying these crummy things, is my strong feeling.

[00:11:56.06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Interesting. Yeah.

[00:11:56.66]

JEAN LIPMAN: But in any case, I am very averse to both glancing at art, as people do now, and study collections being made of third-rate material. I think both of them are quite immoral.

[00:12:14.33]

PAUL CUMMINGS: The label-reading school.

[00:12:16.13]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Yes.

[00:12:17.36]

PAUL CUMMINGS: "Oh, that's who did that. Oh, that's who did that." You know.

[00:12:18.80]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Exactly. The things that can't possibly excite any young person.

[00:12:23.42]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Were there any other instructors at Wellesley that you remember that were particularly important to you, or influential?

[00:12:31.10]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes, as a matter of fact, as I said, I think I was always flattered into whatever I did. I mean, just starting from my college, what I did from my—a few years after college, my French teacher, French literature—her name was Mademoiselle Mesbole—and she was a very strong-minded, dynamic woman who would fix you with a sparkling black eye. And I did an essay of one kind. I forget on—what it was on. Rimbaud, I think, as I remember it. And she wrote on that, "vous devez écrire," exclamation mark. And I thought, well, that was my fate in life. And I thought, well, I'll never marry. I'll never do anything else. But I will write.

[00:13:27.62]

So anyhow, I thought it would be a good idea to try to write. And I haven't—I don't consider myself a writer. I consider myself an editor, because I have never really written in the sense of writing the way Russ Lyons writes. I've edited and I've written bits of things where I had to, to explain what I was putting together in picture form. But I did I did take a graduate course in Fine Arts at New York University under Erwin Panofsky and Richard Offner.

[00:14:04.27]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, when was that?

[00:14:05.53]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, that was—and I graduated from college in 1931, and that was in 1932, '33.

[00:14:10.84]

PAUL CUMMINGS: So right afterwards, yeah.

[00:14:11.74]

JEAN LIPMAN: And our courses then were very—our classes were very small. They were seminar classes. And my classmates, with both Offner and Panofsky, were Helen Frank, Robert Goldwater, Daisy Scolari, Daisy Barr—Alfred Barr's wife—and a few other people, but not very many. The courses were—the seminar classes were about five or six people. And the Offner seminar I think was only three—Helen Frank, myself, and Robert Goldwater, as I remember it. And maybe Daisy Barr. I'm not sure. I think so.

[00:14:53.05]

But the Panofsky course was a little bit larger, but not much. But four of us—Helen Frank, Robert Goldwater, Daisy Barr, and "Pan." And we had lunch two or three times a week, as I remember, to continue the discussions, which just couldn't be finished in the three hours. And what we were looking at was one object, as I recall it, from as often as sometimes two or three sessions and lunch. And it was a different way of looking at things.

[00:15:28.82]

And I remember in the Offner seminar, we spent six weeks looking, studying, discussing, writing about one Trecento cross, which was not very glorious. It was not historically important, really. But in retrospect, it was a great study course. We exhausted everything that could possibly have been seen in that cross. And that was the way the Panofsky studies of things were based, like the van Eyck. What is that great van Eyck? "The Marriage," the—

[00:16:12.02]

PAUL CUMMINGS: I know what you mean.

[00:16:12.72]

JEAN LIPMAN: I can't think of the title.

[00:16:13.64]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Of a mirror in the back.

[00:16:14.24]

JEAN LIPMAN: A mirror in the background. And I cannot think—

[00:16:17.18]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Chandelier.

[00:16:18.44]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, a sign of age. But in any case, we spent quite a few weeks on that.

[00:16:24.47]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. There's was a lot to see in that.

[00:16:25.58]

JEAN LIPMAN: There was a lot to see. But it was very different from the way anyone would look at it right now in person, if it appeared for us to look at the Metropolitan. There would be a ramp to walk past it.

[00:16:36.84]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Well, were those the only two people you studied with—

[00:16:41.42]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes.

[00:16:41.75]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —at the Institute?

[00:16:43.40]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Oh, as a matter of fact, the other people in our class, I almost forgot were Millard Meiss and—terribly well-known art historian, Columbia and New York University—Meyer Schapiro.

[00:17:03.17]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Meyer Schapiro, yeah.

[00:17:05.18]

JEAN LIPMAN: This was a very small group, but it was an exciting one. And about six of us. Six or seven of us spent a great deal of time. Millard Meiss— his wife also was part of that group. And I should remember her name. She was Aline Saarinen's sister-in-law.

[00:17:35.54]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yes, right.

[00:17:37.94]

JEAN LIPMAN: Her name, Maggie—whatever Aline Saarinen's maiden name was.

[00:17:42.29]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Bern—Bernstein.

[00:17:43.97]

JEAN LIPMAN: That's it.

[00:17:44.48]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Bernstein.

[00:17:45.05]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Yes.

[00:17:48.65]

PAUL CUMMINGS: My goodness—

[00:17:49.47]

JEAN LIPMAN: It was quite a group, as a matter of fact, in retrospect.

[00:17:51.82]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Extraordinary, yeah.

[00:17:52.43]

JEAN LIPMAN: We all stayed in the art field in various ways—

[00:17:57.02]

PAUL CUMMINGS: You've been active.

[00:17:57.95]

JEAN LIPMAN: —for our entire lifetime, which is really quite something. It's rather interesting.

[00:18:03.08]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's fantastic. How did you like those two people as instructors? Were they very different? Did you—

[00:18:08.31]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, totally different. Totally different. Offner was a very terse, high-handed, aristocratic, elitist person who served four different kinds of tea. One had a choice of Ceylon tea, various kinds of tea in the afternoon. And his students were also partly secretaries, in a sense. We did some of the work for his corpus. And we served the tea. And there were only four or five of us, or sometimes only two or three.

[00:18:44.79]

And, well, a typical example of his way of conducting things—he was doing his corpus, and he had a secretary in Munich at the time who was working on the German end of it. And he asked me to get her on the phone. That was very unusual in those days, to phone someone, but he had some questions to ask her. And it was very expensive, and quite a problem. And I got her on the phone. And I heard him say, "Fraulein (whatever her name was), will you listen, but do not interrupt. This is a very expensive phone call. Take down the questions and write me the answers." And he talked for about 15 minutes. And I heard him say— I can't say it in German— "Verstehst du?" "Do you do you understand everything that has— that I have said?" And I think we were expected to listen on the extension phone so that if there was any problem, we could jot down—he would say, "write this down," or something or other. She said, "nein." [Laughs.] This had gone on—

[00:19:49.87]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, dear! [Laughs.]

[00:19:50.47]

JEAN LIPMAN: At which point he flung down the phone, stamped out of the—not out of the room, but out of the apartment. And we were left there to have tea by ourselves. [Laughs.]

And this was a— Also an amusing, when I got married, I told him that I was leaving his course, and we were planning to get married. I had finished the course, as far as I was concerned. And he wrote me a long letter of congratulations, which I believe is in the archives, which was a three-page letter saying what a horrendous mistake I was making. It was the end of a promising career. And he ended with "All best wishes," which, "As you know, my dear Jean, I do not mean, Richard Offner." And it was very cryptic.

[00:20:42.74]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, goodness.

[00:20:45.05]

JEAN LIPMAN: He was a totally opposite kind of person from Panofsky, whom I'm sure everybody has talked about at great length. He was a great, marvelous, jolly, wonderful person, with the greatest fascination for his students. Anything that he lectured on, you were absolutely lifted by the roots of your hair. It was more than fascinating. And his iconographical systems that he devised were as great a creation as an artist. They were not always correct, which was something that nobody I think has pointed out in detail. But there are lots of very funny stories about things that Panofsky devised, as to prove a point. And within their own system— taking the premise as correct, they were brilliant, exciting, and everything beyond words. But the premise was sometimes wrong.

[00:21:39.59]

And one—while I was a student, the greatest thing that I ever did in Panofsky's eyes, was I had been making a study of the transept sculptures of Chartres. And I had arrived at the concept based on the way the folds of the cloth fell, that these were tomb figures that had been done as tomb figures, and that it had been stood up. And there were all sorts of things that proved it, based on the way the clothing fell, and so on and so forth.

[00:22:13.92]

And he and I worked really closely for about three weeks on this. And I wrote an essay on the transept sculptures of Chartres related to tomb figures. And it was just really one of the greatest archaeological, if you want to call it that, art historical discoveries of the ages—until we discovered that it just plain wasn't so. [They laugh.] There were other figures that were done in other places in the same way, that had no relationship to tomb figures. Or in any case, I don't remember how we discovered the horrendous truth, but it didn't bother us in the least. It was a marvelous Panofsky-esque exposition. And Panofsky himself had done this. And I think people, if anyone interviews other people about Panofsky, you will find that there were some fascinating things that were just absolutely fabulous, fabulous—

[00:23:07.25]

PAUL CUMMINGS: In the true sense of "fabulous."

[00:23:09.50]

JEAN LIPMAN: —constructions that were just the greatest, and terribly exciting, and they revealed, everything pertinent about the artist under question. But the premise that it started from was not always correct. It's very interesting.

[00:23:22.44]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm. That's fascinating. Well, what had your intention been when you went to NYU, to—

[00:23:29.84]

JEAN LIPMAN: None. I took a graduate course in Fine Arts, because my art teacher at Wellesley had said this was a good thing to do, and a good idea to do. And my French teacher had said that I should write. So I thought I would take a course. And I think I thought I would write. And my first idea, when I got my master's, was to write. So I went to the Frick Art Reference Library, where I had been spending—practically living—spending a great deal of time, and I looked through the art magazines to see what art magazine I would most like to write for. And I picked *Art in America*. And I decided that was the magazine I would like to

write for.

[00:24:14.55]

So I wrote to the editor, who was Frederic Fairchild Sherman, who lived in Westport at the time, and said, "I would like to do an article for *Art in America*." And I gave him all my credentials—except that I had never written. I had written one thing for *Parnassus* before—I think before—yes, before I had my master's, and it was on sculptures, drawings. But that was the only thing I had ever written. And I think I gave him that as a point of departure, and said, I would like to write for *Art in America*. And he was a very brusque sort of person. And he knew perfectly well that he did not want this young upstart to write for *Art in America*, but he was very cagey about it.

[00:25:00.69]

And he wrote me a letter saying, "My dear Mrs. Lipman, the only thing on my agenda that I would like to have as an article for *Art in America* at the moment is an article on the Matisse paintings in the Stephen Clark collection," which were at the top floor of his house, on 70-odd whatever street it was. "However, Mr. Clark does not permit people to come and see the collection. So that if you can break that small barrier, I will be very glad to have your article."

[00:25:32.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: [Laughs.]

[00:25:33.13]

JEAN LIPMAN: So this was quite typical of Frederic Sherman. But in any case, this didn't seem to me, in my early 20s, to be any kind of a barrier whatsoever. It never occurred to me that anybody who wanted to write an article about something would be turned down by anybody. So I telephoned Mr. Clark's house, and by some strange fluke, I got him on the phone, and said that I had been commissioned to write an article for *Art in America* on the Matisse paintings in his house, and could I come and see them? And he said, "Certainly." And there was no problem whatsoever.

[00:26:10.34]

So we made an appointment for very soon thereafter, and I went up with a great pad. And I knew nothing about Matisse paintings at all, except that I think the Museum of Modern Art had a Matisse show at the time, and I went to see that, and studied it rather carefully. I saw it for quite a while as groundwork. And then I went up, and I was ushered up to the top floor of the—it used to be the—it was the attic that had been completely done over as a Matisse interior in a way that I thought was absolutely marvelous. Everybody has written about it as horrendous ever since. All the lampshades looked like Matisse things. It was pinks, and greens, and blues, and brilliant rugs, and everything looked very Matisse-y. The whole room had been—the whole attic had been done over as a Nice—

[00:27:04.87]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, a Matisse painting.

[00:27:06.28]

JEAN LIPMAN: —Nice-period kind of painting. And everybody is talking about it as being horrendous. I thought it was fabulous. I still do, I think, because I remember it. But in any case, I started writing my—taking notes for my article. And there was a knock on the door, and a butler came in and said, "May I get you something to drink, Mrs. Lipman, or would you like anything at all that I could bring you? Some pencils?" And I said, "No, really, I would just like to be left alone. And thank you very much, but I have everything I need." And about half an hour later, there was another knock on the door, and somebody else came in and said, "Mrs. Lipman, is there any way that I could be of any help to you to talk about the paintings in any way, or anything of the sort?" And I said, "No, as I have told the butler, I would really just like to be left alone." And the door closed very quietly, and I was left alone, and I did the article, and I was in *Art in America*.

[00:28:07.90]

The only problem with it was that I was comparing a painting with goldfish in the Stephen Clark collection with another one. And in the black and white, the goldfish did not come out as strongly as I wanted them to when the thing was in page proof. And I insisted to Mr. Sherman that it had to be done over. And he said the magazine has to come out within the month, and there isn't time. And I said, "I absolutely will not permit this to go through." The goldfish were just a shade pale in a black and white. He said, "I'm very sorry. It's my magazine, and this is the way it will be." And I never forgave him for years. And it was—when I thought afterwards of what I was asking for, nothing could have made the goldfish come out darker. That's the way they were.

[00:28:52.63]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's the way they were.

[00:28:53.41]

JEAN LIPMAN: The tone, the way they were in the painting. I wanted them one shade darker. But in any case, the only funny thing about this story was that I guess it was about 25, 35 years later, Stephen Clark bought our folk art collection for Cooperstown, for the New York State Historical Association. And Mary Alice had been commissioned to form a great folk art collection for Mr. Clark for Cooperstown, and he had given her a ten-year period to do it. And she called us and asked when we might be interested in selling our collection.

[00:29:31.12]

And we had been thinking for years that it was too horrendous to live with all these cigar-store Indians and figureheads, 373 pieces of folk art. It had gotten to be a public collection where curators sent—asked if they could send their classes from—professors from Smith and so on. And I was a full-time restorer, curator, and this and that. We had been—also we weren't there a good part of the time. In winter we were at my mother's apartment here in New York. And the fireproof house, the whole thing, we were more than prepared to dispose of it. And we certainly couldn't afford to give it. And Mary Alice asked us if we would sell it.

[00:30:12.00]

So within three days, all arrangements were made, and Mary arranged for us to meet with Mr. Clark. And I guess it was a different house. I don't think so, though, at the time. But in any case, we were introduced to Mr. Clark. And Mr. Clark said to me, "You don't remember me, Mrs. Lipman, but I will never forget you, because I knocked on the door when you were doing an article on my collection in New York, and you slammed the door in my face and said, 'Please, just leave me alone.'" [They laugh.] Which was very funny. This was our meeting with Stephen Clark.

[00:30:52.94]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's marvelous.

[00:30:53.09]

JEAN LIPMAN: The only other interesting thing I think about the folk art collection is that at the time, when he bought the collection based on current prices for these things, included five Hicks paintings and so on, we thought we were doing a brilliant, brilliant job of selling it—I did, at least. My husband said, "If Stephen Clark wants to buy it, we should keep it." And he couldn't have been more right. The total price that we got, which we thought was simply staggering, would be something that would be considered absolutely a ridiculous price for one of the Hicks "Peaceable Kingdoms." I mean not a ridiculous price. It would have been completely impossible.

[00:31:32.39]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's fantastic, yeah.

[00:31:33.23]

JEAN LIPMAN: But in any case, I was—never, never regretted it being in a great public collection. And this was when we were free to go on to other interests, and contemporary themes.

[00:31:44.72]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, where did you meet Howard Lipman? Because—

[00:31:49.70]

JEAN LIPMAN: In New York. We were—I was trying to think what—we were—well, ho hum. I was living in New York before I was married again, with my mother. And we were—well, he was very interested in art. But that isn't how we met, I think. We met over at a bridge game, as I recall it. He was a—he was a—much more in the art field than I was, to put it mildly. He had lived in Paris for a couple of years, doing bookbinding. He was a part-time—he was a part-time sculptor for a good many years, and as a part-time sculptor, as a—well, a total unknown would be the way to put it, in Wall Street, or anywhere else.

[00:32:46.97]

He had had a one man show at the Weyhe Gallery, and one-man show at Kennedy, and a two-man show at the Walter Vincent Smith Art Gallery. And he was really a very good sculptor. That was the—and at the Silvermine Guild. He had a one-man show there. But he was a very good sculptor, and gave it up. He did sculpture with great holes in the middle of it before Henry Moore did things that way, not that there's any connection whatsoever. But he was a very avant-garde sculptor his time. And he had quite a number of shows and sales. It was kind of interesting.

[00:33:41.01]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Terrific.

[00:33:41.03]

JEAN LIPMAN: He also was a painter. He painted things that looked mildly School of Paris-ish, like the Synchromists, roughly. We no longer have any of the paintings.

[00:33:58.02]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

[00:33:58.98]

JEAN LIPMAN: This is too bad.

[00:34:00.62]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Well, did that association with Sherman then continue?

[00:34:07.47]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, yes.

[00:34:08.04]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —because you wrote—

[00:34:08.76]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, definitely—

[00:34:09.82]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —occasionally.

[00:34:11.66]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. [Cross talk.] As a matter of fact, after that article, I was living in New York. And then we—the year after we were married, we rented a little house in Connecticut, a new, brand-new house that had just been finished. We rented it for six months during the summer season. I guess it was four months. And it was a marvelous little house with a terrace that had the advantage of not having a telephone, so that if people wanted to get us,

they had to come in person, or send a telegram. But it had no phone. But other than that, it was a great little house, and with lots of property. And a marvelous house. And we paid, as I remember it, very distinctly $40 a month in the summer season for it, for just—it was three months. And we were in Wilton. That was where the house was.

[00:35:03.52]

And at the time, I had just done this article for Frederic Sherman. And that was the end of that, as far as I was concerned. I was—oh, I was working on my—I was still working on my master's thesis, now that I think of it, when I did that article. That's right. I had forgotten that. I had not gotten my master's degree. I was still working on the thesis. And Howard said, "Look, this man Sherman lives in Westport, and his office is on the Main Street in Westport. Why don't you go and see him?" So I knocked on his door, and went in to see him. And we were very close friends and associates from that time on. I did a few other articles for him. And then I was his Associate Editor, for what it was worth, which was not very much in those days.

[00:35:55.27]

And then, when he—every anniversary of *Art in America*, Frederic Sherman decided there was a deficit, and he just could not continue. And somehow or other, on those anniversaries, the 10th anniversary or—it wasn't the 10th. The 25th anniversary or so on—at that time, I was very fond of the magazine, and I persuaded him to continue just a little longer. And then, when he died, there was no question about the magazine continuing. But somehow or other, it seemed a great pity for it to end. And I asked the publisher, Everett Pond, whether he would be willing to continue it on a risk basis for a little while. And I took—we bought it from Mrs. Sherman, I think for a dollar, to make it technical. And the—I took it over, and we continued it.

[00:36:55.96]

And at that time, the circulation of the magazine was 199, exactly. And it had been—it had a much, much, much larger circulation in its heyday, when Morgan and Mr. Walters, and the Walters Art Gallery, and various people supported it. But it had dropped to 199. And we had no staff, no nothing. And Howard—I said, "Well, who is going to keep track of the subscriptions?" And Howard said, "Well, any idiot could do that." And so he was the—he was elected to be that person. [They laugh.]

[00:37:31.08]

But then, our promotion project for enlarging circulation was successful enough. We got a little agency in Wilton to take it over. We got up to about 3,000, 3,500, at which point our deficit was so horrendous that we decided—it was $500 a year. It was so horrendous, and we saw deficits accumulating in the future.

[00:37:57.63]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Getting bigger and bigger and bigger.

[00:37:57.87]

JEAN LIPMAN: And we decided we could not do this. And that was when we asked Lloyd Goodrich. And Lloyd Goodrich, who was only a Consulting Editor— a consultant, to see if he could place it. And that was when Lee Ault bought it from us. In the meantime, there have been various crises where it just could not continue without a deficit. And Louisa Dresser had taken it on herself to ask six museum directors to guarantee $500 a year to meet the deficit, for which they would each get a special issue on their museum, which we did. We did two or three of them. I forget which museums. But in any—

[00:38:47.02]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Over the years, yeah.

[00:38:47.73]

JEAN LIPMAN: In any case, this, incidentally, is all in an article called "Cinderella Story," which the *Saturday Review* did. And it tells the story of *Art in America*. So I won't go into that. But it's an interesting story.

[00:39:05.84]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Okay. What was your M.A. thesis on?

[00:39:10.14]

JEAN LIPMAN: Profile—the profile, the portraits in the Quattrocento. I think that was the exact title. "Florentine Profile Portraits in the Quattrocento." This was straight out of my Offner time. And I related the background of the portraits to the landscape of the Italian Quattrocento, which was the only original part of it. And I think it was quite good, in retrospect, because the gardens— the Quattrocento gardens were very much in the style of the portraiture. And the concept of the drop-away of the land in the portraits to a very stylized distance. And the style of the landscape of the gardens was rather similar. And that was the only thing I find now really of interest in the thing.

[00:40:18.70]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. So you really had no plans to teach or do anything else with the publication?

[00:40:22.95]

JEAN LIPMAN: No, I just thought I—

[00:40:24.00]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —grew and grew and grew.

[00:40:25.11]

JEAN LIPMAN: I thought I would write, was what I thought. [Laughs.] But I should mention that I was on a no-salary basis as Associate Editor of *Art in America*— Assistant Editor of *Art in America*. And while I was editing the magazine, to say that I was on a no-salary basis needs no comment. And actually, when I was working with Lee Ault, I was being paid in stock in the company, which was a polite way of my saying, "I am willing to work without any recompense for this magazine, that this is my lifeblood," and Lee very politely turning over large quantities of the stock. But when the company was sold to Jock Whitney, the stock was worth something. So it was very—

[00:41:21.24]

PAUL CUMMINGS: So finally you got a paycheck.

[00:41:22.15]

JEAN LIPMAN: —very pleasant. And then my salary at *Art in America* was more than respectable salary at the time when the Whitney corporation took it over. It was $20,000 plus expenses, which was very ample, and very generous. And based on the time that I have always stipulated I will spend in an office, which is the only way I can work, it was very stupendous. And I began to have great guilty consciences about it when the thing got to be much more systematized, because my summer schedule was two days a week in the office, and my winter schedule was three or four days, but never full days.

[00:42:06.07]

And I was working, definitely, on my own time in the office, even with my staff of—well, the magazine had a staff of about 20 people. But somehow I did whatever I had to do, wherever I wanted to be. And if I had to be in the office six days a week, I would have been in the office six days a week. And it never was a problem to anybody except the—at the end of the—at the end of my time at *Art in America*, they would look to see where I was at 4:30. And nobody cared that I was there at eight o'clock. My time at the office was always from 8:30. That was—

[00:42:51.85]

PAUL CUMMINGS: At the crack of dawn.

[00:42:53.26]

JEAN LIPMAN: That was my office hour.

[00:42:56.67]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —Schedule. Well, one of the thing that was interested me when I was looking through the *Art in America* from, I'll say, '35 or so on, I noticed that about the only large, consistent ad was Duveen.

[00:43:11.61]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, *Art in America*'s ads, the early ads? Yes, as a matter of fact, *Art in America* was considered in Duveen's pocket, because Frederic Sherman was publishing Duveen material, really. And a publication in *Art in America* was a very inexpensive expertise. For instance, Frank Jewett Mather would write an article on a painting that Duveen owned, let's say. This was a very good way of authenticating it, and no fee.

[00:43:47.13]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I see.

[00:43:48.18]

JEAN LIPMAN: And well, it wasn't done in, well, as a plot. But this was what the magazine was doing. It was publishing important material. Duveen had the most important material. But Duveen's ad— which I forget what the rate for a page as was. It was something perfectly academic, like. $100 was really, I think, the page rate. In fact, I know it was the page rate when I took over. And this was really very simple, because $100 was quite a lot in those days. It was a—when you figure, well, when our circulation was 199, you can figure what the per-reader rate for an ad. It was the all-time high—

[00:44:32.95]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Very great.

[00:44:33.10]

JEAN CUMMINGS: —of any magazine in the world ever, where each reader was paying—

[00:44:37.99]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Fifty cents, or something—

[00:44:39.10]

JEAN LIPMAN: Something like that.

[00:44:40.36]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:44:41.32]

JEAN LIPMAN: But we—a friend of mine said at one time, well, why don't you—At one time, we didn't carry any advertising, not even Duveen, I think. And it seemed, I think—

[00:44:54.73]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did Sherman run—because he's always been such a curious figure to me. He did those little monographs, and he had the magazines—

[00:45:02.32]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes.

[00:45:02.47]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —and he seemed to have all these little sort of very elegant activities going on.

[00:45:07.00]

JEAN LIPMAN: He published books, privately-printed books for J.P. Morgan. And this is—he was a very well-to-do gentleman at one time. He had a large yacht. His publications, his book publications for Morgan subsidized *Art in America*.

[00:45:24.85]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I see.

[00:45:25.54]

JEAN LIPMAN: And it worked two ways. I mean, *Art in America* had introduced him to Mr. Morgan, this and that. And he did private publications basically for Morgan. But his own publications—there were a lot of things that were sort of laughable about him. But as a pioneer in the study of American art, I would say he has, should have, and will have, and has, I think, really right now, probably the largest reputation as a pioneer in the field of the vernacular tradition, the native tradition, whatever you want to call it—the folk art field.

He published books called *Connecticut Artists and Craftsmen* a generation before the Connecticut Historical Society thought this was anything that was even worth bringing out of their cellars. And he did a little booklet on James Sanford Ellsworth, a miniature painter. And right now—well, he owned about four of them. And there were about 20 of them that were known right now. There's a major exhibition of these miniatures that is being put on at Williamsburg by Lucy Mitchell, who has collected several hundred of them—400 or 500 of them. And they are all recorded at the Frick Library.

But his—well, he was the first person to write on Homer, Eakins, and Ryder in *Art in America*. The whole Ryder thing, about Lloyd Goodrich being the authority on Ryder, and Sherman, who was the authority of Ryder in his time, is a very mixed bag. Goodrich has totally discredited Sherman at the time, as far as authentication, as far as scholarship, and everything on Ryder. But another young scholar by the name of Robert Koch, who has specialized in Art Nouveau material, made a very large study of the Ryders in the Sherman collection that were, and I think are, totally uninsured. They were discredited by Goodrich, which meant that they were unsaleable. They were all considered forgeries.

[00:47:51.08]

But one of the interesting things is that one of the things that was sold at auction, for instance, was a little painting called "Spirit of Autumn," which, after it was sold, was since authenticated with lots of documents, letters about it, and so on and so forth. And photographs. It was completely authenticated. Sherman had sold a good many Ryders to some of the most important collections. There were three or four that he did not want to sell, and that he really did not want to sell. A few of them had very high offers in his lifetime, but he considered it—the things that he wanted to keep, he had no money by that time. That would be Mrs. Sherman's—

[00:48:35.66]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Estate?

[00:48:36.62]

JEAN LIPMAN: —estate, living—whatever, are his. And these were, as a group of six, I think, or whatever, were totally discredited as forgeries, by not only Lloyd Goodrich, but the Kecks, who examined them. On the other hand, even doctors' X-rays are sometimes fallible. And one of the interesting things—and I don't mean to propose the theory that all of these are not forgeries. But one of the interesting things with one painting that had a complete report from the Kecks was that there were little flecks of gold in the paint, which was totally impossible for Ryder. And this was one of the statistics. And I asked Mrs. Sherman about

that. And she said, "Well, I was really very embarrassed about that. I didn't even want to talk to Mr. Goodrich about it, because I repainted the frame without taking the picture out of the frame." This was what the little flecks of gold were.

[00:49:34.00]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, so that's fantastic.

[00:49:34.51]

JEAN LIPMAN: So, this is something. The painting may or may not have been a forgery, but at least the flecks of gold were there for the best of reasons.

[00:49:43.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: [Laughs.]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yeah. So anyhow, I have never believed that all of the Sherman paintings that remained in his collection, just on the law of averages, when Sherman was so very close to Ryder's friends, his time, as everything—I mean he was much closer to Ryder than any subsequent writer could be, and he was the first writer on Ryder, the first book on Ryder, the first collector of Ryder, the first authority. And he was the closest to his time.

[00:50:19.86]

PAUL CUMMINGS: So it's always interested me—

[00:50:21.39]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think the dead bird was in the Phillips collection. In fact, I'm certain that came from the Sherman collection. I mean, there are things that make it illogical, and I've always thought this would be another very good subject of re-investigation at some other time after— see who was the next authority on Ryder, after Lloyd Goodrich, and to delve into the whole question.

[00:50:49.77]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Well, it's fascinating how those stories persist, you know.

[00:50:53.61]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, they persist one way or the other. And for all I know, Goodrich's appraisal may be 100 percent right. On the other hand, if it's only 99 percent right, it would be interesting to—

[00:51:04.47]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Which is the one percent?

[00:51:05.56]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes, no, yeah.

[00:51:08.34]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, one thing that intrigues me is the interest in American folk art that you've had. How did that start?

[00:51:16.81]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, it started very simply. We were in Edith Halpert's downtown gallery, just looking around, and we saw one painting that we thought was just absolutely fascinating. We didn't buy it, but we thought it was fascinating. It was a poodle, as I recall it, a primitive poodle. And then we saw another one in the Weyhe Gallery, which we thought was more fascinating. It was some kind of a landscape, very primitive landscape. As I recall it, really, really good. The poodle wasn't. And we thought it was—the Weyhe Gallery painting was fascinating. We thought maybe we'd like to buy it. And it had been sold. And we were very sorry about it. And then we found one somewhere that we thought was equally fascinating,

and we bought it. And that was it. We put it over a sofa, and we began to see a phase.

[00:52:14.45]

PAUL CUMMINGS: When was that? When was that, would you say, roughly?

[00:52:16.64]

JEAN LIPMAN: About 1938, just about, roughly. I have kept a little book of all of the folk art paintings we bought by the year, and by the place we bought them, and the price, which is—makes fascinating reading at this point.

[00:52:32.24]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah. [Laughs.]

[00:52:32.48]

JEAN LIPMAN: For instance, the "Winter Sunday in Norway, Maine" was our national Christmas stamp. I don't know, do you remember—do you remember that, by any chance?

[00:52:40.62]

PAUL CUMMINGS: I'm afraid I don't.

[00:52:40.82]

JEAN LIPMAN: There's always a national Christmas stamp, and that was the national Christmas stamp. And we bought that in Norway, Maine for fifty cents. The man, the dealer, said, "Well, I've got to get fifty cents for that frame. So if you want it, you can have it." And it had a little tear on it that we had to restore it later for about $50. And then I think, when we put it in at the—for the Mr. Clark's collection at Cooperstown, it was worth about $500. Now, certainly $5,000 would not be what it's worth. It would be nearer $50,000, and so on, and it gets to be very funny, and an mathematical progression.

[00:53:20.19]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Why do you think that folk arts have increased so much in value?

[00:53:25.50]

JEAN LIPMAN: Have increased so much?

[00:53:26.61]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:53:27.30]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I have the—my opinion about it is very basic. I think the reason they've increased so much is that they are—I think they're worth so much. I think they're—first of all, in the 19th century, I don't believe there was any sculpture, except possibly the Schuylkill—the—

[00:53:51.03]

PAUL CUMMINGS: A Rush.

[00:53:52.27]

JEAN LIPMAN: A Rush Schuylkill, things. Maybe "The Greek Slave," and a few things, possibly. But 19th century sculpture just wasn't great sculpture at all. And some of the folk art sculpture is great sculpture by any standards. I think, my opinion, as I put it down in my—the preface of my book in 1942, on primitive painting, was that the greatest of the folk art paintings rival, equal, sometimes surpass, the greatest of the paintings of the 19th century in the more academic tradition. And I still believe that the 19th century greats notwithstanding, including all of them—Homer, Eakins, Ryder, Mount, Heave, right down the line—I don't say that they surpassed them, but I think, in many instances, they equal.

[00:54:45.43]

And I reiterated that opinion in my book that I did with Mary Black in about 1950. And I think I reiterated in the book that I am bringing out now for the Whitney Museum in 1974. And I believe that the value and the interest in folk art has not yet sifted down to separating the sheep from the goats. And I think what it does, the great ones will be valued at whatever great things are valued at. And a few of the Hicks paintings have reached that level of, like $250,000. But I think the field is still wide open for reappraisal, reevaluation, and the interest in it has proliferated because I think we see a great many connections now with what we most value in the contemporary art in various ways.

[00:55:51.15]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, we keep jumping around. Was that one of the first times you met Edith Halpert? Because she was the great folk art dealer.

[00:56:04.04]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes, as a matter of fact, though, we were in our gallery not because of the folk art. We were interested at that time in contemporary art. And we were looking at a Stuart Davis exhibition. And there was one—we were collecting folk art. No, that was later, after we were really collecting folk art. I don't know why we were in her gallery, I must admit, at that time. But a few years later, we were really collecting folk art.

[00:56:26.66]

And she had a Stuart Davis exhibition, and Howard fell in love with one of them. And it was $250. And Edith Halpert suggested that we buy it. And I said to Howard, "We just cannot do everything. We're collecting folk art," and that was that. And Edith said at the time, "You don't have to pay for it now. You can pay me for it over a period of two years, or $50 a month, whatever." And Howard really agreed with me, more or less. But we said no.

[00:56:58.49]

And the absolute bummer that we have made of our rigid standards of when we were collecting folk art—we were collecting folk art, period. One of them was the Heade, "Storm Approaching," not the one with the jagged lightning, but the great one that's in the Karolik collection. And I think it was about—I think it was the Macbeth Gallery that had that at the time. And I called Howard, and I said, "There's a great painting here that I want you to see. It's nothing we want to buy, but I just think you should see it." And we both stood in front of it with our hair standing on end, because it was so great. And I forget what the price was at the time—something like $1,500, which was a large price. But anyhow, this was something we couldn't buy. And another one was the Peto, "Poor Man's Store," that Karolik bought—

[00:57:50.63]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

[00:57:50.81]

JEAN LIPMAN: —that was hanging in the Silvermine Tavern, where we had dinner frequently, and it was an antique shop we frequented. We bought lots of folk art from Kenneth Bard. And we looked at it every time. It was a thin line between folk art and modern folk art, but we decided it was not folk art. And—

[00:58:08.56]

[Telephone ringing.]

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

[00:58:09.76]

JEAN LIPMAN: —$75—

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

[00:58:12.17]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What had you collected before you decided to specialize in folk art?

[00:58:16.85]

JEAN LIPMAN: Nothing.

[00:58:17.39]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Nothing.

[00:58:18.17]

JEAN LIPMAN: Nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing. And collecting is something that there was quite an evolution to it. [Laughs.] And after we sold our collection to Stephen Clark, we said that was the end of collecting. And in a very real sense, it certainly was. We have never collected, and we certainly don't consider ourselves collectors, nor have we since. We really did form a collection of folk art. And I think I can say that it was a great collection. It's one of the great collections, with Williamsburg and Shelburne.

[00:58:54.29]

And we really formed the collection as a collection. We filled in gaps. We bought the three Hicks paintings at a time when we had—we borrowed the money to do it. We felt we had to. We stayed up overnight one night worrying about it—should we or shouldn't we? We bought one of them from Knoedler, and two of them from a collector. And at the time it was a pretty horrendous problem.

[00:59:20.54]

And the one great—the greatest one, probably, of the three, is one that was used as the cover of the Hicks book, and the Hicks monograph on the back of it. It was a huge painting. It was dedicated to my beloved daughter, Mary Leedom, and it's just one of the great Hicks paintings. And we paid $2,500 for it. And that was a pretty horrendous thing to have done in those days, particularly as we turned down the great one that's in Williamsburg for $750. And I have a little photograph still with a price on it. And at that time—that was about 1938 or so—it was owned by a little dealer in Trenton, we literally fled from his shop when he told us what the price was because we thought he was literally insane—not just mad as you talk about—

[01:00:15.39]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That was a lot of money in those days.

[01:00:16.65]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, nothing, no primitives, really, were being sold for more than $50. In fact, we bought one of our greatest ones for $50, and we walked all around the block in Pennsylvania trying to decide whether or not we should or could. And we had described—the one painting that was missing from our collection was a scene with lots of little people. And it's called "York Springs Graveyard." And it was exactly this. We saw it, we recognized it for the dream picture. But it was $50.

[01:00:46.23]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's fantastic. Yeah.

[01:00:48.21]

JEAN LIPMAN: So anyhow, that's the way things go.

[01:00:49.71]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you decide to really specialize, and develop a whole collection of —

[01:00:54.24]

JEAN LIPMAN: We didn't. We actually never made the decision until we kept finding things that we thought were exciting. And then, somehow or other, we did. I don't know. I don't think we ever really made the decision. We found ourselves doing it somehow. All our holidays were—we were terribly excited about the material, and all our holidays were scouting trips to find it. It was when you stayed at dollar—not motels. You know, tourist homes where they gave you your bed and breakfast in a very pleasant place. Somebody asked us one time how long it took us to get to—drive to Portland. And we said, seven days, which is how long it took us. I mean, that's how we—

[01:01:37.77]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Stopping here—stopping—

[01:01:38.79]

JEAN LIPMAN: We never thought of doing it any other way. And we spent all our holidays on scouting trips. And then we found that this is what we found fun. And by then, we had quite a selection and cross-section. And we also sold as many more, many more things. We were very—we were refining at quite a rate, and making decisions on a very tight basis. And we bought a whole collection at one time, the Horace W. Davis collection, which we sold—it was an evening Parke-Bernet sale.

[01:02:16.50]

And the Mark Catalog provides interesting reading, too—for instance, the great scene, the Poughkeepsie scene that—who was the young curator at the Metropolitan? Howard—John Howard, featured in color in his book—that was one of the paintings that we didn't keep of it. We wanted six things from that collection after he died. We had known the collection very well. And they wouldn't sell them at any price. So we bought the entire collection, and we sold the entire collection. We ended up keeping about 16, instead of six things out of a great many hundred things. And we came out exactly $3.50 to the good on the whole deal, which was very fun. We expected that we'd come out somewhat even, maybe, or not get hurt very badly. But in any case, it was a whole Parke-Bernet sale. And—

[01:03:09.60]

PAUL CUMMINGS: But you still had the 16 paintings.

[01:03:10.76]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Well, I keep talking about intelligent things we did. But like the Peto thing, we went to a sale, and we turned down the great Brewster paintings—a child, a boy and girl—boy with a rooster, with the bird— the boy with the bird, and the girl. But one of the greatest pairs of things. And they were $75 at the sale. And we had it all the way up the catalog completely marked. We had considered buying them, but not at that price. And this was reasonable in those days.

[END OF TRACK AAA_lipman73_8779_m]

[00:00:03.81]

PAUL CUMMINGS: This is side two. As your interest in folk art developed, who was really handling it, or who was interested? Who was writing about it? Who was collecting it? I mean, you were very active, so—

[00:00:21.50]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, everybody, when we started really collecting said, "Well, this is ridiculous because Mrs. Rockefeller has formed a collection." And she, with the advice of Holger Cahill and Edith Halpert, had formed the Williamsburg Collection. But that was a real drop in the bucket. And I don't think she ever paid more than $50 for anything, because that was the way things were priced in those days. I would doubt it. I don't know. But at the same time, I think we were collecting—well, we started collecting actively in 1938, which was about as early as anybody, I think, except for Mrs. Rockefeller. But more or less at the same time were Carl Droppert, Halliday Thomas collection. The garbage is much, much later. But

Carl Droppert and Halliday Thomas. There were a few other people.

[00:01:26.58]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, did you get to know these people well?

[00:01:29.34]

JEAN LIPMAN: Not really. We went to see how George Thomas and the Hallidays—we did stop in to see because they also had an antique shop.

[00:01:41.04]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh.

[00:01:41.94]

JEAN LIPMAN: And we visited them. We didn't—no, we didn't get together with any collectors at all, not at all. There really were no collectors as such in the sense that you think now, as Kaplan collects folk art, so and so and so and so.

[00:01:57.81]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Down the list.

[00:01:57.96]

JEAN LIPMAN: There were very few collectors. However, all this is quite fully documented in—well, my 1942 primitive painting book, and other books, the collections, the book I did with Mary Black. All the exhibitions are documented.

[00:02:13.76]

PAUL CUMMINGS: But I'm curious about the things that aren't published, you know, in the sense of how one found things. Everything was really, what, in antique shops?

[00:02:22.70]

JEAN LIPMAN: Everything was either in antique shops with—well, as I said, the Hicks, that was much later in our collection. Knoedler had those. Everything was in antique shops, or still in private houses. And the antique dealers would have gotten their things from private houses. And occasionally they would not have bought something for some reason, but they would take you to the house, show it to you, or say, "If you will come back this afternoon, there are some things."

[00:02:50.03]

We got a marvelous little thing from—in New Bedford that way. We were in a shop, and he said there's a—not a—it wasn't a collection. It was somebody who owned something. And he said, "If you'd be interested—" after we had bought something— He said, "I can bring you something that you might be interested in." And he went to the house and got it, brought it. We didn't go prowling around in private houses and farmhouses the way Edith Halpert did to get things. That we did not. We were at the stage where they were in antique shops or houses. However, we bought weathervanes off barns, that kind of thing.

[00:03:25.62]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really? Yeah. Well one thing, there were not many people writing about it, were there?

[00:03:29.67]

JEAN LIPMAN: Nobody. Nobody was writing about it, which was the reason that Edith Halpert loathed and despised me.

[00:03:36.21]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

[00:03:36.48]

JEAN LIPMAN: She hated me worse than most women. She hated most women, but she particularly disliked me because she knew perfectly well that she was the person who should have written about it. And she should have, but she hadn't.

[00:03:47.85]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, I see.

[00:03:48.51]

JEAN LIPMAN: So anyhow, I did. And well, my book on—my book on American primitive painting in 1942 was not the first book. Clara Endicott Sears had written a book called *Some American Primitives*. And it was about her—she was a collector. It was about her collection. And she was very—it was the collection that she formed for Fruitlands, the Fruitlands and the Wayside museums that she was a trustee of, or well, everything of. And she wrote this book. But it was not, in the sense—well it was a chatty book. It was called *Some American Primitives*, about that collection. But my book was the first book that, well, objectively presented primitive paintings from all the collectors.

[00:04:38.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you come to do that?

[00:04:39.65]

JEAN LIPMAN: And also, each of my other books was the first one in its field. I did one called *American Folk Art in Wood, Metal, and Stone*. This was called—this was sculpture. And nobody had written about that. And then I did one called *American Folk Decoration*. And nobody was interested in painted furniture or folk decoration in that sense. Alice Winchester and I did one called *Primitive Painters in America*, which was biographies of, like, one-man shows in print. And I can honestly say that each of the books that I did was the first one in the field, because I was writing about folk art. Other people have written about it. And Holger Cahill certainly was the great writer in the field, and he did these exhibitions for Newark, and the Museum of Modern Art. And these are still the best writing in the field, with no exception, including Jean Lipman, [Paul laughs] and the most important pioneer work in the field. He was the great pioneer in that field.

[00:05:46.04]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you come to do these books? Because most of them were in the sort of—well, they started rather early. The first one was in '42.

[00:05:53.78]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, this is what I wanted to write about, and this is what I wrote about. And in those days, one's royalties on books were very slim. But they have continued. The royalties have continued, strangely enough, right down the line and accumulating, whatever you call it, accelerating at an accelerated pace until the books were out of print. And Oxford did not reprint the "primitive painting" book. Oh, yes, it did. It went into two editions. And Pantheon didn't reprint the sculpture book. But all of these have been reprinted as Dover reprints. And the thing that amuses me to no end is that they're being reviewed now without any consideration of the fact that they're straight reprints, because I don't believe in slightly updating anything. You either keep it in print exactly as it is or—

[00:06:45.98]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Or do a new book.

[00:06:46.49]

JEAN LIPMAN: Even the collections are not updated because they can't be. I mean, you either update the whole thing, or you don't. And they're straight reprints. But they're being reviewed now. That's somewhat gratifying in a way, but very upsetting when people think this is the way I would have presented this field in 1974, when actually it was what was available in 1942.

[00:07:11.12]

PAUL CUMMINGS: '48, or '42—

[00:07:12.54]

JEAN LIPMAN: So, but anyhow—

[00:07:14.16]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, was it difficult to get a publisher for something like that?

[00:07:17.07]

JEAN LIPMAN: No. As a matter of fact, my answer to that is, strangely enough, I have not found it difficult to get a publisher for these. These were specialized fields, and I guess specialized publishers. And I don't remember ever taking any of these early books to two publishers. This is not so with the later books. I have an agent, and a very good one. Willis Wing was a very good friend of mine at Collins-Knowlton-Wing. It was my agent. And—well, I shouldn't go into the fact that not all of the publications that I have done have been taken by the first publisher that she has presented it to. She has found no difficulty in placing the books. But the books that I have done—well, I don't think many of them have been taken to two publishers.

[00:08:18.68]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Wow. That's incredible. So often books travel around and around.

[00:08:23.45]

JEAN LIPMAN: The one, as a matter of fact, I really, really think the only book that has been taken to two publishers was the one that Viking is now doing, which will be, I really think, a bestseller. And it was turned down by Dutton for only one reason. Cy Nelson had been doing—working with me for the Calder book, specifically at the Whitney. And I felt I really owed it to him to offer it to him first. But in the meantime, he was at work on a series of books in the same field, and had just commissioned a book on sculpture, I mean folk sculpture. And he had just done the quilt book and—

[00:09:08.57]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, right everybody's doing a quilt book.

[00:09:09.86]

JEAN LIPMAN: —the chair book, and the painted furniture book. And he turned it down on that basis.

[00:09:18.06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was a logical thing for him to do.

[00:09:19.13]

JEAN LIPMAN: We offered it to Viking, whom we think is the—I would have—this was my agent's first choice for this kind of a book, and I just felt I had to offer it to Dutton first, and Viking second, instead of the other way around. But I think, I really do believe that I have a clean record on offering the books to publishers. I was trying to think back, because the folk decoration book was an Oxford book, also. And they had done my other book. And the Dodd Mead book. I think, yes, that it's a clean record.

[00:09:58.28]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How do you like the Dover reprints?

[00:10:00.44]

JEAN LIPMAN: Very much. I think they do a fabulous job. They reprint the material, not photographically, but with all original photographs. And I don't know whether everybody

knows that. But I had kept about two-thirds of my photographs from these early books, even 1942. And it was quite a good record. A lot of them had been lost, but they supplemented the ones that I did not have with photographs from all the institutions that had them. And if there was one missing, or something that they absolutely couldn't get, they did do it photographically. But they did all new color plates. And they did the thing entirely from new material. And naturally, there are some flaws. The color is not the greatest. And they are planning to correct this in subsequent editions. The color in some instances was not the greatest.

[00:10:52.43]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, colors— you never know what it is to have it sometimes.

[00:10:55.43]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, the early books were done without color, anyhow. And color was extremely unimportant. And I would just as soon have had the books done without color. But from their point of view, it was better to do it with color. So, they did.

[00:11:10.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How has it been from your point of view, seeing this enormous interest develop? I mean, there are lots of books now being done on furniture and quilts.

[00:11:18.06]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think it's absolutely staggering. I think it's astonishing, amazing. There are so many books that, I feel very strongly, that the field has not quite sifted down yet. Because instead of dozens of books, there could probably be a few more definitive ones. But, well the quilt field is a whole new field of interest. Very validly, I think. The Whitney got that started.

[00:11:44.31]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh, it's incredible. A good friend of mine from Paris was here a couple of years ago, running all over, buying quilts. She said, "It's so important to have a great American quilt in your apartment in Paris."

[00:11:54.12]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Well, Alice Winchester was there, and everybody said you must go to see the Quilts American, which I thought was absolutely marvelous. And they were all sold at the exhibition.

[00:12:06.71]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Oh, that's [inaudible].

[00:12:07.55]

JEAN LIPMAN: The Whitney deserves credit for that.

[00:12:09.68]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, let's go back and talk about *Art in America* a little bit, because that's really been kind of the day-to-day activity for so long. And the magazine changed every so often. It changed the format, changed the colors, the various things. But I'm curious about, during the '40s—well, when you acquired *Art in America*, it stayed in the same format for a little while. And then it started to change.

[00:12:47.99]

JEAN LIPMAN: After Lee Ault acquired it, it changed drastically in format and size, basically, and the amount of money that was put into it, which was very considerable.

[00:12:56.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Now, was that his interest in changing this, or

yours?

[00:13:00.50]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I think all of our interest. Tony Bauer and I worked together as Lee Ault brought Tony Bauer in as managing editor.

[00:13:08.13]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Now, when did he come in?

[00:13:09.60]

JEAN LIPMAN: Right when Lee Ault took the magazine over.

[00:13:12.06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: I see.

[00:13:13.00]

JEAN LIPMAN: Lee Ault took me to lunch, said he had a friend whom he thought could do a good job with the magazine, subject to our getting along. He thought it would be a fine idea. And Tony was absolutely great to work with as a managing editor— absolutely frightful moments that we had from time to time, but very seldom. We worked together, I think, very happily. And we were on the same wavelength about what we wanted to do, although we were—no two people could have been more opposite in every way as far as our work habits were concerned.

[00:13:50.58]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Because I only knew him very vaguely in the last ten years, or something like that.

[00:13:57.24]

JEAN LIPMAN: Tony was interested in everything. He knew everybody. Really, almost all the —he was the last person to name drop anybody. He'd talk about somebody. He knew everybody, from Robert Penn Warren, Elizabeth Hardwick, Gustavo Duran, during the Spanish Civil War, when Tony was in Spain. Desmond Guinness was a very good friend of his. When we wanted an article for the *World of Art* on great Irish houses, he asked Desmond Guinness to do it. John Russell was a friend of his, which is how we got him as our London correspondent—so on and so forth. He was a really internationally-able person. He was multilingual. He had traveled a great deal. He knew people in key places.

[00:14:47.19]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What had he done before the magazine?

[00:14:48.65]

JEAN LIPMAN: He was a—he translated. As a matter of fact, Francine Gray knows what Tony's activities were as a translator. He was a writer, and basically a translator. He translated Baudelaire and Rimbaud, I think. And he was a very well-known writer and as a translator, mainly. And he had done a lot of writing as a freelance writer.

[00:15:17.40]

PAUL CUMMINGS: 'Cause I just—I would have never known what his background was.

[00:15:21.21]

JEAN LIPMAN: He was a very distinguished writer. He wrote extremely well. Even the memo that Tony and I drafted for Jack Whitney at one point was, I think, quite a distinguished piece of writing, which is in the Archives.

[00:15:36.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, there's volumes of material in there.

[00:15:38.88]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, the Archives has a complete memorandum on the whole story of *Art in America* in its last years under Tony's and my management. So that's all on record in the Archives.

[00:15:59.02]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Right. Well, as the magazine developed—I'm particularly interested in it because it reflects, in a way, I think the whole development of the art market and the broadening of it here. The advertising increased. The styles of it would change. The style of it changed every so often. Was that apparent to you as it was going on, or—

[00:16:30.18]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, very.

[00:16:30.96]

PAUL CUMMINGS: It was?

[00:16:31.35]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. As a matter of fact, the advertising increase was sensational. Our advertising manager, Beulah Allison, built the advertising up from—well, I sold advertising myself before Lee Ault took the magazine over, as one of my jobs. And for one issue I think I had about 40 pages of advertising, just one special issue, which was more or less an antiques issue. But the basic advertising of the magazine had been absolutely virtually nil.

The way we got advertising was telling nobody what our circulation was. The rate was $100 a page. At the time, still when it was a circulation of 199, we had just one ad, as I recall it, I think Duveen. I got an appointment somehow with, very easily as it turned out again—Arthur Houghton answered the phone, because I wanted to ask somebody in charge if we could inveigle them into—Corning glass into a—Steuben it was, actually, into taking an ad because I thought it would be very—a good come-on for other advertisers.

[00:17:45.25]

And Mr. Houghton saw me, and asked me what the circulation of the magazine was. And I said I couldn't—I couldn't tell that. So he said, "Well, what is your advertising rate?" And I said, "$100 a page." And he said, "Well, and you can't tell me what the circulation is?" He had had some respect for the magazine. And I said, "No, I'm sorry. I can't." And he said, "Well, I'll have to call in our advertising manager." And he called him in, and he said, "Would you—let's start back. What is your circulation?" This is what [inaudible] had said. "I'm sorry, I can't tell you." The advertising manager said, "I live to see the day." Well, in any case, the upshot of it was that Mr. Houghton did take a page out. I say "he" did because he told his advertising manager to do it.

[00:18:36.31]

Well, there were a few come-ons of this sort. We got Wildenstein, Knoedler, Duveen, Steuben on this perfectly ridiculous basis. "Will you come along and help us get some advertising?" It couldn't have been more frank. And they were willing to do it. But somehow, with that as a start, by the time the magazine was well launched, certainly under Mr. Whitney's sponsorship, the advertising paid for itself very well. Dealers told us about the results they got. It was being sold on a totally businesslike basis, including an ABC-audited record. And the advertising, of course, was almost double what any other art magazine got.

[00:19:27.03]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Well, the circulation got to be—

[00:19:28.59]

JEAN LIPMAN: The circulation was 55,000 at its—when I left. It has declined somewhat since.

But that was a lot.

[00:19:37.38]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. I'm curious, how did you build that circulation?

[00:19:41.22]

JEAN LIPMAN: I didn't have anything to do personally with building it. But we set out—it was a direct mail promotion, some very moderate radio, television stuff, very, very inconsequential. It was direct mail entirely, very expensive, very accurately recordable. You pay for just so much, you get so much. And the whole crux of it was the renewal rate. And that's all it amounted to. And it worked out reasonably well—

[00:20:12.92]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Because I used to advertise things in it.

[00:20:14.87]

JEAN LIPMAN: —not too well—it cost an awful lot. The magazine ran at a deficit.

[00:20:20.08]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's interesting.

[00:20:20.63]

JEAN LIPMAN: It never lost—it never lost any of its promoters, shall I say, its sponsors, like Lee Ault, Charlie Dana, who was the vice president. Nobody ever lost any money on it. But this was obviously on a tax basis, whatever, where they were supporting a magazine, and taking losses, this and that. But nobody ever lost any money on the magazine. Nor do I believe, to this day, that anybody has ever, in the normal business-like sense, made any money. Although, I certainly cannot speak for the present management. They may be making money on *Art in America*, but I would be astounded if that were the case.

[00:21:03.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Because I always found that, when I would use it—when I would advertise various things in various magazines, that the response from that was always so much superior to the other ones.

[00:21:15.32]

JEAN LIPMAN: For *Art in America*?

[00:21:16.19]

PAUL CUMMINGS: For *Art in America*. Yeah.

[00:21:17.45]

JEAN LIPMAN: The response? Well, we got much more advertising. And—

[00:21:20.57]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, but I mean you'd—if you took, say, a half-page ad there and a half-page ad in *Art News*, the coupon with a key would always—*Art in America* would be way up there, and *Art News* would be—

[00:21:31.55]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think it was. Actually, until the last years, our advertising rate was lower than the other magazines, because our circulation was lower. *Antiques* and *Art News* had a higher circulation than we did until the last years, or whatever. I don't know exactly when, but *Art in America* finally ended up with the largest circulation of any art magazine. And at that point, our advertising rate was also—

[00:22:00.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But I mean, the people who read it seemed to spend money, you know, in terms of—the other magazines, they didn't.

[00:22:08.94]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I don't feel that our advertising ever, in the last years, reflected the policies and the content of the magazine, because our interests were in newer fields, like, well, film. I was very interested in getting film into the magazine at the end—serious articles on film, and photography, and Earthworks, and conceptual art, and so on. And these were not the people, the galleries, who could afford to advertise. In fact, photography galleries really weren't advertising. Conceptual art galleries really weren't, on the same scale.

[00:22:48.28]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:22:48.72]

JEAN LIPMAN: So what it amounted to is that, at the greatest circulation, and the highest advertising rate, the galleries who could afford to pay these rates for full-page color pages, or a double-spread color, this kind of thing, were really the galleries who were showing that they were in the category of the great galleries of advanced art, and so on. But they were making the point that was not consistent with the character of the—well, it was not consistent with the editorial character of the magazine, which I—was one of the things that I was very, very unhappy about.

[00:23:31.47]

I don't mean that had anything to do with my resignation. I was sorry that the advertising, which had to pay for the magazine, could not more closely reflect the editorial policies of the magazine. But it was impossible, because the people who could afford to pay for advertising were, like, Steuben glass, with their crystal sculpture. And this was not what the magazine represented. In fact, we consistently refused, after one time when we fell by the wayside, to publish any—well, we never, never bargained, which is one reason the advertisers respected us.

[00:24:07.86]

They would say—I would go call on the dealers just to be nice. And it helped the advertising department for the Editor to stop in. And I wanted to see what they were doing, anyhow. But I always went to see people to be pleasant. But they would say, "We would love to take an ad in your magazine. What do you think you will be doing about this exhibition?" And I would say, I'm sorry to say; nothing."

[00:24:31.74]

And we never—and our Advertising Representative was absolutely—or, Manager—Beulah Allison, was absolutely marvelous about that. She never asked me to do anything for an ad. If we did anything for an ad, believe me, she followed it up like a beagle hound and never took no for an answer. But the fact, the sequence, was always the content, and then when you advertise—never, never, never the reverse. And I think this is one reason that the advertisers respected the magazine, so that if we did do something for them, they knew we did it because we wanted to, and never because we thought we'd get an ad.

[00:25:14.36]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:25:14.84]

JEAN LIPMAN: But we got more advertising that way. None of the dealers were ever angry about the amount of space that was given to them based on the space of their ad, which was never so with all the other magazines. And all of them were always displeased about the space, because if they got maximum space, well then, there was only one advertiser who was really pleased, and all the others were angry. So everybody was always annoyed no

matter what space they got.

[00:25:42.32]

PAUL CUMMINGS: The one thing that interests me, in 1945 you did an issue, mainly—well, there's a feature article on research in American art. How did it come about at that point that that was an interesting topic?

[00:25:59.60]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I think it was an interesting topic. I mean, research was something that was very, very much needed. It was being done. And there wasn't enough published serious research in various fields, as I recall.

[00:26:17.46]

PAUL CUMMINGS: It still is a problem.

[00:26:18.78]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Yeah.

[00:26:24.75]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Let's see. Oh, the New Talent series, which started, I guess, in the mid '50s—was that because of your interests or just the shifts in the art world?

[00:26:39.57]

JEAN LIPMAN: "Presenting New Talent?"

[00:26:40.71]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:26:41.13]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I think I can say honestly that everything that was presented in the magazine while I was editor was something that was my interest. I mean, any major presentation, like New Talent. Tony Bauer found a great, great many interesting subjects, like the Bloomsbury Group for instance, that we published—I can't think of the name of the author—very, very well-known writer who did our article on the Bloomsbury Group that Tony knew, the one who did the Strachey biography. Well, in any case, this kind of thing, where articles that were suggested by Tony Bauer and John Russell—we had a great advisory board.

[00:27:28.05]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Were they active? Did they really give you lots of—

[00:27:30.60]

JEAN LIPMAN: Totally active.

[00:27:31.05]

PAUL CUMMINGS: They were? Yeah.

[00:27:31.95]

JEAN LIPMAN: They were really anything but masthead people. We met either twice a year, or later, once a year. And we literally picked their brains for ideas of anything that could be done in the magazine. And we took down all their ideas. And the—well, for instance, the impossible art, the conceptual art concept, this was Tom Messer's idea. And he didn't do it for the museum. None of the ideas that had already been simmering in museum directors' minds that were in work were things that—they were perfectly willing to talk about it, but our principle with *Art in America* was that major presentations we wanted to have things that had not been done, not things—in no way a review of things that had already been

done, or that had been presented. The things that we presented as major things were things that we thought would be interesting possibly to be done. And this gets very confused as the years go by, even sometimes as the months go by, because sometimes something is presented as an exciting idea. And when you look at it later you think, well, why did they do that?

[00:28:55.23]

For instance, the multiples—we—Nan Pina did an article on multiples. And this was before multiples existed, before multiples were thought of as a concept. A few galleries had made four or five of something. And a few artists had done more than—but in any case, the multiples concept, as a concept for what could be done was—we did it before it was done. And this is the only way we found it interesting to—to function. And there were no New Talent exhibitions before we did New Talent issues. I guess that's the way to put it.

[00:29:32.49]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Hmm. It must have been fun, running around looking for all those things, and finding them.

[00:29:34.92]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, this was done entirely by our advisory group. And the group included—well, the New Talent issues say who the people are who did them. And they were the top people in each field, from Dorothy Miller for paintings, to Jim Selby, and the people who were the people who were looking for new talent at the time.

[00:29:58.23]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. A collectors' group. Yeah.

[00:29:58.95]

JEAN LIPMAN: My memory for names is perfectly awful, but they were the top people in each field.

[00:30:08.35]

PAUL CUMMINGS: One thing that interested me, you had Donald Karshan doing that series of prints.

[00:30:13.99]

JEAN LIPMAN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:30:14.26]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did that come about—I mean, the idea? Was that his or yours?

[00:30:18.73]

JEAN LIPMAN: No. It was our idea to present—let me think now. I think—I think the idea of doing a major—one major presentation was his idea, based on a special issue that we had asked him to do for a summer issue on the history of American printmaking. And I believe this was his idea—it certainly wasn't mine—to do one featured print that we would present as a multiple in an edition of 55,000—as a print. In other words, that a print could be done—well, the Calder lithographs, for instance, are exactly what we were doing. They were being reproduced in exactly the same way. They were done with the cooperation of the artist, the original work done by the artist, overseen by the artist, and in that size edition. And it was a very expensive thing to do. And I think that I kept it going longer than the management thought it reasonable. But the problem with it was cost. And it was Donald Karshan's idea to do it.

[00:31:46.10]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. One thing, just sitting here looking at the Calder all the time reminds me that you've had a long association with him, haven't you?

[00:31:53.72]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes.

[00:31:54.13]

PAUL CUMMINGS: With Calder.

[00:31:54.83]

JEAN LIPMAN: Can you turn it off for one second?

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

Very long association with him.

[00:31:57.56]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Where does he come into all of this?

[00:31:59.12]

JEAN LIPMAN: Into our lives? Well, the first time he comes into our lives, as I recall it, was just about the time I was writing my master's thesis.

[00:32:10.95]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really?

[00:32:11.36]

JEAN LIPMAN: In about 1932, roughly. We met him—a very good friend of his, who appears in his autobiography—and you will have to forgive me, but my memory for names is absolutely, just terrible at this point—was a mutual friend of ours. And we were at a party of his, and the Calders were there. And Sandy—we were—this was when we had rented this little house in Wilton. And Sandy said, "While you're in Connecticut, come up and stop by and see us sometime." And we certainly knew nothing about his sculpture at the time at all.

[00:32:47.84]

And we were driving, or thought of driving up somewhere. And we thought, well, we'd go right through Roxbury, so why don't we stop and see the Calders? I guess we knew something about his sculpture, very little. But in any case, there was a croquet game, and forest, and we stopped off there. And Louisa came out and said, "What color do you want?" And we said, "Color of what?" And she said, "Croquet!" So we picked up a red mallet and ball, and we started playing. It was like something out of *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. And there were big barrels of cider or wine, or something. And as I recall it, we played croquet and had something to eat and tap beer or cider, or whatever it was. And then we went on our way. And well, we've known the Calders since then.

[00:33:35.53]

And I don't remember how we got to know them better. But I suspect, like all acquaintances and long-time friendships with artists, it was one we found that we greatly admired his work. And we've been very, very close friends ever since. And I don't mean "collector," or whatever friends. We've been close friends of the Calders, and feel that they're among our closest friends. And we were touched when Sandy, in his autobiography, mentioned Howard Lipman, his favorite collector. So that was very pleasant. There were an awful lot of Calder collectors.

[00:34:14.06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:34:14.21]

JEAN LIPMAN: But I guess there aren't any—I guess there is no other private collector who has, as consistently and quantitatively, or whatever, collected Calder. Other institutions, like

the Modern, have as many Calders, I guess, or have collected them as assiduously. But I don't guess there are any other private collectors.

[00:34:36.92]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:34:37.82]

JEAN LIPMAN: And we have a few—well, I don't know whether Calder—Sandy has a marvelous sense of humor, just great. People think that he's half-asleep part of the time. But one of the examples of when he was slightly asleep or asleep, we were driving to see one of his new sculptures at Segre's factory from his house in Roxbury. And he was asleep on the front seat. And we didn't know that Arthur Miller—he was married to Marilyn Monroe at the time—lived next door. And the Miller house, it's next door to the Calder's in Roxbury. And the Miller house had a great barn that had just been roofed in this horrible shiny stuff that they put on barns now, instead of shingles. And Howard and I were in the back seat. And Howard said to Louisa, "What is that shiny, shiny stuff on that beautiful barn?" And Sandy opened one eye, and he said, "That's Marilyn's hot tin roof," which I think is a great ad lib comment. [Laughs.]

[00:35:38.17]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's marvelous.

[00:35:38.56]

JEAN LIPMAN: But in any case, this is Sandy. And the other thing, though, is that he has, like all artists, he really has no sense of humor about other artists. Or one of—we, at the time, I don't know whether you remember, David Smith, who was also a very good friend of ours, had just published the statement in the *Times* about the sculpture that a collector had bought and stripped the paint off of because he wanted it down to the stainless steel. At the time, David was just starting to do his "Cubi." And this thing had absolutely no more relationship to a stainless steel sculpture than this, the "Raven" series that he painted black. So he published a statement in the *Times* that this sculpture was now worth the weight of the metal. [Phone rings.]

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

Yeah. Well in any case, David Smith had published the statement that this sculpture was now worth $37.84, which was the cost of the metal, after the collector had stripped off his paint. Sandy was—I guess David Smith was the only sculptor Sandy was—"jealous of" isn't the word, but he would just as soon have heard unfavorable stories about him as favorable stories. And he was interested in him. And we were in Saché at the time visiting the Calders. And I thought he might have missed the *Times* article, which indeed he had. So I told him the story. And he said, "What was it that collector did to David's sculpture?" And I said, "He stripped off all the paint." And Sandy said, "And then it fell apart?" [Laughs.]

[00:37:13.44]

PAUL CUMMINGS: I see. [Laughs.]

[00:37:13.64]

JEAN LIPMAN: Which is the way he felt about David. But then the other thing I thought was very funny was one of the first three large stabiles that Sandy had made—there were three of them that were shown. David Noyes—Eliot Noyes bought one. And we went to—we thought his looked marvelous, and we went to see it in the gallery, wherever it was. And it was—it's the "Long Nose," which is one of Sandy's very favorite things. In fact, it's the cover. It's used as the cover of his autobiography in the new edition that he did. And he always was very fond of it. And I think it's one of the great, great Calders. It's one of my favorites, if not the favorite. It's a huge, bird-like thing.

And at the time we had a maid, a colored maid of Father Divine, who answered the phone, "Peace, it's wonderful." And she was with us for about three or four months. And she, one time said to me, "Mrs. Lipman, what is that big black thing out in the field there?" And you

feel like an idiot trying to explain what a sculpture is. But I went into all of that. "The sculptor had made it because he liked the way it looked." And she said, "What does it look like?" And I said, "Well, it may look a little like a bird. But that isn't why he did it. He just liked the way it looked." And she went on sweeping. And after about two minutes, she looked up, and she said, "Mrs. Lipman, whoever made that sure run out of something to do." So anyhow, I thought that was pretty funny. And I told Sandy the story—not funny in the least. [They laugh.] He thought that was very unfunny.

[00:39:00.23]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's marvelous. It's funny.

[00:39:01.28]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, anyhow.

[00:39:02.90]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you know David Smith, who also is apparent in your collection, because you really built another sculpture collection with the Whitney and—I'm curious about how that came about, and why it was sculpture?

[00:39:22.28]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, Howard—Howard is primarily interested—he was a sculptor. He was interested in sculpture. And the only reason that we had a sculpture, if you want to call it that, three-dimensional things, weathervanes, figureheads, cigar store figures in our collection, which went to Cooperstown, and it was the only collection of folk art that had—except Williamsburg—that had both media. People either collected paintings or sculpture—

[00:39:49.55]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right.

[00:39:50.54]

JEAN LIPMAN: —and was that we landed in Rockland, Maine one time, and stopped in to see an antiques dealer. And he had four staggering figureheads, just incredible. And Howard insisted on buying them, while I kept saying we are only collecting paintings. But that is how we started collecting the sculpture. Also, Howard said, "We are going to buy them." And we bought two of them from Rubenstein in Rockland. And then we—and also a cigar store figure, all three of which are in Cooperstown, among their great—the things that they consider so key to their collection, that they have refused to lend them to my folk art exhibition.

[00:40:32.80]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, really? [Laughs.]

[00:40:32.95]

JEAN LIPMAN: I'm going to straighten that out, I hope, somehow. But the four things that were the key sculptural things that they do not—

[00:40:41.59]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How fascinating.

[00:40:42.31]

JEAN LIPMAN: But in any case, this is why Howard is primarily interested in sculpture. And the collections are primarily Howard's, though we have always discussed everything. But we haven't collected. We collected for the Whitney. We collect—made those little—I forget what they were called, the collections, the traveling collections.

[00:41:02.84]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Right.

[00:41:04.03]

JEAN LIPMAN: The new, younger sculptors, the two traveling collections that we formed for the Whitney that traveled. And they're now in the Whitney's permanent collection. And the Calder collection for the Whitney, which we have tried to get some major Calders. And he has released things from his private collection that were on—not for sale in any way—for acquisition by the Whitney, which was a great break for us and the Whitney, we think.

[00:41:36.31]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How did you get so involved with the Whitney, as opposed to, say, one of the other museums?

[00:41:41.68]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, it's the great museum for American art. There is no other that compares with the Whitney in any way as a museum that collects American art.

[00:41:54.70]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And that was it. That was the—

[00:41:57.07]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. That's it. I mean, we knew Lloyd Goodrich and Jack Bauer. We also knew Alfred Barr and Dorothy Miller and everyone else. But the Whitney is the museum that has the—has and should have the greatest collection of American art. It should have, and it has.

[00:42:17.65]

PAUL CUMMINGS: How do you think the collection is going to develop over the years, since the prices increased, and all of this is getting so complicated?

[00:42:24.97]

JEAN LIPMAN: Of American art?

[00:42:26.65]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:42:26.86]

JEAN LIPMAN: I have no idea. [Coughs.] I don't know.

[00:42:31.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: But the development of the collections and things at the Whitney—

[00:42:37.12]

JEAN LIPMAN: How will it continue? There are always, if somebody is agile, there will certainly always, if there is a future to American art, there will be a future to great American art collecting. The way Alfred Barr collected was not on the basis of "prices are too high and I can't buy this." This was not at all the way great collections are formed by museums.

[00:43:00.88]

PAUL CUMMINGS: They kept getting people coming along.

[00:43:02.98]

JEAN LIPMAN: Their art, and—actually, if one of the greatest masterpieces of all times, whose price is too high, comes up, I think it is probably just up to the trustees, somehow, to make it possible. Because if something is the greatest thing that there is, and the museum just absolutely has to have it, it is probably drastically underpriced for whenever the time is,

right now. So I suspect that the combination of paying whatever has to be paid for the greatest things, and being alert to the things that are coming up will make it perfectly [inaudible].

[00:43:37.37]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What do you think of the Metropolitan's deaccession activities?

[00:43:42.32]

JEAN LIPMAN: I am one of the people who feels that Tom Hoving has acted as a politician rather than a great director. And I think that the way the Metropolitan has behaved has had a very terrible repercussion on the whole museum world. We get this in Arizona, where collectors are leery of giving things to museums, where they—they hardly read the *New York Times* in Arizona, but they followed every—

[00:44:16.73]

PAUL CUMMINGS: They hear about it. [Laughs.]

[00:44:17.42]

JEAN LIPMAN: —every lap of—no, they've read every bit of this. I think John Canaday has served a great purpose by bringing us into the light. Obviously, the Metropolitan is way beyond any possible damage by one director. But to the maximum damage that one director can damage his museum, I think Hoving has done it.

[00:44:40.85]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah. It's certainly unbelievable.

[00:44:43.40]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think Hoving is irresponsible to the degree that I am virtually sure he couldn't have read the introduction to his *Harlem on My Mind* catalog and written what he did. I think he had no concept of what Henry Geldzahler's exhibition was all about when he wrote his introduction to it. And I think he has been quite irresponsible in his actions. I think there has been no justification for it. And I think there's no more reason to try to justify it than to try to justify Watergate. You can justify anything if you want. Perfectly possible to justify Watergate as a minor occurrence. And possibly in comparison with other things, such as what's happening to our planet, ecology-wise, all these things are most minor, which I think they probably are. But for what they are, I certainly am all against the present management of the Metropolitan.

[00:45:46.79]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, you are now Director of Publications at the Whitney, right? Isn't that your title there?

[00:45:54.93]

JEAN LIPMAN: That is my title. There never was a Director of Publications at the Whitney. So the title is—the job is possibly, potentially very major, but more minor than the title might imply.

[00:46:09.24]

PAUL CUMMINGS: What actually is it? And what do you do there?

[00:46:12.72]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I work with the curators as best I can on the publications that are coming up, the catalogs that are coming up from, in some instances, a discussion of everything before the thing is even started, depending on how the curator feels about my helpfulness. Some curators have discussed everything from start to finish, concept to blueprints; some not. Some I find it very difficult to get to read the manuscripts, the Samaras catalog, for instance. I guess I read and worked with the—the text, from the time it left

Lucas' hands, with about 18 readings. And Nancy Foote, who is now the managing editor of *Art in America*, and who was my secretary, has been working at the Whitney one day a week on this project. She has been working with the curators. And as problems come up, I've worked with them as-needed with their publications.

[00:47:23.13]

And I have also originated a few publications, where I'm afraid the cart came a little before the horse, or vice versa, when I wanted to do a show, a *Calder's Circus* show. I then suggested that the catalog be done as a commercial publication. I firmly believe that if a major publication is to be done, that it should be of interest as a trade publication on a straight royalty basis, arranged through an agent, or it isn't that major. And this has been the case with the shows, with the publications that I've instigated, which is the *Calder's Circus* book, which was done by Dutton as a book, not as a catalog.

[00:48:09.18]

I don't believe in catalogs. I think omitting anything because it isn't available, in these days particularly, falsifies the material. And a great many things were invited to show for the *Calder's Circus* show. And the film was shown, but the book was a book, a Dutton paperback and hardcover. And this is what we're doing with the *Flowering of American Folk Art*. It's a Viking book. And the book, in a sense, takes precedence over the exhibition, because we've invited everything that's in the book to come to the show.

[00:48:41.32]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh, I see.

[00:48:41.49]

JEAN LIPMAN: But we have not included in the book anything because it can be shown—for instance, Winterthur lends nothing, but that has not meant that we have cut down on the things from Winterthur in the book, which will also serve as a catalog.

[00:48:57.06]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So the book will be larger than the exhibition.

[00:48:59.67]

JEAN LIPMAN: Much larger. Yes, the book is a Viking book. It will be a proper—

[00:49:03.30]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Who's the editor on that?

[00:49:04.20]

JEAN LIPMAN: What?

[00:49:04.65]

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's Viking. Who's the editor at Viking?

[00:49:06.63]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, Barbara Byrne. Ryan Holm is the editor. I mean, is acting. He's the—I forget his exact title. He's the Director of Studio Books. And it's a Studio Book. Barbara Byrne is the editor for this project. But this, again, is a straight, straight book, arranged by an agent with all the rights— straight royalties in this instance, and the Calder book, to the Whitney. And this is the way I think publications, major publications should be done. I think that books that cannot be not only paid for, but books that make money, as they do, should be very small publications, paid for and subsidized by the museum. But things that warrant a large expenditure, a large interest, if they do, they should be books. That's been my policy. I don't believe in catalogs at all, not at all.

[00:50:10.63]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Really—

[00:50:11.23]

JEAN LIPMAN: The height of absurdity was when the Géricault drawings for the "Raft of the Medusa" were shown in Boston. And obviously, the "Raft of the Medusa" could not be borrowed, so in no way was it reproduced in the catalog.

[00:50:26.80]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

[00:50:27.40]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. That is—that is the height of what happens when you consider a catalog a pure catalog of what is shown.

[00:50:34.89]

PAUL CUMMINGS: It's just a checklist then.

[00:50:37.03]

JEAN LIPMAN: So, anyhow.

[00:50:38.20]

PAUL CUMMINGS: That's fantastic. I didn't know that. You've also had some activities at the American Federation of Arts.

[00:50:45.57]

JEAN LIPMAN: No.

[00:50:46.18]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Don't you?

[00:50:46.87]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, the Calder—the *Calder's Circus* drawings—the AFA circulated a show called *A Circus*, that was the photographs that Marvin Schwartz took for the *Calder's Circus* book, and a portfolio—my *Art in America* portfolio of *Calder's Circus* drawings that were in reproduction. And AFA circulated that exhibition. No, I have never worked actively with AFA.

[00:51:25.82]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That's the only—

[00:51:27.09]

JEAN LIPMAN: No.

[00:51:28.62]

PAUL CUMMINGS: I mean that's the only kind of little project you—

[00:51:30.90]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes. Well, as a matter of fact, we worked very actively with all the organizations, like AFA, when I was editing *Art in America*. The people who worked with AFA, the directors, we did a great, great many articles that we worked with AFA on one way or another.

[00:51:51.46]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, that's what I mean.

[00:51:52.49]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, yes.

[00:51:53.32]

PAUL CUMMINGS: All the—

[00:51:53.86]

JEAN LIPMAN: Oh, yes.

[00:51:54.82]

PAUL CUMMINGS: —coins they had something to do with, I think.

[00:51:57.55]

JEAN LIPMAN: Yes, Tom—no this—the coins, Tom Messer, as Director of the Guggenheim show, did an exhibition of the coins that we originally— [Cross talk.]

[00:52:10.81]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Didn't AFA tour those? They toured something. [Cross talk.] The stamps, or—it's so hard because they would sometimes show things in the New York gallery that really went—

[00:52:23.17]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think AFA did tour the coins after Tom showed them. Yes, that's right.

[00:52:28.60]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah.

[00:52:28.72]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, there were all sorts of relationships with AFA. But I never did anything specifically.

[00:52:33.40]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. No, I don't mean—

[00:52:34.54]

JEAN LIPMAN: No. No. Well, certainly, all sorts of—

[00:52:39.01]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, you must have, over the years, gotten to various dealers very well.

[00:52:44.74]

JEAN LIPMAN: Indeed.

[00:52:45.22]

PAUL CUMMINGS: You know. What about somebody like Edith Halpert, for example?

[00:52:49.45]

JEAN LIPMAN: She was a great dealer. She was *the* great dealer, in my opinion, in her particular time. She had a stable of a small number of artists. Well, Sheeler, O'Keeffe, Kuniyoshi, Stuart Davis—I can't name them all. There were very few—Rattner. She had—well there—I think I'm omitting probably some very important ones. But—

[00:53:13.68]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Well, she had a lot of them.

[00:53:14.32]

JEAN LIPMAN: Just take Sheeler, Stuart Davis, and O'Keeffe. She had the judgment to pick great artists. And she promoted them brilliantly. She was a great dealer. Her file, her archive is the only way to describe it, was unique for having everything recorded, photographed, sizes noted. She was certainly the great dealer of her particular time, in my opinion. And as I have said, we were not what one would call close friends. I had the greatest admiration for her. And I think she knew it. Anyhow, but she resented my interest in—my publishing in the folk art.

[00:54:02.62]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, it's funny because I would talk to her sometimes about the folk art. And it always seemed to me that her attitudes towards the folk art was quite different from her attitude towards the living painters she represented. I mean, it was really two—

[00:54:17.53]

JEAN LIPMAN: I don't think so.

[00:54:18.46]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Really?

[00:54:18.97]

JEAN LIPMAN: No, I don't think so. I think there was a very close relationship. For instance, Sheeler—well, the exposure of her artists was a dual exposure, for one thing. Sheeler, for instance, was exposed to all of her folk artists. And his interest in folk art was most specific—Shaker art particularly, which I don't think Edith Halpert did very much with, come to think of it. But there was a very distinct relationship between Sheeler and folk art content. I don't know whether Robert Laurel was one of her artists. I sort of rather think so. And his interest —

[00:54:56.52]

PAUL CUMMINGS: He was at one point, yes.

[00:54:57.07]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think so. I don't know whether Zorach was.

[00:55:00.03]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Zorach was at one point, yeah.

[00:55:00.69]

JEAN LIPMAN: I think so. But in any case, their interest in folk art was very definitely related, in a sense, to what they did, certainly to their interests. And I think—no, I think her—I think it was basically homogeneous. It was certainly two totally separate fields, which I think was, again, an enormously avant-garde concept for a gallery. Basically, galleries didn't do that.

[00:55:31.23]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Right. Right. And she showed the things in terms of objects, not as—as you'd see them in an antique store, either.

[00:55:38.76]

JEAN LIPMAN: No. And I think also the fact that she had the same clients, who became interested in both, was very significant.

[00:55:48.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Were there other dealers who have been—you either have been particularly friendly with, or close to or interested in over the years?

[00:55:57.76]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, I don't believe that I have had as much to do with dealers as most people who have been as closely involved in the field. In a sense, while I was editing *Art in America*, I tried to stay very—not clear of dealers in any way, but not terribly involved with them personally, because it was a little bit sticky as an editor to work also with—

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

[Laughs.] —The reason that we turn this on and off. I knew just about all the dealers, of course, and had a lot to do with a great many of them. Leo Castelli, I think, is one of the great dealers. Sidney Janis, certainly. We had a great deal to do with a great many of the dealers. I think I've had more to do with Arnold Glimcher as a dealer than any other, because —well Klaus Perls—Klaus and Dolly Perls, certainly.

[00:57:01.56]

The dealers that we've had a great deal to do with were the dealers who represented the artists that we had the most to do with. And David Smith had no dealer in any way, except Marion Willard, who was, I think, is a great dealer, and who we were very friendly with. But David Smith's dealer had no bearing whatsoever on any of our relationships with David in any way, you know. We bought things. I was trying to think what we had bought from, obviously, through whatever dealer he had at the time.

But as far as dealers are concerned, Klaus and Dolly Perls were very close friends of ours. And I think that they are terrific as dealers. Arnold Glimcher, in my opinion, is, if I had to pick one dealer who I thought was the greatest from the point of view of the contemporary art scene, I would certainly pick Arnold Glimcher. I think he's a genius. He's as able and great, I think, as a designer, which has to do with his installation, which is layout, as a—I think if he hadn't been an art dealer, he would have been a terrific designer in the Chermayeff sense.

[00:58:18.50]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Right.

[00:58:19.46]

JEAN LIPMAN: And much greater than Chermayeff, I think. But in any case, I find Arnold both an emotionally—a person emotionally involved with his artists, and intellectually involved with what is going on. I consider him a great dealer. And of course, Louise Nevelson is one of our closest friends. And again, as always, based primarily on our acquaintanceship. At least we now feel that she's as much of a friend as an artist friend. But that is the way it grows. It grows when you feel that somebody is a great artist.

[00:58:56.11]

I think Louise Nevelson is—our trio of artists we have considered the greatest are Calder, Nevelson, Smith. And Sandy Calder had never sold anything much when we felt that way. Louise Nevelson, when we began to feel that way, had sold nothing, just about nothing. And almost, I guess, literally nothing. The first time she came to our apartment, she was a very bitter woman. She had been an artist all her life, and had never sold anything, nor did she find a Nevelson, obviously, as she knew, in our apartment. She was brought here by Dorothy Dehner as a guest, who was David Smith's first wife, as you know. She ranted and stormed around the place and said, "How can you stand living with all this junk?" And she behaved very badly, we thought. But Howard just said, "I greatly admire your work and hope we may acquire one." And that was our first acquaintance with Louise. She has now a euphoric state of mind, with the best of reason.

[00:59:54.93]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, wow. Yeah.

[00:59:56.04]

JEAN LIPMAN: "Life is great."

[00:59:58.14]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. That's true. But she really—

[01:00:02.10]

JEAN LIPMAN: She's the doyenne of—

[01:00:04.71]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. But she's also blossomed in an extraordinary manner.

[01:00:07.51]

JEAN LIPMAN: She's the doyenne, certainly, of American sculpture.

[01:00:10.77]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Yeah. Yeah.

[01:00:11.76]

JEAN LIPMAN: Well, when she was interviewed—do you want to have a little story about an interview on Louise Nevelson in Arizona?

[01:00:17.52]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, sure.

[01:00:17.73]

JEAN LIPMAN: One week she came to visit us when she was doing this monumental—has done this monumental sculpture for Scottsdale. Howard was on a committee of three to choose a monumental sculpture for Arizona, for Scottsdale. And instead of an equestrian statue of Barry Goldwater, or something of the sort, he managed to put across a large Louise Nevelson, a monumental Nevelson monument. And she came to visit. The temperature was about 90 degrees at the time. And she came in her chinchilla coat, and she looked marvelous.

Well, in any case, she was being given a luncheon, and a young reporter interviewed her, and he was about 21. And he said, "Ms. Nevelson, I don't like to mention a lady's age, but how does it feel to be the doyenne of American sculptors? And well, an older lady, as you hope—I hope you don't mind my saying—putting it that way, but it is so wonderful to see you looking so marvelous and being so excited and exciting. And how does it feel to be a great person at your age?" And she said, "Look, dear. If anybody has to be old, I hope they'll have it as good as I have." And he wrote—started scribbling and everything. And he said, "How wonderful to have somebody, a lady not mind saying that she is an older lady." And Louise said, "Look, dear. I can say that, but that doesn't mean I want it in your article." [They laugh.] Well, he was very upset. And he began crossing out. [They laugh.]

But the other marvelous thing is Louise wanted a cowboy hat to wear with her chinchilla coat for her press photographs. And she visited us in our little house in Carefree. And at first, I asked her if she wouldn't like to take a nap. I was thoroughly exhausted after two days of Louise. And she said, "Well, look dear, what would you do if I took a nap?" And I said, "I'd take a nap." So she said, "Fine." So I got her all tucked in on the terrace. And I crawled into bed. And the second she—I was under the covers, I saw her peering at the door, and out she went.

But anyhow, I got up. She had wanted a cowboy hat, so we went to this little corny gift shop in Carefree. There were about 500 hats priced at about $2.50, or $3.50 or something, and Louise tried them on. They really didn't look very good. She was billowing around among these piles of hats. And she said, "Look dear. Here's one that looks very—that's a nice color." And it was sort of a dull olivey-greeny-gray, much larger than the others, and softer. And she sort of felt it. She tried it on. It looked just marvelous. She said, "This one will be fine." So I said—she was out looking at things. And I said, "How much is it?" And the storekeeper said, "Well, this is one we just put in to make the others look good." And it was $37.50. It was one hat out of about 500. Louise knew nothing about anything, except—

[01:03:16.08]

PAUL CUMMINGS: And she got it.

[01:03:16.66]

JEAN LIPMAN: That was it. So that was her hat.

[01:03:19.36]

PAUL CUMMINGS: Oh, that's fantastic.

[01:03:20.10]

JEAN LIPMAN: Howard had to pay for it the next day. [They laugh.]

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]