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Oral history interview with John Emmett Gerrity, 1965 Jan. 20

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with John Emmett Gerrity on January 20, 1965. The interview was conducted at 1184 Sterling Avenue Berkeley, California by Mary McChesney for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

MM: - Mary McChesney
JEG: - John Emmett Gerrity

MM: I'd like to ask you first, Mr. Gerrity, where were you born?

JEG: I was born in Los Altos, California.

MM: What year was that?

JEG: 1895.

MM: And how did you make your first contact with any of the government-sponsored art projects?

JEG: I was with the WPA in San Francisco.

MM: That was the first one you were on?

JEG: Yes.

MM: And where did you receive your art training? Where did you go to art school?

JEG: Autodidact. I'm self-taught. And I worked with groups in Los Angeles and in San Francisco. I used to go out to the art schools as a freewheeler.

MM: What was that first name you mentioned – of the art school?

JEG: No, I said "autodidact," self-taught.

MM: Oh, self-taught. Then you began on the WPA in San Francisco? And what was your first assignment or what did you do first?

JEG: I used to do watercolors in my studio here; and landscapes, I have quite a number of them someplace. Later on I was assigned to do a small mural for the North Sacramento recreation center. That was about 1938. It was in tempera on heavy paper.

MM: About how large was it?

JEG: About ten by eight.

MM: Ten feet by eight feet? And what was the subject of that?

JEG: Just a landscape with horses – a decorative panel.

MM: Who was it that suggested that you do this mural?

JEG: Well, I think it was Joseph Allen of the WPA.

MM: And did you submit designs for it?

JEG: No.

MM: You were just assigned to it. And then you went up there and did the work?

JEG: I did the work at the studio in the Montgomery Block (in San Francisco).

MM: And then took the mural up and installed it there in Sacramento?

JEG: Installed it.

MM: How was it put on the wall?

JEG: I think it was just tacked up.

MM: So it was a temporary mural?

JEG: This was a temporary one.

MM: Previous to that, you'd been on the watercolor project?

JEG: Yes.

MM: Was it here in Berkeley?

JEG: I used to work here in Berkeley. Then I moved to San Francisco and did my work in the studio over there in the Montgomery Block.

MM: Who was your supervisor over there on the watercolor project, do you remember?

JEG: I don't think it was called the watercolor project. It was just painting and I submitted watercolors. I think it was William Gaskin.

MM: Who were some of the other painters who were on the same project with you?

JEG: Oh, I don't remember. It was quite a number, including Dong Kingman, and I think Puccinelli used to turn in drawings, watercolors and sculptures.

MM: Yes, Raymond Puccinelli.

JEG: And quite a number of others. But that was quite some time ago and I don't remember them all. We never met in great big councils. We just brought our work in there. We didn't have much contact one with the another. And we didn't contact the people from this side of the Bay. I was in San Francisco at that time.

MM: Then you did the murals at San Francisco State College?

JEG: Then I was assigned to paint murals in the State Teachers' College at Haight and Laguna Streets in San Francisco. An octagonal-shaped room which must have been about sixty feet long and twenty-five feet wide at the entrance.

MM: Those were in the entrance?

JEG: To the Life Science Building and the subject was the life sciences.

MM: Were those fresco murals?

JEG: No, it was oil on canvas. I had them stretch the canvas over the walls.

MM: So the canvases were actually stretched in place on the walls?

JEG: Yes. And glued there with some sort of formula they worked out with the WPA.

MM: And then you worked directly on the wall?

JEG: Yes. I made full-sized drawings first.

MM: Did you have any assistants working with you on that?

JEG: Yes, I had quite a number, but I can only remember a few of them.

MM: Who were the ones that you remember?

JEG: Constance Woolsey from Berkeley, Sonia Sitomer, Peter Owens, and Baumann, I forget his first name, he's a painter in San Francisco.

MM: Karl Baumann? And what kind of work did they do for you? Did they actually do part of the painting?

JEG: They laid it in for me and I painted.

MM: How long were you working on this project?

JEG: It took about four years, but there were interruptions; I had to take a leave once to have an operation on my nose, and that took about two months. And I had another leave of absence to do a mural at the World's Fair at Treasure Island. They had the temple of religion there and I did the murals on the inside of the temple.

MM: Where they oil on canvas, too?

JEG: No, they were not. It was done in line, black paint on silver leaf mostly.

MM: This was not a government-sponsored project?

JEG: No.

MM: Your murals at the State Teachers' College look quite different from most of the other work that was being done at the time.

JEG: Yes. And you mean what's the reason? Well, at that time there had been a number of painters coming here and there was a lot of influence. First, Hans Hofmann was here and taught at the University of California. A lot of people were painting very much like his paintings.

MM: Excuse me, what year was Hans Hofmann here, do you remember?

JEG: It must have been around 1936. And then Diego Rivera was here and everybody began to paint like him with sort of stovepipe legs. There was a lot of work like that, strongly influenced by various painters. So, being an independent character, I set out to do the thing I felt was closest to myself. And so I worked that way.

MM: Do you think there were any influences as far as you were concerned?

JEG: Yes. I probably was influenced a great deal by S. Macdonald-Wright, a painter in Los Angeles at the time.

MM: He was active in the WPA, too, wasn't he?

JEG: Yes, he was in charge of it down here; he was director in Los Angeles.

MM: In Los Angeles.

JEG: He went into and studied what might be called color painting as against laying painting out in black-and-white and then coloring it. Quite a different process, kind of lost now. He and Morgan Russell called themselves synchromists for a while. They did painting in color but they went away from that later. But I worked on the idea of color in this wall. I had eight walls. In the eight walls I had eight different keys of color worked out. And I had this all worked out in notebooks and this was stolen from me, and I did it over again and it was stolen from me again, so I have no record of which wall was which.

MM: Was this a theory that had been developed by Macdonald-Wright?

JEG: No, he instigated it and I developed it according to my own ideas.

MM: Did you have any contact with Hilaire Hiler? He was very interested in color theories.

JEG: No, I didn't have any contact with Hilaire. I knew him, but his color theory precluded this idea of color. It was entirely different.

MM: What is the idea that you were working on?

JEG: Well, it was likened to the study of music, of sound and working in harmony. I haven't done much with it in a long time.

MM: Are the colors in the mural very bright, or are they low keyed?

JEG: Well, I had a very bad time over there, and at certain times the WPA would run out of money. So they wouldn't be able to get color, sufficient color so I usually worked in very bright colors. I worked in brilliant colors as far as I could.

MM: Were you grinding your own colors there?

JEG: Some of them, and some were purchased.

MM: There was a great deal of interest at that time around here in fresco painting.

JEG: Fresco, yes. Fresco was very unsympathetic to me. I couldn't stand the feel of it.

MM: You had tried it?

JEG: Yes. And I couldn't work with those more or less earth colors. I had, over the years, studied so much in oil color that it would take a whole new process for me to learn how to do fresco.

MM: So you were working on this mural for a period of about four years?

JEG: Well, it covered that time. The actual painting of it didn't take that long. We used to work five days a week. Then in the middle of the thing they stopped and only gave us three days a week. That eliminated a lot of the time, so it dragged on altogether about four years.

MM: Are the murals still in place there?

JEG: I think they are. I'm not sure. I haven't been out there for a while. But it's changed hands so many times that I don't know what's happened. I don't know whether they've remodeled the building or what they've done.

MM: Did you submit designs for this mural or were you just assigned to it?

JEG: I just submitted very simple designs and they liked them, so I went ahead with it.

MM: Were you on relief at the time that you were employed on the WPA? You were. So you weren't actually a supervisor or anything?

JEG: No. At times I had about eight people helping me, but towards the end I was doing the work all by myself.

MM: Did there seem to be an influence from your kind of mural on other work that was being done?

JEG: I don't think so.

MM: So it really was a very unique kind of thing. And after that did you do any further work for the government?

JEG: I believe I did watercolors again. It's very hard to remember now. I've moved around so much. I had a studio down at 1769 Post Street, over Betty Halstead.

MM: Do you remember any of the other painters who were active in the area at this time?

JEG: Yes, a lot of them have passed away, I'm afraid. Well, here, of course, in Berkeley there's Glenn Wessels. I think he was one of the directors over here. I really should have gotten hold of my papers and looked those up.

MM: You don't remember them too well.

JEG: I don't know who was on relief, or who was painting on their own.

MM: Well, you were actually on the WPA project for a long time, then.

JEG: Let's see, about five years.

MM: Did you ever have any exhibitions of the watercolors that you did on the project?

JEG: Not on the project, no. They were scattered around. I remember going into some establishment – I don't know whether it had any connection with the WPA or not – and I was supposed to interview somebody, I don't know what for, but I happened to look up on the wall and I saw a very, very lovely watercolor that I liked very much. I went up and took a look at it, and it was my own.

MM: Oh, really. How strange! Were the watercolors you were working on in the same style as your murals?

JEG: Yes.

MM: But they were figurative; they weren't abstract?

JEG: No, they weren't abstract.

MM: Landscapes, people --?

JEG: Landscapes. I'm really a figure painter; I do most things with figures. But I tossed off a lot of landscapes in

watercolor. I have done some abstractions, but I finally wind up by finishing them figurative. I start out one way but I can't complete it that way. I have some here that I'll show you later.

MM: How would you evaluate the work that was done on the WPA project around the Bay Area?

JEG: You want my real opinion?

MM: Yes.

JEG: I'm afraid it did a great deal of harm here. It gave a lot of people the opportunity to do work, and so forth, but I think a lot of the work was not up to standards that we like to think of, like to pose.

MM: Why do you think that was?

JEG: Well, it's hard – I think it's hard to screen out people who knew how to paint and had done a lot of painting. They used to send me assistants out there. You can see some of their work on the wall. There was a band of lettering around the edge of the thing, so I had to get people to letter. They were wonderful chaps, and so forth, but they couldn't do the work, and I couldn't letter myself. It shows over there now.

MM: Do you think it was because of the relief qualifications that some of the better artists were eliminated? They had more money and didn't have to be on relief.

JEG: I think so, I think so. I had a large family here, five kids and I was over there working. I used to have a school here, classes. About twenty, twenty-five people used to paint up here in my studio. And they all quit; as the Depression came they all left. Finally, I had one left, and she became my assistant over there. They all could find classes for nothing, free classes. Later I taught some of those classes. I think it was the State at that time – adult education.

MM: Well, with five children, did you find the money from the WPA adequate to live on?

JEG: No, my wife worked when she could, too. She manufactures jewelry, does a lot of beading, and lectures on beads and jewelry and things like that. And so we struggled by. And the kids used to help, the oldest boy especially.

MM: As far as the way the WPA projects were actually managed, did you have any complaints or criticisms about that?

JEG: I think it was excellent. I think the directors were good. I think they handled it with great humanitarian feeling and very, very efficiently. I don't know where all the paintings have gone. There must have been quite a number of them around.

MM: Have you ever had a chance to see government-sponsored art from that period done in different localities besides the Bay Area?

JEG: No. No, I haven't.

MM: When you were working in Sacramento on the mural up there did you have any contact with the Sacramento Art Center?

JEG: No. I went up there one day and installed the thing and that was my contact with Sacramento.

MM: Do you think it's a good idea for the government to sponsor the arts?

JEG: Yes. I think the whole program would have to be very carefully figured out, but I think it's possible and desirable. They do it in other countries very well, for instance, in Mexico.

MM: Do you think the idea of sponsoring decorations for public buildings is a good one?

JEG: I think that would be a great thing. With all our system here of civic government, and whatnot, I think we have made very little room for any of the arts. And art really is a tremendous influence on the future. Take this beautiful place here, they're striving to fill in the Bay and cut down the hills and put all kinds of bridges around, and freeways right through the town, and so forth. And these things are thought of and pushed through by people who have had no training at all in planning. I think there should be courses on metropolitan planning in college. They have city planning – I believe it's taught, though it doesn't have much influence. Sort of an advisory thing for those who'll go through it.

MM: Do you think the artists in America need work from the government?

JEG: I do. Because now I think they are sort of controlled by advertising people who take a certain trend in art and push it through the magazines, and whatnot, and create a terrific market for things without any real idea of what should be. The whole trend seems that way. That's my opinion. I don't expect people to agree with me.

MM: What kind of influence do you think the time you spent on the government projects had on your career as an artist?

JEG: It gave me a lot of chance to experiment and to work. It was a great help. It helped me to have a lot of materials and to work out different things. Of course, everything I did then, I would do entirely different now. I guess that's true of all painters. Painters usually don't like to see things they've done a long time ago.

MM: Did you ever go ahead and do any further mural work?

JEG: No. I entered competitions, but I had great difficulty with my health and it has interrupted my painting a great deal. I've just gone through five operations since last summer. I have just gone back to work. But that's been my history in the last ten years.

MM: But you did continue to develop your painting?

JEG: Oh, yes. Oh, yes!

MM: But more as an easel painter?

JEG: Yes. Yes, I'm much more interested in easel painting. I was doing a decorative thing for a friend of mine in Oregon, a wall here, just nothing. That's about all I'm able to do now until I get going with the other stuff that I've been waiting for. I'm about ten years behind schedule.

MM: Is it going to be done for a wall?

JEG: Yes.

MM: Do you think that mural painting would fit in with the kind of architecture that's being built in America now?

JEG: There are so many different kinds of architecture being done today and I think mural painting could very easily fit in. My son John, Jr. is an architect – you got mixed up in that letter you wrote – he's building a home, a so-called leisure home thing out here. I think that all through these buildings they could very easily, very readily use paintings, and instead of originals they're using prints and little odds and ends of things. I think there's a big market to be explored through all these buildings. And I think architects could begin to think more and more along these lines if they were really sold on the idea.

MM: At the time you were doing your mural, were you thinking much in terms of the painting in relationships to the building in which it was going to be placed?

JEG: Yes, very much so. And the whole thing over there at the school, I believe, stays on the wall and doesn't interrupt the architecture in any way. It follows the architecture and is composed and designed to fit the various architectural features.

MM: Was that a very old building? Had it been built for some time?

JEG: I don't think so. I don't think it's very old. I know it was built after the earthquake. It must have been about twenty, twenty-five years old.

MM: At the time you put the murals in?

JEG: Yes. And at the time they put the mural in they were contemplating changes all the time. This is a very difficult thing to work against when you feel that maybe this will be all torn down; because nothing is permanent that way.

MM: What style of architecture is it?

JEG: Well, I think it probably has no real style. It probably goes back to the mission style as developed around Los Angeles. You see a lot of that kind of buildings there, but chastened a lot; I mean it doesn't have all the gewgaws that Mexican and Spanish things have. As I recall it now, it has a lot of arches, and it rambled around the edge of the whole block.

MM: An open court or patio in the California-Spanish style?

JEG: Yes, something like that.

MM: Do you think it would be easier for a mural painter to begin from the inception of his plan working with the architect?

JEG: Very much so.

MM: Do you feel that would be possible?

JEG: Under the way they do it now, it certainly isn't possible. I hope to see a time when it will be, when there will be some sort of dialogue between various composers. But now in an architect's office they're thinking so much about price and square footage, and so forth, and all those include exigency rather than art – beauty is the last thing to consider, I often think.

MM: Were there other painters making murals at the State College when you were there?

JEG: Yes, but for the life of me I can't remember their names. One was Reuben Kadish, I know. I don't know where he is.

MM: What sort of mural was he doing?

JEG: It was more – how do I say it – heraldic – more – I think it was strongly influenced by the interweaving of forms and designs like Diego Rivera at that time. I may be wrong. But I don't know what his conception was.

MM: And there were other people too. Hebe Daum was working there, wasn't she – doing a mural of children?

JEG: I think so, on the children's mural. What did you say her name was?

MM: Hebe Daum – D, A, U, M.

JEG: D, A, U, M. Yes.

MM: She's now married to Peter Stackpole – Ralph Stackpole's son.

JEG: Yes, that's right.

MM: At the time you were there, was Maxine Albro doing her mosaic?

JEG: I think she had completed it by that time. I think I was the last of the workers there on the WPA, because this mural went on for a long time.

MM: Well, Reuben was working there at the same time as you were, though?

JEG: I think so, yet.

MM: You don't seem to have had much contact between the painters?

JEG: No, we didn't because we were in different sides or corners of the building. We all came in different entrances and we'd leave at different times, and I had these various assistants to work on all the time, and I just didn't meet the other painters.

MM: Things seem so different from what you hear about the Coit Tower.

JEG: Well, they all had a small area there. They had a tower to work on. Couldn't escape one another.

MM: Have you seem the Coit Tower murals recently?

JEG: I haven't, no. Have they really done something there?

MM: They repaired them. They were quite badly damaged. I was wondering what you thought of them as works of art.

JEG: I saw pictures of them. I didn't think very much of them. Of course a painter likes his own things.

MM: Or somebody whose work is like his.

JEG: That's right.

MM: Was there any sculpture being done at the State College?

JEG: I don't think so. At least I don't know of any. I don't think so.

MM: Did you find the experience of doing a mural rewarding for you as an artists?

JEG: Very much so. To go through that phase you need to be a terrific, physical man like Diego Rivera, somebody like that, to carry you through what you have to do. It's just an enormous thing. There are times when you want to work twenty-four hours a day and things like that. But I don't have that physical capacity. But it's a tremendous thing for those people who love it. I think it's quite a different thing from easel painting, very different. It requires quite a different temperament entirely, I think. I'm more of an easel painter.

MM: You mentioned earlier that Hans Hofmann was out there in Berkeley in 1936.

JEG: I think it was '36, and before that.

MM: And he had quite an influence on painting in the area. What kind of work was he himself doing at that time?

JEG: It must have been much before that. It must have been around 1930. He wasn't doing anything like he's doing now. He used models; I mean he painted from the figure, I think. He also painted landscapes but they had certain relations to the landscapes he saw, that he worked from. Of course, they didn't go into the very strong color abstractions he's doing now.

MM: Was his influence more as a colorist then?

JEG: No, it was more or less with the German methodical approach to studying out the whole form and the figure. They used that kind of analysis with Cézanne's things later on – some of the students. I guess there are a lot of books written with that idea.

MM: What do you think about Diego Rivera's influence on the painting of this area?

JEG: I think it's just about petered out now. At that time everybody had to paint like him. When I was a young painter here, being a native, I was painting certain kinds of things that I liked to do and they had no relationship to any painting being done. I used to have to exhibit with the Japanese East-West Society painters. They let me exhibit with them.

MM: That's interesting.

JEG: There was just another fellow and myself, I think. Perham Nahl, of the University of California. He's long since dead, I believe.

MM: What was his name again?

JEG: Perham Nahl – N, A, H, L – of the famous old family of Nahls. They're originally German. There were, I think, four or five of them that could paint like the very devil.

MM: And the first name is Pierre?

JEG: Perham – P, E, R, H, A, M. And he had a brother, Virgil Nahl, who used to do beautiful line drawings for newspapers. They were excellent. You'd just like to look at them. And there's another Nahl, and some of his paintings were done with great exactness. I saw one in the De Young Museum one time. I never knew where it came from, or where it is now, but I saw it out there about five years ago. It's interesting about the Nahls; somebody sometime should look these men up.

MM: Why do you think Diego Rivera had such an impact on the artists of the area around here?

JEG: Well, first of all, he did very excellent painting. And he was able to cover walls which previous to that time evoked a very curious attitude – something like – I think the British used to paint a lot that way. And all of a sudden the impact of this very extraordinary and strong color with line that didn't go into any of the formulas that had been previously used sort of freed everybody to work on these things. In my own way of thinking, Carlos Merida of Mexico is more sympathetic to me with a very subtle line and a great deal more delicacy in his presentations in color and line. But that's my own feeling. And Diego Rivera was here, was a very flamboyant figure, and did a lot of things around here with great success. First it was the art school, and the bank, and the Stock Exchange in San Francisco, and the other large mural – at City College, isn't it?

MM: Yes, San Francisco City College. Do you have any general thoughts about that period in American art history?

JEG: As contrasted to now? I think now it's all shot to pieces. I mean today art has to be newsworthy or it doesn't

get anywhere. I mean that's the first thing. It has to be something that you can talk about. Now these are my own opinions. I don't know. We used to feel that if a painting couldn't stand up by itself and tell its own story out of relation to the painter or any frame of reference, we didn't care for it. But it seems to be just the reverse now. A painting that can stir up a lot of talk is of great interest and that's the way the museums go. I'm afraid the museum directors, particularly from the Harvard school of directors, are very successful in getting people in, and it's all slanted toward that. They will take on things that have newspaper interest, that they can talk about, that have magazine interest, or the thing that will photograph well in magazines. You have to be able to paint those things that photograph and are able to be reproduced well. They like things that would go into Life magazine, which can afford to spend so much money on reproductions of paintings. Somebody there who doesn't know a devil of a lot about art will choose what is to be reproduced and that goes around and is a great influence on the people. I was just thinking the other day – I have a whole lot of magazines that are about forty years old, art magazines, and they are exquisite things. Of course, all these magazines folded. An art magazine had to fold up because it couldn't compete with the reproductions that Life magazine, or some of the other big magazines, can put out. As a consequence, art magazines just folded one right after the other. The commercial magazines can use these terrifically costly methods of reproduction that the art magazines never could afford.

MM: Do you think this is the main factor in changing the art scene in America?

JEG: I think so. I think it is really the main factor when you think of the circulation of those magazines and how they reach everybody. And, of course, schools have to follow after the people instead of going in the other direction. I mean they have to. In that sense, it isn't a matter of conformity. It's a matter of following what people are interested in. People get interested in complete change in painting and the painting must be completely unlike anything before it. That's something that the public has been taught to look for now, rather than the qualities that go into painting. And when you figure out how a lot of these painters, who are very successful and have sold a great deal of their paintings to museums and collections, are people who have very often hit upon their scheme through an accident – not that there's anything wrong with accidents to give you a start in things – but there doesn't seem to be any process leading up to it. Anything that is completely astonishing will have a much greater impact on people and as a consequence be more newsworthy and be readily taken up. I think that it is working gradually in the other direction from what I am able to read of Eastern art development.

MM: What was the public response to your mural?

JEG: I haven't the slightest idea. People that I knew liked it, and I imagine others didn't. It was very interesting. I used to have people drop in on me out there that would dislike it. At that time there was a great deal of communism in the air, and agitation, and whatnot. At least, they thought there was. And I had painted a monk on one side and some fellow came in and gave me a great working-over for about an hour about painting the monk in the thing; and it got to such a point that on one side of the mural against the wall I put an American flag. I wanted to show them what side I was on. And that received a terrible amount of comment from people who were radically inclined.

MM: Well, the idea, of course, of a mural being something with a message was very important then.

JEG: Yes.

MM: But you didn't subscribe to that theory? It was largely due to Rivera's influence to a large degree, wasn't it?

JEG: Pardon?

MM: The idea that a mural had to have a very definite political message of some sort.

JEG: Yes, I guess. Yes. That's right. It had to have a message. I tried to avoid that a great deal because I was so concerned with the development of this whole color idea in murals that I felt that I had to put all my time in that, rather than selling political propaganda.

MM: You didn't have any public opening for the mural when it was completed? Was there any kind of ceremony or reception?

JEG: No. I think the WPA was on the decline about that time. It was almost through and everything was played down.

MM: Do you have any further thoughts about the WPA?

JEG: No. I got along with them all very well, and it seemed to give a great many people a chance to work out their various ideas, particularly to get the bugs out of their system by painting, probably.

MM: Did you have contact yourself with many other people who were doing murals? Not very much.

JEG: Not very much at that time because my mural used to absorb me all day long. Very often I'd paint into the night, far over the hours that I was allotted.

MM: When you went to work at Treasure Island, even though you weren't on the government projects – though there were some WPA projects being done at the Fair – did you have any contact with those people?

JEG: Oh, yes. Although I did a very large mural, I did it in San Francisco. I rented a vacant automobile salesroom out there. It was on Van Ness and Geary someplace, and I put these big boards up there, plywood boards.

MM: Plywood boards?

JEG: They were masonite. Soft masonite and because the whole thing was temporary over there, I had to treat it so it wouldn't absorb the paint.

MM: Did you meet Rivera when you were at the Fair?

JEG: I met him but not at the Fair. I had met him previously when he lived over around the Montgomery Block, over around that district when I was around there. And Orozco.

MM: Was he out here, too?

JEG: For awhile. I remember Orozco. I used to belong to the Family Club, and Orozco and Diego Rivera were guests down at the Family Club farm near Woodside. It's very much like the Bohemian Club only it's much smaller. And they got into an awful argument down there about art.

MM: Oh, they did?

JEG: Yes.

MM: I was going to say Orozco didn't have much of an influence around here as far as the style of painting was concerned.

JEG: No, he wasn't here so much.

MM: Do you think that was the reason?

JEG: Yes. I think if he'd stayed around here, he'd certainly have had his following. Everybody that came here had a following. We're so close to the Oriental thing, you'd think there'd be more influence from the Oriental things. I lean toward that – the Oriental.

MM: There seems to be some influence in the Northwest but not much around here.

JEG: Is that so – in the Northwest?

MM: People say Morris Graves, Mark Tobey and people like that are influenced by Oriental painting. But this didn't happen at all during the WPA period.

JEG: No.

MM: And there didn't seem to be the kind of influence from Europe that there was on the East Coast.

JEG: That is right. Now I guess it's in reverse. Painters that I hear about who live around Paris paint like a lot of our action painters here.

MM: Thanks very much for giving us the time for the interview.

JEG: You're entirely welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW

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