



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Berthe von
Moschzisker, 1990 November 26 and
1991 January 12

This interview received support from the Smithsonian American
Women's History Initiative Pool.

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Berthe Von Moschzisker on November 26, 1990 and January 12, 1991. The interview took place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was conducted by Anne Schuster Hunter for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The original transcript was edited. In 2024 the Archives retranscribed the original audio and attempted to create a verbatim transcript. 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. Additional information from the original transcript has been added in brackets and given an -Ed. attribution.

Some language in this transcript may be offensive. It is presented as it exists in the original audio recording for the benefit of research. This material in no way reflects the views of the Archives of American Art or the Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

[00:00:11.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: How is Ruth?

[00:00:13.48]

ANNE HUNTER: I haven't seen her. She was around last year. And I didn't get a chance to see her. She was working on an exhibition for the Fabric Workshop.

[00:00:21.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:00:21.66]

ANNE HUNTER: It was a nice exhibition. Now then, what I have to say is this is Anne Schuster Hunter interviewing Bertha Von Moschzisker on—I don't know today's date. Let's call it November 20—

[00:00:40.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —Sixth.

[00:00:40.63]

ANNE HUNTER: —Sixth, [November 26] 1990 at Ms. Von Moschzisker's home at 310 Delancey Place in Philadelphia.

[00:00:49.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It's Delancey Street right down here. It's "Place" uptown.

[00:00:53.40]

ANNE HUNTER: Well.

[00:00:54.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That's new to you.

[00:00:55.14]

ANNE HUNTER: It's Delancey Street. [They laugh.] I always thought Three Beers was at Delancey Place.

[00:01:02.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I grew up, was born, at 2101 Delancey Place.

[00:01:07.21]

ANNE HUNTER: I see. So it's Broad Street that is uptown. And downtown? Is it eternally downtown?

[00:01:14.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:01:18.25]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, if at any point you want me to turn off the tape, just let me know.

[00:01:24.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Right.

[00:01:24.34]

ANNE HUNTER: But we'll just pretend it's not there.

[00:01:27.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We're going to check that it's working. We're going to talk for two hours and then find it out.

[00:01:32.65]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, I'm curious about your—this is in roughly chronological order, my questions. But they do jump around all over the place. And if we start thinking about something that's not chronological, let's just go with it. But I know that you were born in the house. You mentioned that to me—

[00:01:49.67]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, 2101 Delancey [Place -Ed.].

[00:01:50.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Which is probably your first—that's probably the first piece of biographical information, is where were you born, which is in the house. But—I remembered when I was going through Print Club scrapbooks at the Historical Society that there was an anecdote about your parents' house being defiled in some way during the First World War.

[00:02:15.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was just the end of the First World War. Actually, after Armistice. The house was bombed.

[00:02:21.67]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. The foyer was badly—

[00:02:24.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The whole front of the house was.

[00:02:25.36]

ANNE HUNTER: Was it really?

[00:02:26.68]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Pretty well blown up.

[00:02:30.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Was this because of your name?

[00:02:32.20]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was that same night, the same gang—Bolshevists, we called them in those days—they blew up several other houses. And they left these papers behind saying, "Death to all judges, lawyers, politicians, profiteers, bankers."

[00:02:48.79]

ANNE HUNTER: So they knew exactly who they were bombing.

[00:02:50.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, oh, yeah. Very definitely. And it was just a few weeks after my brother was born, my younger brother, and it was mother's first day downstairs. She had all of us at home. And—

[00:03:05.47]

ANNE HUNTER: What time of day was it?

[00:03:06.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was at night that it happened.

[00:03:07.93]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:03:09.85]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I can remember it. I don't remember hearing a bang, but I remember being carried downstairs by my nurse and all the lights being on and people being very excited, and being taken to the back of the house, and the policemen were around. And for several weeks thereafter, we had policemen in the back and front of the house. And that night, the mayor came calling because dad was on the Supreme Court. And this was rather important. And—[they laugh].

[00:03:39.58]

ANNE HUNTER: This doesn't do well, for a city's reputation that its most prominent citizens get bombed.

[00:03:46.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. But none of us were hurt. But one piece of the bomb stuck in the bed springs right under my mother's pillow. She had been in the bed—that was third floor front.

[00:04:01.91]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, did they ever catch them?

[00:04:03.98]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They blew themselves up. We presume it's the same people because they left the same papers behind. They went to Washington. And they were doing a little job in Washington and got blown up themselves. But it was—the investigation was in the hands of the military because it was right at the end of the—it was December, and the war had been over on November 11. And—it was kept—there was very little publicity about the investigation. And then all investigations of that sort were turned over to the civilians. And the whole thing came out in the papers where they were at, and what they found out, and so forth.

[00:04:46.02]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, my. So that went on for some time it sounds like.

[00:04:48.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, that I suppose was a month later or something like that.

[00:04:52.23]

ANNE HUNTER: So you must have been aware that you were in a famous family, or that your family was important.

[00:04:58.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I was only three and a half. I don't think I thought along those lines.

[00:05:03.75]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. Well, my parents were involved in political stuff until I was about five or six. And I remember feeling they were pretty important people. [Laughs.] All they were doing was passing out leaflets. [They laugh.]

[00:05:18.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I don't remember feeling that. I remember knowing that people were upset that something awful had happened.

[00:05:32.53]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Well, would that incident, notwithstanding, which seems to be something you can't really count on, but would you—was your family more politically liberal or politically conservative?

[00:05:52.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, they were Republicans.

[00:05:53.69]

ANNE HUNTER: They were very much Republicans.

[00:05:54.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. But I changed my registration to a Democrat. The woman got up from behind the desk and said, "Your father would roll over in his grave."

[00:06:05.87]

ANNE HUNTER: [Laughs.] How old were you when you changed your registration?

[00:06:09.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Goodness. I don't quite remember. But probably my late twenties.

[00:06:16.94]

ANNE HUNTER: And did your—you have one sister and one brother.

[00:06:20.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:06:20.51]

ANNE HUNTER: Are they all—did they also change their registration? Or were you the—

[00:06:23.99]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, eventually. Yes. I mean, nothing to do with my—changing mine.

[00:06:29.26]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:06:32.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: What convinced me that I didn't want to be a Republican anymore was when I had a job in a defense plant, the Army Signal Corps during the Second World War. And I heard the young women there talking about what their lives had been like up in the coal mining country before Roosevelt, and the jobs they had before being Rosie the Riveter, was glamorous. I mean, people just didn't realize that women were doing this kind of work. And the Army Signal Corps where I was working was so badly run that we really needed a union there. Being an army job, of course, you couldn't have a union. And I began to realize what Roosevelt had done.

[00:07:15.96]

ANNE HUNTER: Accomplished.

[00:07:16.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Accomplished, and what working in very unpleasant circumstances were like because it certainly was very unpleasant at the Army Signal Corps.

[00:07:25.44]

ANNE HUNTER: My mother made boots. Similar.

[00:07:27.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I ran an IBM machine. And I can't even run an alarm clock. But they weren't complicated machines that they are now. But the things that were unpleasant was that you had half an hour for your lunch. It took you 20 minutes to walk down to the cafeteria, and then you had to stand in line. By the time you got your food, you had to turn around and come back up eating on the way. And there were cockroaches in the food, and the bathrooms were filthy. And when you were on the night shift, when you switched shifts, let's say from the four o'clock to midnight, if you were going on to the next shift, which was midnight to eight a.m., you were expected just to go on.

[00:08:23.60]

ANNE HUNTER: And that was business as usual for a lot of people a lot of the time. Yeah. And I'm just going to check to be sure that our levels are doing the right thing. Oh, we're doing very well. Of course now, we send our work to Hong Kong and to the Philippines where it's an even worse situation. It costs less.

[00:08:46.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, I quit after a few months at the Signal Corps.

[00:08:51.53]

ANNE HUNTER: You'd done your duty.

[00:08:53.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I took other wartime jobs, but not—

[00:08:55.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, really?

[00:08:55.95]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not—

[00:08:57.15]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, I think—I don't think that's clear in this. What did you do? What were the jobs that you took during the war then, in order?

[00:09:04.02]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Nothing to do with art.

[00:09:05.33]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:09:06.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, my next one was the Interceptor Command. And that, I had a great deal of fun with. Very interesting fun.

[00:09:13.62]

ANNE HUNTER: That was machines again though, wasn't it?

[00:09:15.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. It was spotting and tracing airplanes.

[00:09:21.42]

ANNE HUNTER: Here in this area?

[00:09:23.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and so forth.

[00:09:27.63]

ANNE HUNTER: Preserve me from another wartime. So were those two jobs—well, why don't I go back then, and to your family where we sort of started out? And I was wondering about the circle of friends and acquaintances around your parents, because that has a lot to do with the founding of the Print Club—

[00:09:51.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:09:52.41]

ANNE HUNTER: —and the founding of other organizations as well.

[00:09:55.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: My mother came from Pittsburgh, and her father was a glass manufacturer. And he was interested in prints. He was a collector in a very small way. But when the dealers came from New York to sell to the steel magnates, and so forth, they would stay with Grandfather Macbeth. And so mother was brought up with seeing all these prints from Keppels and Knoedlers and places like that when their salesman would come.

[00:10:30.57]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Got used to having them around.

[00:10:32.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And she had an interest in them. And when she married my father and came to Philadelphia, she and some other people who also had an interest in this kind of thing—

[00:10:45.51]

ANNE HUNTER: There really wasn't a place—they weren't coming to Philadelphia, the people from—

[00:10:49.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I suppose they were. But that's much nearer. At Pittsburgh, they had to spend the night, spend several days when they came. And but it was the old—one hot summer night, I was always told, sitting on the fire escape at the old Art Club that no longer exists—

[00:11:11.07]

ANNE HUNTER: On Broad Street.

[00:11:11.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: On Broad Street.

[00:11:12.77]

ANNE HUNTER: That was very big too, wasn't it, the Art Club?

[00:11:14.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I can remember being taken there as a child by my father. Yes.

[00:11:18.05]

ANNE HUNTER: I've seen photographs of it. I'd love to know what was going on in there.

[00:11:23.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But they were sitting on the fire escape talking. And they decided it'd be good to start some sort of a print Club. See, the museum didn't have a print collection. And the museum wasn't, actually.

[00:11:34.01]

ANNE HUNTER: No. Not at that time there wasn't. There was a temporary exhibition space is what it was at the—in Fairmount Park. And the Academy wasn't collecting prints either, I don't think.

[00:11:47.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The Academy had their collection, but they weren't doing anything with it.

[00:11:51.12]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, the [John S. -Ed.] Phillips Collection. It was just sitting there.

[00:11:54.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, I worked at that.

[00:11:55.69]

ANNE HUNTER: I know. And in fact, I had you—have you talked to the woman, Ms. Toohey?

[00:12:04.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I went to see a couple of women several years ago. I forgot what their name—

[00:12:07.04]

ANNE HUNTER: She was very interested, I know, in talking to you about the collection. But then the collection got sold to the museum. And I guess her interest somewhat evaporated.

[00:12:16.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But anyway, these people decided they'd start this print Club. And they started it in people's houses. They would invite, let's say, Mr. Pennell, Joe Pennell, to come with some prints. And people—ladies and gentlemen would come for tea and see the prints. And he talked about them.

[00:12:34.85]

ANNE HUNTER: Was he a dealer? Or was he a collector?

[00:12:37.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Pennell was the etcher.

[00:12:37.49]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, he was the etcher and writer.

[00:12:39.35]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:12:40.08]

ANNE HUNTER: So he would invite an artist rather than the representatives from the New York galleries.

[00:12:44.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They invited artists to the houses, and the artists brought their work, and they had tea. And that was the very beginning of the Print Club. Then they got a room. And—

[00:12:58.64]

ANNE HUNTER: Which is not at the present location.

[00:13:00.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, no.

[00:13:00.83]

ANNE HUNTER: I don't think it was—

[00:13:01.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was someplace—

[00:13:02.96]

ANNE HUNTER: I remember it's in the scrapbooks. Yeah.

[00:13:10.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And they took the second floor of the present Print Club. Mr. Miner—

[00:13:19.14]

ANNE HUNTER: And that was a framing shop on the first floor.

[00:13:20.72]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Miner's Framing, on the first floor. And I can remember being taken there as a small girl and going up the staircase.

[00:13:27.41]

ANNE HUNTER: To the riches above.

[00:13:28.85]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:13:30.56]

ANNE HUNTER: I remember reading in the scrapbooks that some of those earlier meetings could be very heated. It was Joseph Pennell once who was giving a slide lecture on Whistler, which upset members of his audience no end. And words apparently were exchanged. And several of the ladies decided that they were not able to remain to hear that particular discussion. [They laugh.] And that was reported the next day in the paper. So it must have been quite a enthusiastic bunch.

[00:13:59.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then they bought the building. And I don't remember the exact date. But you can look that up in the archives. And remodeled it.

[00:14:11.95]

ANNE HUNTER: And took over the downstairs.

[00:14:13.07]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And they had both floors there and went on having exhibitions. But Mrs. Crawford became director—I'm not sure what date. Around 1920.

[00:14:26.91]

ANNE HUNTER: '21 or '20—something like that.

[00:14:30.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Something like that. She was not the right person for the job. She didn't really like artists.

[00:14:41.01]

ANNE HUNTER: She became obsessed with the bronze turtle at Rittenhouse Square. [They laugh.] I was reading in the scrapbooks, it seemed to be all she really put her energies on.

[00:14:49.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, she was a social climber.

[00:14:50.34]

ANNE HUNTER: This turtle. And she had a lot of publicity for the thing.

[00:14:54.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But she was a social climber. And she was part Jewish and she didn't want to admit it. So the only Jews she was nice to her people like Lessing Rosenwald. If —

[00:15:08.51]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah.

[00:15:10.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: She didn't really like artists.

[00:15:12.59]

ANNE HUNTER: The membership must have dropped dramatically.

[00:15:15.25]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they had a pretty good membership, but it wasn't a membership that I would have wanted. They did have some good exhibitions because there were some good people connected to the Club. Mr. Sturgis Ingersoll, for instance, helped them get some exhibits. And they had some international shows and things of that sort. But everybody's taste was ultra-conservative.

[00:15:42.68]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, she was there for a long time. She—

[00:15:44.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I think about eighteen years.

[00:15:46.05]

ANNE HUNTER: She dropped in harness too, didn't she?

[00:15:47.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. But the artists did not like her.

[00:15:55.50]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, how did—did they complain about her?

[00:15:59.18]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I heard the complaints when I came.

[00:16:01.33]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Right.

[00:16:04.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't know what they did. I worked there as a volunteer for one or two years.

[00:16:10.59]

ANNE HUNTER: With Mrs. Crawford?

[00:16:11.79]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:16:12.90]

ANNE HUNTER: [Gasps.] I didn't realize that there was ever the clash of the titans. [Laughs.]

[00:16:17.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was a number of years before I became Director. So I did know a little bit about the back history between—my parents were no longer active in it then because they couldn't stand her. But I'd heard things at home, of course, about the Club and been taken there. And then I worked as a volunteer for a couple of years until I saw—

[00:16:41.16]

ANNE HUNTER: The particulars.

[00:16:42.19]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —what was happening. And that got me interested in prints, really. So I went to New York one winter and stayed there for most of the winter, and browsed with the dealers, and browsed with the Metropolitan print collections, and things of that sort.

[00:17:05.62]

ANNE HUNTER: And that's where you met, or got to know [Carl -Ed.] Zigrosser. Wasn't it? Or was that later?

[00:17:13.35]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, no. I knew him slightly then. Yeah. I went into the files and looked at prints. And that sort of a relationship.

[00:17:24.09]

ANNE HUNTER: You were probably just one other face.

[00:17:26.19]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, exactly. And when I was in New York, I met this other girl who was from Boston. And she was studying music, and I was studying prints. And she invited me to come and stay with her family that summer outside of Boston.

[00:17:43.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, is that how the invitation came about?

[00:17:45.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So I could look at prints at the Fogg and at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which I did. And while I was there, I heard about a course that Jacob Rosenberg, fresh over from Berlin, this is early—before the Second World War.

[00:18:07.53]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. My mother was studying in Boston with Karl Deringer [ph] for the same—straight off the boat, for the same reason. It was a wonderful time, actually, to be a student in America.

[00:18:15.99]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, anyway, I wrote Jacob Rosenberg and said I—he was going to give this seminar course, graduate students. I'd never been to college. I'd never graduated from high school. And I said, I'd like to take his course.

[00:18:32.49]

ANNE HUNTER: Bold.

[00:18:33.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So he invited me to come up to Boston and talk to him. And so we met at the Boston Museum. And I told him perfectly frankly, I didn't speak German. I could read a little German, and what my non-education was. [Laughs.] And he said, I don't know whether—he couldn't have understood what I was saying. But anyway, he took me on as a volunteer to act as his office boy to read his letters over to be sure they were in legible English.

[00:19:07.68]

ANNE HUNTER: I bet that was a challenge.

[00:19:09.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he was doing very well. And to attend his course, and to see that the students knew what their assignments were in case they hadn't understood them. And work as a volunteer in the print room. He was not curator of prints. There was an old Ms. Dudley there at that time at the Fogg Art Museum.

[00:19:34.23]

Well, of course I had the most fascinating winter doing all this. And I learned just as much from all the people, friends I made, graduate students, and people working in the museum and so forth as I read from the course. I was planning to go back and see if I couldn't chisel my way in to take another course the next year when my father died. And I—as my brother was college, my sister was married, and I as the unmarried daughter was, of course, expected to—

[00:20:13.93]

ANNE HUNTER: I suppose pack up the house. Or—

[00:20:15.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:20:16.12]

ANNE HUNTER: Really?

[00:20:16.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And take care of mother.

[00:20:18.28]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Well, I feel the Smithsonian perched on my shoulder saying, "Give us details now." What was the name of the friend who invited you to Boston?

[00:20:28.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Elli Williams.

[00:20:29.23]

ANNE HUNTER: Elli Williams. And who were some of the friends and people you got to know in Boston as the other students, and so forth? Any names that tend to come to you?

[00:20:40.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he wasn't a student. He was in the Oriental Department of the Fogg, and was a good friend of mine, Ben Rowland. And Jack Thatcher, who moved on to Washington too. I can't think of that.

[00:20:55.78]

ANNE HUNTER: I expect these are contacts that became very useful later on.

[00:20:59.80]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Ben's dead. And Jack Thatcher is probably dead, too. And there was a Jimmy Kronthal who was a student, also dead now. Lydia Evans, also dead now.

[00:21:13.97]

ANNE HUNTER: These are people who probably moved on to do interesting things in the next couple of decades.

[00:21:19.20]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:21:19.76]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. Boston was an amazing place at that time.

[00:21:23.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I loved it. I was dying to go back, but the war then came. And so—

[00:21:30.53]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, then, actually that world kind of disappeared, too, after the war.

[00:21:37.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So—

[00:21:38.84]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the Institute of Contemporary Art was in existence before—

[00:21:43.28]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It just was starting.

[00:21:43.64]

ANNE HUNTER: It just started.

[00:21:45.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I used to go to their openings, and so forth.

[00:21:48.30]

ANNE HUNTER: Now that was—they were showing pretty contemporary work too.

[00:21:51.17]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Very, yes.

[00:21:51.53]

ANNE HUNTER: What was the reaction to that? I suppose in your friends, the reaction was wonderful.

[00:21:56.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, absolutely. But also that Boston was way ahead of Philadelphia about those kinds of things. [Walter -Ed.] Gropius was there, and [Marcel -Ed.] Breuer as refugees, you see.

[00:22:04.34]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Okay. Now, why didn't Philadelphia get good refugees like that?

[00:22:08.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, it was Harvard.

[00:22:10.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, it was Harvard. And Penn wasn't that interested. Yeah. So they were able—they were probably showing their own work, I suppose, and the work of other refugee friends.

[00:22:25.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Pushing them, and so on.

[00:22:26.42]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:22:29.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But let's see, where was I? I was stuck in Philadelphia with the war.

[00:22:35.69]

ANNE HUNTER: Back to Philadelphia, and the sad business of taking care of your family.

[00:22:40.85]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I got into war work. No, first before I got into the war work, it was the Academy of Fine Arts came to me. That was it. And they had this collection. They didn't know what was in it, 60,000 prints.

[00:22:59.21]

ANNE HUNTER: And for years, they didn't know what was in it. Nobody still knows what's in it.

[00:23:03.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I saw the whole darn thing.

[00:23:05.24]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, that must have been a daunting task.

[00:23:08.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But it was pasted down in portfolios.

[00:23:10.87]

ANNE HUNTER: You did one of the first sorts of it, didn't you?

[00:23:13.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:23:13.09]

ANNE HUNTER: It was still just sort of—because it had been a study collection. And people would—the art students would paw through it to look at figures—

[00:23:22.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They weren't interested, except for a couple of them. But everything was pasted down in these portfolios. The dirt was thick on top of the prints. You

had to use up six dusters a day just—

[00:23:38.17]

ANNE HUNTER: Those beautiful Goltzius prints. I can't stand thinking of it. [Laughs.]

[00:23:43.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Nobody knew what they had or where—Mr. Phillips had these big journals. And his idea, he didn't care whether an impression was good or bad. He wanted every print that had ever been made. And the only reference books were Bartsch and Dumenil [Benezit -Ed.].

[00:24:00.79]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:24:04.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And he pasted these things in these portfolios, and he put the little Bartsch number under it.

[00:24:09.72]

ANNE HUNTER: And that was it.

[00:24:10.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And that was it.

[00:24:13.20]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, you know, it's still—it's a great collection.

[00:24:16.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It is.

[00:24:17.66]

ANNE HUNTER: He practically did get every great print. [Laughs.] At least in certain—

[00:24:21.99]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But he didn't care whether they were good or bad impressions. And I had just enough knowledge. There must have been an awful lot of things that were marvelous that I didn't spot. But he had the biggest collection of [Jacques -Ed.] Bellange in this country. Well, my friend Jimmy Kronthal was doing his thesis on Bellange. So of course I—good thing I turned those up. I called Jimmy, and—

[00:24:45.54]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. [They laugh.]

[00:24:46.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Up he came.

[00:24:48.09]

ANNE HUNTER: Did he come down to look at them for his thesis?

[00:24:49.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Of course.

[00:24:49.85]

ANNE HUNTER: Yes, I bet.

[00:24:50.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And nobody knew these. And he had an edition of Piranesi's "Prisons" that nobody knew existed.

[00:25:03.36]

ANNE HUNTER: Because they were slightly different.

[00:25:04.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, it was just the title page. I mean, this was known to exist in reference books. But nobody knew that there was one in this country.

[00:25:18.18]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, I'm going back because I don't want to get—I was just thinking, while you were doing this at the Academy, and coming back to Philadelphia after having been gone for some time, because you'd gone to school here, and then went to Europe.

[00:25:34.39]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I went to Europe before I left school.

[00:25:36.84]

ANNE HUNTER: Okay. And then came back for a little while and did some volunteer work at the Print Club, and then went to Boston. Were you still in touch with friends who you had known at school? And were they also—

[00:25:48.18]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not very much, because they all got married at eighteen.

[00:25:50.70]

ANNE HUNTER: That's what I was—I had a feeling that they weren't following you where your intellect was bringing you. They were sort of out to field.

[00:25:58.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. I've always been a square peg.

[00:26:06.19]

ANNE HUNTER: We all are. [They laugh.]

[00:26:09.58]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But where was I?

[00:26:11.58]

ANNE HUNTER: So it's interesting. There wasn't really an old girl network from that kind of— from that experience.

[00:26:16.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And girls of certain economic and social caste weren't going to college in Philadelphia in those days.

[00:26:27.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. It wasn't the thing to do, was it?

[00:26:28.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. So you were filling in time you were supposed to be married. But this cookie didn't crumble that way for me.

[00:26:36.85]

ANNE HUNTER: I know my grandmother-in-law was told when she was in elementary school that she was going to college, and she'd better get used to the idea, which was Helen Manning. And so her father was not going to let her not go to college. But I had a feeling that that was very—that was an extraordinary demand for him to make on her.

[00:26:54.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, I went through this collection. I forget just how long I was doing this.

[00:27:04.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, was there anything that was interesting to look at in the city, in terms of art around that time? Was the Art Alliance doing anything interesting?

[00:27:11.43]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They had some exhibits. And sometimes, they were interesting ones. And The Print Club was having exhibits. And they went to all the dealers around that they are. Now, there's Sessler's.

[00:27:20.52]

ANNE HUNTER: Sessler's had prints.

[00:27:21.72]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Prints. Yeah. McBey, and Cameron, and Muirhead Bone. And the Print Club had Stow Wengenroth and John Taylor Arms and Thomas Nason. And those were the best people they had.

[00:27:37.38]

ANNE HUNTER: And I'm sure that those were—people were buying them—

[00:27:40.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes.

[00:27:40.26]

ANNE HUNTER: —because they always had that beautiful technical edge that people go for.

[00:27:44.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:27:45.09]

ANNE HUNTER: So those were around. But you didn't—you weren't seeing the Roualt, for instance, that you would have seen in Boston.

[00:27:51.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:27:53.64]

ANNE HUNTER: The museum wasn't showing prints.

[00:27:55.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The museum didn't have a print department.

[00:27:57.42]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. And the Academy—was the Academy functioning as a museum as

well as a school at that time?

[00:28:01.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. They had their annual exhibits.

[00:28:03.30]

ANNE HUNTER: And that was just about it.

[00:28:04.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:28:05.31]

ANNE HUNTER: Small art world.

[00:28:07.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was very small.

[00:28:07.92]

ANNE HUNTER: How did artists be artists here? Because there were good artists. Where were they getting—

[00:28:11.67]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, the artists taught.

[00:28:13.57]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:28:14.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And if they were very good, sometimes they'd get a dealer in New York, and that sort—

[00:28:20.81]

ANNE HUNTER: I guess they sort of hung on, didn't they?

[00:28:22.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:28:22.52]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. Well, I guess what I was trying to figure out what the other cultural institutions were. I guess, well, the orchestra, there was always the music cadre.

[00:28:34.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:28:34.53]

ANNE HUNTER: But your family wasn't that involved?

[00:28:36.31]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, mother and dad had concert tickets. Yes, they went regularly.

[00:28:40.77]

ANNE HUNTER: And the—were the churches also involved in art things?

[00:28:47.34]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not that I know of.

[00:28:48.15]

ANNE HUNTER: No. Well, because in other cities, they were. Art and music. But not really in Philadelphia. It's a funny city, isn't it? It's interesting to look at what's happening, say, in 1990 and say, "Has this always been like this?" So and the colleges, of course, the University of the Arts was the Pennsylvania Museum School at that point.

[00:29:14.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Oh, the School of Industrial Arts.

[00:29:16.01]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, it was the School of Industrial Arts.

[00:29:18.68]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The Museum School came later.

[00:29:20.12]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. They were doing technical courses. Of course, the artists could get employed there. Moore College was around, though, wasn't it?

[00:29:27.42]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was just for girls.

[00:29:28.64]

ANNE HUNTER: Just for girls.

[00:29:29.39]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And it was out in North Broad Street. And it didn't figure much in the art life.

[00:29:34.94]

ANNE HUNTER: And of course, Tyler didn't exist yet. Because Mrs. Tyler hadn't given it to Temple. But the people who were showing at that time—now, Carles had his Art Alliance show some time around there.

[00:29:53.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Carles was showing. Yes. I'm sure. And Franklin Watkins, of course.

[00:30:00.43]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Who was very much in present—

[00:30:02.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And Walter Stuempfig.

[00:30:05.88]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I guess Wharton Esherick—well, Wharton Esherick wouldn't have shown. He would have been—

[00:30:10.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he was sort of a rebel, and a maverick, and—

[00:30:16.14]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. [Laughs.] But how could he be a rebel and a maverick when there was no place to see work around here? Would he have shown—I guess he showed at the Art Alliance.

[00:30:25.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't know where he showed. Well, he had something at the Print Club because I have a little print of his upstairs.

[00:30:32.01]

ANNE HUNTER: And then Julius Bloch would have been—

[00:30:34.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:30:34.84]

ANNE HUNTER: Around.

[00:30:35.34]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was around. But he was hardly what you'd call a leader.

[00:30:40.15]

ANNE HUNTER: He was a follower?

[00:30:41.58]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Very sentimental things. Very sweet man.

[00:30:46.62]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. Curious—

[00:30:48.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But not very exciting as an artist.

[00:30:50.46]

ANNE HUNTER: Because his name is now becoming famous because of the fund in his name that Benjamin Bernstein gave to the Museum, which is how the Museum can buy local work now. And local artists have their work purchased under the Julius Bloch Fund. So he will undoubtedly be thought of as a great Philadelphia artist when perhaps he wasn't at the time. But let's see. I was trying to think of other names of people who would have been around and doing things that you might have known that early—I was thinking also Hobson Pittman.

[00:31:25.26]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. But he was not a printmaker, of course.

[00:31:27.54]

ANNE HUNTER: No.

[00:31:27.93]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But I knew him. And—

[00:31:30.03]

ANNE HUNTER: Joseph Hirsch.

[00:31:31.71]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Benton Spruance. We didn't mention him.

[00:31:33.81]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, he'll be coming up after we get to the Print Club. I guess—let's see. I don't know if I have any more questions about what it was like at the academy. I'm sure that the excitement of having that collection there was—you were probably expecting to do that forever. Certainly as a lifetime's work was is working on the [inaudible].

[00:31:56.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, what they wanted to know was whether they had anything worth preserving, doing anything about, or whether they should just forget it.

[00:32:06.89]

ANNE HUNTER: Were they thinking of selling it?

[00:32:08.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they weren't supposed to sell it, you see? But they could just lock it up and forget it.

[00:32:13.62]

ANNE HUNTER: Which they—

[00:32:14.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Had been doing for years. And I told them that something should be done with this. But when I got involved emotionally in the war, I didn't feel right just sitting there going through—but also, how could I do anything with it without any reference books? Without the equipment to take them out of the portfolios. And you needed a proper museum.

[00:32:44.42]

ANNE HUNTER: And hundreds and thousands of dollars' worth of matboard.

[00:32:47.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:32:48.56]

ANNE HUNTER: And they probably had no funds at all for that.

[00:32:50.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Nothing for anything like that.

[00:32:52.73]

ANNE HUNTER: Actually, it's wonderful now that the art museum does have them, and is able to provide the stuff for them that they should have had all along. Where would you have found a reference library for prints in Philadelphia?

[00:33:05.14]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The museum had a very small one at that time.

[00:33:09.36]

ANNE HUNTER: I guess the Print Club really—because the Print Club eventually put together a little reference library for that. Right?

[00:33:15.93]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they didn't have very much.

[00:33:17.34]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. It's still a very expensive thing to set about doing, although what's helpful now is you can now buy access to a computer bank of print information. But it's very expensive just to buy access to it.

[00:33:31.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, yeah. They didn't have any money for it. Or at least if they had it, they weren't willing to put it into a print—a print department at the Academy.

[00:33:39.03]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, and the Museum was still trying to—was still trying to attach the two wings that had been built in the center. [They laugh.] They didn't really have a building yet.

[00:33:48.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: When I was—oh yes. They had the building when I was at the Academy. And they didn't have a curator yet.

[00:34:00.33]

ANNE HUNTER: There was no curator before Carl Zigrosser?

[00:34:03.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:34:03.56]

ANNE HUNTER: He was the first one. Carl Zigrosser. That was nice for him. Of course, they didn't have collection either.

[00:34:12.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they had a little one. A friend of mine, Joan Hopkins, and she was like I was, was interested in prints. And she was out there sort of keeping tabs on the prints they had. They paid her a pittance. And then Ziggroser came and—

[00:34:31.99]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, how did you become interested in prints? I missed that thread. Because, well, of course you'd been involved in the Print Club. But while you were growing up, Mrs. Crawford was there stultifying it.

[00:34:46.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Because mother had and dad had some prints around the house, and people like McBey coming and visit.

[00:34:53.51]

ANNE HUNTER: They were exciting.

[00:34:54.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:34:56.98]

ANNE HUNTER: See, I can't imagine there was really—you really had to work to get print enthusiasm going when Mrs. Crawford was there sitting on her turtle in Rittenhouse Square. [They laugh.] So you must have been—were you in the middle of war work when they started to look for a director for the Print Club? Or was it after?

[00:35:18.19]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, it was just towards the end of the Second World War that she died. And I'd been in war work for several years. And the war was tapering off very definitely. And they came and asked me if she died, if I would take the job.

[00:35:38.08]

ANNE HUNTER: Do you know who else they asked?

[00:35:39.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:35:40.21]

ANNE HUNTER: It's always interesting to know that.

[00:35:43.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't think they did ask anybody else. They knew they couldn't afford to pay somebody with real training. They knew that I knew a little something.

[00:35:52.05]

ANNE HUNTER: Who were they at that time? Who—

[00:35:53.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Just the board of directors. Sandy Saltus was the name of the man who was president. And Sturgis Ingersoll was on the board. And Lessing Rosenwald was on the board. And Joe Simms, an architect. And—oh, I can't remember.

[00:36:14.20]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, had they been happy with Mrs. Crawford, and they were hoping you had more of the same?

[00:36:18.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not very, but people weren't interested in what was happening to a small, poor gallery like the Print Club with the Second World War going on.

[00:36:29.38]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. And probably the board was really stuck. They didn't have a director. And they needed—

[00:36:36.52]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And so she died, and they asked me if I would take it on. And I knew the war was just about over, and so I was going to be getting out of war work anyway. And so I took it on.

[00:36:51.55]

ANNE HUNTER: And found that you were probably fighting your own war.

[00:36:55.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And got very fascinated by the whole thing. We had no money. We sometimes didn't even have enough money to get coal.

[00:37:06.70]

ANNE HUNTER: I remember that you had mentioned to Ruth that you asked people to bring down coal. And I also saw that you mailed that to people in the scrapbooks.

[00:37:14.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:37:16.16]

ANNE HUNTER: That wasn't a joke.

[00:37:17.39]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. It wasn't a joke.

[00:37:18.14]

ANNE HUNTER: It was extremely—and you also sold off some furniture?

[00:37:20.99]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes. Yeah, it was overstuffed horsehair sofa and some things of that sort. But we actually needed the money to stay open.

[00:37:36.05]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, at—what did the Print Club look like at that time? And I was always fascinated to discover that it had been a—it had been a contestant in a contest of the beautiful gardens of 1928.

[00:37:50.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, I didn't know that.

[00:37:52.28]

ANNE HUNTER: And in the newspapers, there was a very sort of [vocalization] scratched up photograph of the back garden, which made it look nice. But I couldn't really see from the photograph whether it was in fact a beautiful garden.

[00:38:03.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was a very pretty little garden. You see, where we built out the gallery, that was all garden.

[00:38:10.07]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Was it all—was it a brick garden?

[00:38:12.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Brick paving.

[00:38:13.87]

ANNE HUNTER: And it had flowers and stuff around the edges? And—

[00:38:16.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: A little bit. Nobody ever did very much gardening there. But it was a pretty little back courtyard.

[00:38:23.87]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, it's always—any gardening along Latimer Street is always so overpowered by the Colonial Dames. That gorgeous garden there. But I guess maybe Mrs. Crawford spruced it up in order to become one of the beautiful gardens of 1928.

[00:38:41.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Probably.

[00:38:43.19]

ANNE HUNTER: And there was always the little figure of a child in the niche. But that was never a working fountain I don't think.

[00:38:51.07]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I think it may have been at one time.

[00:38:53.11]

ANNE HUNTER: I couldn't find any plumbing in it. But it was—

[00:38:55.93]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Then I guess it wasn't.

[00:38:56.29]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. It looks like it should have been, though. Something else to look at. Now, I guess what I'm—was curious about was how Lessing Rosenwald and Sturgis Ingersoll would move from Mrs. Crawford's not-particularly-earth-shaking ideas about what the Print Club should be doing to this young sort of firebrand. Or did they realize what they were getting?

[00:39:23.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't think so. Well, the Sturgis Ingersoll certainly backed me up one hundred percent. But there were a lot of very conservative people on the board at that time. I don't remember their names, even some of them, now. And when I wanted to show contemporary things, they said I had to prove to them that I could sell them.

[00:39:56.00]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Now, how did you find buyers for this work?

[00:40:00.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I put them on the wall.

[00:40:01.76]

ANNE HUNTER: And the buyers flocked in, huh? It's the only place in town, I suppose.

[00:40:05.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. My first spring there, we had—those days, we had an etching show, a lithography show, a woodcut—each one separate. And Hayter won the prize. I don't remember who was on the jury. But he won the prize for "Laocoön," sitting out there in the hall. And—

[00:40:30.58]

ANNE HUNTER: That's a gorgeous print.

[00:40:31.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The Charles M. Lee prize.

[00:40:35.23]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, did you know him before he won the prize?

[00:40:37.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:40:37.95]

ANNE HUNTER: Came out of the woodwork. There he was.

[00:40:40.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. He sent in from New York. He moved the Atelier 17 from Paris to New York for the end—just before the end of the war. And he won with this—which I was very excited about. So I wrote him and I asked him if we could give him a one-man show in the autumn.

[00:41:05.40]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, and I don't know—how was it? So having been there, was it—you must have changed the way the shows were a little bit for him to have known to submit in the first place.

[00:41:17.52]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: There weren't very many shows for people to submit to. There weren't all these places like Iowa with Lasansky and so forth. Those all came later.

[00:41:30.89]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. So you were able to attract somebody like Hayter without having to work for it because you were there. But who would your jurors be? Would they be artists from Philadelphia? Or—

[00:41:42.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, we'd get them from New York and Philadelphia. I don't remember who was on that jury. But anyway, he said, "Yes."

[00:41:52.68]

ANNE HUNTER: And you said, "Yay."

[00:41:54.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And he came over, and said he wanted to come over and talk to me or something. And so he came, and I got Ben Spruance to have lunch with us that day. I guess Ben was sort of the leading Philadelphia printmaker. And—

[00:42:13.47]

ANNE HUNTER: Did they know each other previously?

[00:42:14.70]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. Of course not.

[00:42:17.85]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Hayter was European.

[00:42:21.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. And we—Hayter had his workshop in New York. And we — I invited him to come and do a workshop just once a month in Philadelphia.

[00:42:38.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Would that be a one-day workshop? Or was it a couple of days?

[00:42:41.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: One day. One evening. And it was, he came once a month. But they met the other, it was on Wednesdays, let's say. They met the other Wednesdays without him. And we would—found that we'd have Hayter once a month. And then we'd get somebody from lithography occasionally.

[00:43:01.51]

ANNE HUNTER: Now Ben Spruance himself was a distinguished lithographer. Or he wasn't at that time, was he?

[00:43:06.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he wasn't as distinguished as he became later.

[00:43:08.82]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:43:11.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But we had Louis Schanker come over for woodcut. And we had Will Barnet come over. And we had Adja Yunkers come over. And well—

[00:43:21.99]

ANNE HUNTER: And these were artists who were generally living in New York.

[00:43:24.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:43:25.17]

ANNE HUNTER: And they were coming down to Philadelphia for this—

[00:43:27.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, to meet with our artists at the Print Club.

[00:43:30.30]

ANNE HUNTER: And the artists must have been—these were famous names, and which would make Philadelphia artists feel pretty good about what they were doing.

[00:43:39.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:43:40.26]

ANNE HUNTER: I do think that is a good thing to do for Philadelphia.

[00:43:43.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And Ezio Martinelli, and Dmitri Petroff, and some of these young Philadelphia artists were the ones that were coming to these things.

[00:43:56.17]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. So now, how long did it take for these two to take off? Now, Hayter started in around—

[00:44:01.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Hayter started the year after I—he started coming.

[00:44:03.69]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, it was just the next year.

[00:44:04.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:44:05.70]

ANNE HUNTER: That was quick work. You were still running around selling the furniture, and trying to get the coal, and trying to—

[00:44:12.45]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:44:12.87]

ANNE HUNTER: Trying to make it look like a respectable place for Hayter to come down to, I suppose. My. But you had already knew Benton Spruance before being at the Print Club.

[00:44:24.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:44:24.72]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. I suppose other artists of his generation—I suppose Morris Blackburn.

[00:44:32.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Yeah, they were all members of the Print Club.

[00:44:35.00]

ANNE HUNTER: Who you knew before becoming the director, because you were also a member.

[00:44:39.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:44:40.34]

ANNE HUNTER: And they were—and they were complaining to you, too, about Mrs. Crawford probably in that first year.

[00:44:45.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And well, after I got there, they said, they started telling me things. Yeah.

[00:44:52.07]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, how did the workshops work really practically? And I'm interested for a number of reasons in terms of the—of what the Print Club did in the past in terms of workshops. And Hayter would come, and you had set up an etching situation for him. You had the chemicals.

[00:45:08.93]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And the press.

[00:45:09.59]

ANNE HUNTER: And the press. And the paper.

[00:45:11.78]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:45:12.59]

ANNE HUNTER: And this was all on the second floor, under the pitched roof.

[00:45:17.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:45:18.38]

ANNE HUNTER: And he would—would he do a demonstration? Or would artists bring their work and—

[00:45:25.16]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Artists would bring their plates they were working on. And Hayter would talk to each one separately. And—

[00:45:33.62]

ANNE HUNTER: So it was sort of like a studio class. The work was going on and he would look over shoulders and say, "Do this, do that." But everybody would be pulling their own prints.

[00:45:43.16]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:45:44.15]

ANNE HUNTER: And would there be differences in method from artist to artist?

[00:45:48.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes.

[00:45:49.87]

ANNE HUNTER: I mean, what—and I guess what I'm trying to figure out, well—there's a real difference between a workshop and a collaborative situation where there's a printer working with the artist.

[00:46:04.76]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, they were doing their own printing.

[00:46:06.32]

ANNE HUNTER: They were doing their own printing under the helpful guidance—

[00:46:10.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, that Hayter was experimenting with combining serigraph with—and you get color, and all that kind of thing. You see, and he was telling them about these experiments.

[00:46:22.37]

ANNE HUNTER: And probably some of them were going off and doing the experiments and bringing back that information to him.

[00:46:27.71]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:46:27.96]

ANNE HUNTER: And did they tend to—they were bringing in plates that they were working on. Did they also have a printing situation at home?

[00:46:34.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Some of them had presses of their own. And some—College of Art, was as it was then was beginning to have an active print department. And so—

[00:46:44.66]

ANNE HUNTER: There was a press there.

[00:46:45.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:46:46.62]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, there—was there a press down—while this was going on, there was this sketch—

[00:46:53.57]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The Sketch Club.

[00:46:55.79]

ANNE HUNTER: What's now the Fleischer Art Memorial, which was the Graphic Sketch Club.

[00:47:00.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, they weren't doing very much with prints, as far as I can remember.

[00:47:05.12]

ANNE HUNTER: Graphic Sketch Club, they—

[END OF TRACK AAA_vonmos88_7514_m]

[00:00:05.53]

ANNE HUNTER: [Laughs.] I'm also—I have used interviews like this, and I really—it's that little stray aside—and you go, I didn't realize he was there. Now, wait a minute. If he was in Philadel—and that's when the interviews—it could be somebody working on an entirely different project. You never know what it is. And so you're speaking for other people who didn't get a chance to do an interview. We're trying to see if we can go ahead and use it.

[00:00:37.39]

Well, let's see. What we were talking about was interesting. Oh, we were talking about Hayter and the workshops and how exactly that worked. And you think of it as the Hayter workshop, but it sounds like it was much larger than that. It must have taken a couple of years to make it long enough to—

[00:00:54.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The first few years, it was its best. And then, unfortunately, some of the artists, like Morris Blackburn and Ben Spruance, actually, from the other older ones that were in it, went to people who were still students at the College of Art who wanted to join the workshop—they didn't want to work with their students.

[00:01:28.40]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Right. Well, they got older, in other words. Yeah.

[00:01:34.52]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And they resented that. And so we split it into two evenings, one evening for the older men, who wanted to be private, and the other evening for anybody else, who—

[00:01:57.37]

ANNE HUNTER: That's an interesting point. Were very many women doing this at the time?

[00:02:02.50]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not very many. I mean, there were women, but, I mean—

[00:02:06.91]

ANNE HUNTER: Helen Siegl?

[00:02:08.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: She wasn't here yet. And anyway, she was only woodcut. So she wouldn't—

[00:02:13.63]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:02:15.67]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But we split it into two groups.

[00:02:20.08]

ANNE HUNTER: Sort of advanced—

[00:02:21.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not by age, or—I think it was just ones who wanted to work privately and didn't want to work with—the same room with their students could have their own little—

[00:02:32.11]

ANNE HUNTER: Atelier.

[00:02:33.13]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —private thing, damn them. [Laughs.] And—

[00:02:36.73]

ANNE HUNTER: I take it that the administrative attitude wasn't entirely supportive of it. [Laughs.]

[00:02:42.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Of course, the older ones, it just died, that part of it.

[00:02:45.97]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Right. Well, were they—did they have other places to print as well?

[00:02:52.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they had their own presses.

[00:02:54.10]

ANNE HUNTER: But at that time, they didn't really feel like—

[00:02:56.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But it was the younger ones who had the enthusiasm. And so it went on for—I forget how many years, maybe ten years altogether. And then, by the time it really folded was when the art schools all were having active print departments.

[00:03:13.06]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:03:13.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And so it wasn't needed.

[00:03:14.91]

ANNE HUNTER: So there was no longer a real necessity. But it must have been a great—it must have been a great time there for a couple of years with all those talented people working together and—

[00:03:24.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, it was.

[00:03:24.76]

ANNE HUNTER: —supporting each other.

[00:03:25.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. But you see my point. I mean, I wasn't going to shut out the new younger people from—

[00:03:32.09]

ANNE HUNTER: That's the next generation.

[00:03:34.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:03:35.11]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. Well, that's how these things—you have to change for the times.

[00:03:45.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:03:45.44]

ANNE HUNTER: I'm interested in talking about Benton Spruance, because he actually—one thing that I'm interested in knowing about those older—who became older artists who weren't older when they were younger—I know Spruance—

[00:04:03.95]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Spruance was a very good friend to the Club.

[00:04:05.96]

ANNE HUNTER: I think Robert Riggs and some other artists were doing collaborative printing with Theodore Cuno here in Philadelphia?

[00:04:12.76]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, yes. We had Cuno come to the workshop.

[00:04:14.96]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, you did?

[00:04:15.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:04:16.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Did he give a workshop or was he—

[00:04:18.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He gave several sessions. And we had a lithograph press there for a while.

[00:04:22.82]

ANNE HUNTER: My, my. I'd like to have taken a session with Theodore Cuno. He was pretty good.

[00:04:27.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:04:27.53]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. Now, he moved to New Mexico soon in the early '50s?

[00:04:35.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't remember.

[00:04:36.47]

ANNE HUNTER: Or maybe even earlier than that. But during the '30s, he did a fair amount of work with artists, but—

[00:04:41.18]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes, Ben Spruance and Riggs and Abels, and so on. They all depended on him very definitely.

[00:04:48.86]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. He was producing a lot of work then.

[00:04:50.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was a good printer.

[00:04:52.43]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, was he involved with—well, obviously, he was involved with the Club with workshops. He didn't—he wasn't an artist himself, though, was he?

[00:04:58.70]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, no.

[00:04:59.21]

ANNE HUNTER: He was—

[00:05:00.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Master printer.

[00:05:01.16]

ANNE HUNTER: He was moonlighting from a day job, too, wasn't he?

[00:05:03.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I think so.

[00:05:04.19]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, I think he did commercial printing. You know, I have this awful fear. Let's just check and be sure that we're getting all these—

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

Okay?

[00:05:16.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:05:16.72]

ANNE HUNTER: Great. I get the feeling that he—now, I think people came down from New York to work with him?

[00:05:26.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, yes.

[00:05:27.03]

ANNE HUNTER: Or was that—I feel like he was really pretty well known on the East Coast.

[00:05:29.89]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We didn't do very much in the workshop with lithography. We didn't do very much with woodcut. But we did have Louis Schanker come and Adja Yunkers come. And, by the way, Ed Colker started as a printmaker at—

[00:05:43.95]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, was he one of the younger people—

[00:05:45.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:05:46.44]

ANNE HUNTER: —who Spruance didn't want to work with because he was a student?

[00:05:48.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, Spruance wasn't a leader, and these were all his friends. And so he was behind the eight-ball.

[00:05:56.82]

ANNE HUNTER: I suppose Jerry Kaplan might have been one of those younger—

[00:05:59.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was, and Sam Maitin. Very definitely, they were my three boys.

[00:06:05.55]

ANNE HUNTER: And they were, in fact, the next generation who did bring the Print Club through to the '50s and '60s. So you were right.

[00:06:13.26]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. They were my—I mean, there were lots of others, yes, but these were the ones I was particularly close to.

[00:06:20.61]

ANNE HUNTER: I'm—let's see, have I—I'm trying to think of anything more. People don't know a whole lot about Cuno. He didn't leave many records. And I'd love to know. Gee, I wonder where his records are.

[00:06:33.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I have no idea.

[00:06:34.71]

ANNE HUNTER: I think they may be gone with the wind. I think also Harry Brodsky did some work with him and may know a little more about what happened to that, just people who are around now who would remember him. But I think they've gone to New Mexico.

[00:06:53.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: What is that thing teetering there?

[00:06:56.82]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, it's the case.

[00:06:58.65]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I just thought it was something important.

[00:07:03.19]

ANNE HUNTER: Not important enough. What did you—what kind of programs did you figure out for the younger people when the workshop stopped being really a great place?

[00:07:13.45]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they had plenty going on at the art schools where they were—other students were teaching.

[00:07:18.12]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:07:19.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then—

[00:07:21.63]

ANNE HUNTER: By then, exhibitions probably were provided.

[00:07:23.79]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, we were having exhibitions and demonstrations and all that kind of thing to expose them.

[00:07:32.76]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, how was this working structurally with the Print Club? It must have been in terrible shape during the war, financially.

[00:07:41.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was.

[00:07:42.21]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, really. And the membership was probably—

[00:07:44.85]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Way down.

[00:07:46.48]

ANNE HUNTER: People weren't—people were busy fighting a war. And they—

[00:07:51.35]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The thing that gave our membership the most tremendous boost was when John Canaday wrote that article, which you've undoubtedly seen, in the *New York Times*.

[00:08:01.23]

ANNE HUNTER: That's in the '60s. That's twenty years later.

[00:08:04.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, but our membership had come up.

[00:08:06.79]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:08:07.28]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But it just surged ahead after that.

[00:08:11.08]

ANNE HUNTER: What I'm trying to figure out is I'm thinking about Philadelphia and the art community in the '40s and the '50s, what fueled it. And when the Print Club was in bad shape, what came through to help support? Did the board come through with donations or—

[00:08:30.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We didn't get the kind of—we didn't have to go to foundations. There weren't the foundations to go to. Some board members gave money, but it was only in small amounts. We sold, and we sold, and we sold. I'm not talking about the furniture now. I'm talking about prints.

[00:08:49.65]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:08:50.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We really began to—and I gave a range so that the staff got a commission—our salaries were miserably low, but we got a commission on sales over a certain amount.

[00:09:04.84]

ANNE HUNTER: And so there was a real incentive for selling.

[00:09:07.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Everybody on the staff, that applied to. The secretary got out and sold, and the bookkeeper got out and sold. And of course, I—

[00:09:15.42]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, who were you selling to? Were they—let's see, was it Rosie the Riveter who'd come out of the factories and make—

[00:09:21.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, we had lawyers and doctors and young businesspeople and housewives.

[00:09:26.17]

ANNE HUNTER: Who were often taking the train into Center City and would come in their lunch break to look at the art?

[00:09:31.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, one of the things when I first came there, I did draw people into this empty building—cold, no heat. [Laughs.]

[00:09:40.15]

ANNE HUNTER: On a side street.

[00:09:41.89]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —was I put out a tea tray every afternoon.

[00:09:44.59]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. And that would be around four o'clock?

[00:09:47.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:09:48.64]

ANNE HUNTER: So if your business had banker's hours, you could drop by after work.

[00:09:52.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And we'd be—members of staff would be having tea, and people would drift in, and we'd get talking. And next thing we knew, they joined the Club.

[00:10:02.68]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:10:03.16]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And they'd buy something.

[00:10:04.78]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, if you join the Club, you could get a discount for what you bought?

[00:10:08.74]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, not in those days.

[00:10:10.78]

ANNE HUNTER: So you would join the Club in order to know what was going on.

[00:10:13.39]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and then be invited to the openings, and invited to demonstrations and lectures. And then we started—I forget what year, but you could look that up—publications.

[00:10:23.58]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Who was coming into the teas? Were they wives or husbands?

[00:10:29.43]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: More wives than husbands.

[00:10:31.17]

ANNE HUNTER: Coming back from shopping?

[00:10:32.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was at four o'clock on Friday. They'd come in after the orchestra—

[00:10:36.74]

ANNE HUNTER: Friday. Right. Very well-timed. Perfect.

[00:10:41.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That would have been always the day for that. And so that was my only thing.

[00:10:45.73]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the Print Club was famous for the teas. I don't think—I think other organizations started to do it after you, didn't they?

[00:10:53.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Probably.

[00:10:54.15]

ANNE HUNTER: But that was really—the Art Alliance, for instance. Who did you feel were your competing organizations who you were trying to get sales and people from?

[00:11:03.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I suppose the Art Alliance. But we had a perfectly good relationship with them.

[00:11:07.47]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, it was all friendly. Also the commercial galleries.

[00:11:11.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: There weren't very many of them.

[00:11:12.75]

ANNE HUNTER: There weren't.

[00:11:13.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: There was Carlen, and there was Sessler's.

[00:11:18.21]

ANNE HUNTER: And they were showing older prints and not newer prints?

[00:11:21.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, Carlen had the German Expressionists.

[00:11:24.10]

ANNE HUNTER: Really?

[00:11:25.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. That's where I got my Kirchner watercolor.

[00:11:32.47]

ANNE HUNTER: And how did they fare during the war, though? Were they still open?

[00:11:36.16]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I suppose poorly.

[00:11:37.33]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. I don't know how well—I guess they stayed open, though.

[00:11:41.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, they were still there. And Sessler's were selling the McBeys and Camerons and Bones. And they were damn good printmakers.

[00:11:52.15]

ANNE HUNTER: Then they were there. And they also—of course, the thing about a print in terms of incomes at the time, you could buy a print a month without being too greedy—

[00:12:06.57]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, sure, they were selling for fifteen dollars, ten dollars, five dollars.

[00:12:11.71]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. So you could get somebody and really hook them. They would come in for the teas, and the teas would be once a week.

[00:12:18.28]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, no. They were once a month.

[00:12:20.88]

ANNE HUNTER: Once a month. And you might be able to make a sale.

[00:12:24.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, you made lots of sales at the teas. I went around festooned with these little red things that put on and carrying my sales book and—

[00:12:37.11]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, did you find that there was spillover? If you had a popular show—and I guess I'd like to know which the popular shows were. And if the next show was a less popular show but somebody you were pushing, that you would find the sales would lop over? The person who bought the popular print would come back and buy the younger or unpopular print?

[00:12:55.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes, sometimes.

[00:12:57.00]

ANNE HUNTER: Who was really popular? I expect you might have had some difficulty selling Hayter, or maybe I'm wrong.

[00:13:02.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, we almost sold his row out.

[00:13:04.41]

ANNE HUNTER: In Philadelphia?

[00:13:05.43]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:13:08.04]

ANNE HUNTER: That's against expectation. Who else?

[00:13:14.26]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, look around what prints are in my house.

[00:13:16.19]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:13:16.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That's who else.

[00:13:17.66]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. And people would really—even—

[00:13:21.20]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And sometimes we had shows that we'd done, and nobody—hardly anybody bought, certainly.

[00:13:26.24]

ANNE HUNTER: How about work that was really—I was very interested—now, where did I read this? And was it Leon Kelly? You just look for—I think it was Leon Kelly, who was a real Surrealist. And it was a—I think it was an issue of *Minotaur* or—gee, I don't see it here, and I was so interested by this. It was a Picasso print and a Leon Kelly print in the edition of the magazine that caused the U.S. Post Office to cease mailing them because they said they wouldn't deal with this trash. [Berthe laughs.] And I was like, well, you know, I can understand Picasso and Leon Kelly, a Philadelphia artist. Isn't that wonderful? Was he making prints that—

[00:14:12.50]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He made some, yeah. But he wasn't—I mean, we did show him at one time. But he was never active at the Print Club.

[00:14:19.91]

ANNE HUNTER: Would people have bought work like that from the Print Club? Because I've found it's very difficult to sell challenging work now.

[00:14:28.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Sometimes they would, and sometimes they wouldn't.

[00:14:31.16]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. It's much easier to sell something that's beautifully crafted and of a subject of still life or something like that than harder work. But I know I go to people's houses and see the collections from the time, and people were buying very challenging work. And I guess they were feeling supported by it.

[00:14:53.31]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I think the artists and the dealers are making a terrible mistake letting the prices go up so high that—

[00:15:00.63]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, something's—yeah, something's happening to that now. A recessionary market is going to—is running in collision with the inflation of prices. It should be interesting in the next couple of years. But it isn't—particularly with prints, which are meant to be for the masses.

[00:15:17.13]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. And they're defeating themselves. And I always—the artists, when they came to me for advice, of course, they always were doing a lot of—doing that because I knew that from the time they were students, I'd say, "Keep your prices low. Get your things in people's homes and offices, where people will see them and say, 'Whose work is that? Where do I get it?'" And—

[00:15:46.82]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Now, a lot of these artists had been involved with the WPA during the late '30s, didn't they? And, in fact—I get a feeling that these were people who had learned how to get by with not very much money.

[00:16:01.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:16:02.36]

ANNE HUNTER: And that was a great help. The greed for commercial success was not perhaps that strong then as it was now. And I think Spruance was WPA.

[00:16:13.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I think he probably was, yes.

[00:16:15.17]

ANNE HUNTER: And I think Riggs was.

[00:16:16.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. [Harry -Ed.] Brodsky and [Nathan -Ed.] Margulies—"Mar-go-lees," whatever his name was. Oh, yes, an awful lot of them were.

[00:16:27.02]

ANNE HUNTER: And they must—did they look back on that as being—some people have a very nostalgic feeling about that. Millie Greenberg, for instance, does—that it was wonderful and that the work that she did at that time was important to her. But in the '40s, of course, that was gone, after the war. What were people doing to stay afloat while they were making art? I suppose they were teaching.

[00:16:49.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They were teaching, or going into advertising.

[00:16:52.44]

ANNE HUNTER: That's right. That's what Harry did. He worked for *T.V. Guide* for—

[00:16:58.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, most of them were in one or the other. Every once in a while, you'd find somebody—there was one that young man—I can't remember his name now—who was a tree surgeon.

[00:17:06.63]

ANNE HUNTER: Was he a woodcutter? Did he do woodcuts? [They laugh.]

[00:17:11.81]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was what most people—

[00:17:15.06]

ANNE HUNTER: Probably teaching or commercial art.

[00:17:17.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, one or the other.

[00:17:18.39]

ANNE HUNTER: Did you know Dox Thrash?

[00:17:21.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Very slightly. He was an older man, and he wasn't very active at that time, but yeah.

[00:17:28.74]

ANNE HUNTER: Somebody told me once that the Print Club had the first integrated board, or it had a feeling of being more open than the other boards of—

[00:17:38.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, that was another thing that I was responsible for. There weren't any artists on the board before—

[00:17:44.88]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:17:45.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —let alone Black artists.

[00:17:51.27]

ANNE HUNTER: Just society folks or big collectors, I guess, like Ingersoll and Rosenwald.

[00:17:56.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, well, Ingersoll with society folks both.

[00:17:59.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:18:02.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Bonnie Wintersteen and Henry McIlhenny and—

[00:18:05.76]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, were they ever on the Print Club board?

[00:18:07.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes.

[00:18:07.59]

ANNE HUNTER: I know Bonnie was president for a little while, wasn't she?

[00:18:10.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:18:11.07]

ANNE HUNTER: And Henry, and then—

[00:18:15.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, we were the first of the art organizations, I think, to actually have Black members.

[00:18:21.42]

ANNE HUNTER: Really?

[00:18:21.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I got poison pen letters. I had five of them.

[00:18:25.65]

ANNE HUNTER: Really? Because there were Black members?

[00:18:26.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:18:27.75]

ANNE HUNTER: From other members? Or from the general—from other members?

[Some language in the following passage may be offensive. It is presented as it exists in the original audio recording for the benefit of research. This material in no way reflects the views of the Archives of American Art or the Smithsonian Institution. -Ed.]

[00:18:31.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: From the general public. And when I moved down to this part of town and I joined Christ Church—and the rector of the church, Ernest Harding, was a great friend of mine. And one woman came in to him, into his office, and said, "You should not have that woman in your church. She sleeps with Blacks." Well, "niggers," she called them.

[00:18:53.65]

ANNE HUNTER: Wow.

[00:18:55.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And he threw her out of his office.

[00:18:59.27]

ANNE HUNTER: Hmm. It was very tough being a Black artist at that time.

[00:19:03.46]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. And it was tough befriending them, too.

[00:19:06.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. But the board—I guess that was another thing the board learned to live through.

[00:19:11.14]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The board backed me up. Absolutely.

[00:19:12.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Who were your board members after the '40s and '50s. I should probably look this up, but—

[00:19:19.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: You could look that up.

[00:19:20.83]

ANNE HUNTER: There's a big difference. Really, I mean, Bonnie Wintersteen would have been supportive, I know.

[00:19:25.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. No, my board was a very supportive board once they found out I could sell them. [They laugh.]

[00:19:35.65]

ANNE HUNTER: I suppose that means as long as they knew they didn't have to take out their checkbooks every time you came by, which, probably, they didn't have to do.

[00:19:42.28]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. I did very little asking for money.

[00:19:48.07]

ANNE HUNTER: For one thing, you kept within the bound—I suppose your big expenses—

[00:19:51.93]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, we made profit.

[00:19:54.19]

ANNE HUNTER: How about that.

[00:19:55.42]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. After the first few years, we always had a profit.

[00:20:02.38]

ANNE HUNTER: Your expenses, you were able to keep rather low, I would imagine.

[00:20:05.98]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, we were at starvation wages.

[00:20:07.99]

ANNE HUNTER: Starvation wages, and a lot of doing it yourself, too.

[00:20:11.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And when we were about to hire somebody, I told them that the pay was lousy, but the work was fun.

[00:20:15.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Right, and lots of hand-addressing.

[00:20:18.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. We did it all by hand at first. But then, when the membership became bigger, we got a thingy like this—bang, bang, bang [demonstrating a machine -Ed.].

[00:20:31.24]

ANNE HUNTER: I think it's still there. [They laugh.] Tell me when you're getting tired because this can be slightly draining. So—

[00:20:41.45]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, let's say about twenty more minutes.

[00:20:44.60]

ANNE HUNTER: Okay. Let's see.

[00:20:47.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Do you want to know how the publication started?

[00:20:50.12]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, let me just look at this page of notes. Oh, here's a question, I guess, still during the '40s and the '50s. When artists were working with advertising, who would they be working for? I know a number of magazines were based on—

[00:21:04.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: N.W. Ayers. An awful lot of artists.

[00:21:06.44]

ANNE HUNTER: Really?

[00:21:07.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —Leon Karp and Walter Reinsel, and Paul Darrow—all Print Club members and printmakers and—

[00:21:14.48]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the Pinto brothers—I don't think they did prints.

[00:21:18.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They were before my day, the Pinto brothers.

[00:21:20.39]

ANNE HUNTER: And they were commercial photographers, I think?

[00:21:23.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: One of them was, and one of them teaches at Barnes Foundation.

[00:21:28.13]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, the Barnes Foundation. I didn't think about it. It was—

[00:21:32.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, you know, that didn't exactly mix with the art world.

[00:21:37.36]

ANNE HUNTER: Exactly. [They laugh.] I suppose that Mr. Barnes would also be accused of consorting with Negro people, too.

[00:21:46.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:21:47.69]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, dear. But there were the teachers at the Barnes Foundation. I had forgotten about that. And, of course, there was—were people aware of the Barnes and—

[00:21:55.81]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes.

[00:21:56.23]

ANNE HUNTER: —nobody could see it. Oh, no, you could go out for courses, couldn't you, as long—

[00:21:59.56]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: People went out for courses. And we had members who went to the courses. Actually, Barnes, at one time, was a great friend of my father's. But—

[00:22:08.52]

ANNE HUNTER: Do you remember him coming to the house?

[00:22:10.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:22:10.59]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, my goodness.

[00:22:11.89]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I don't remember it very well. But when I was two years old, he told my father I was mentally deficient.

[00:22:18.93]

ANNE HUNTER: Always a very ingratiating person was Mr. Barnes. [Laughs.]

[00:22:21.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. That was when he was visiting us in New Hampshire. [Laughs.] And I've always wanted to write him a letter and say I was just mentally deficient enough to want to see his collection—[They laugh.] But anyway, I did—he invited me himself to come see his collection one time. Dad had to break off with them because Dad was Chief Justice and Barnes was telling him how to decide his cases. So Dad had to cut it off.

[00:22:56.60]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. I suppose Barnes wasn't above trying to exert whatever influence he could over whatever—

[00:23:05.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, everything. But—I can't remember the name of the young artist. But he brought a Pascin drawing back from Paris. He brought it in to me. It was unsigned. And while he and I were looking at it—it was very obviously Pascin or somebody imitating him awful well—Ms. de Mazia came in, and she saw it. And the next day, I got a telephone call. "This is Albert Barnes. Bring that Pascin drawing out immediately." "Yes, Dr. Barnes."

[00:23:45.75]

ANNE HUNTER: Yes, sir.

[00:23:47.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And he told me how to get there. And so I came, took the Pascin—it was quite large—and took the train and walked over to the Barnes Foundation. And he met me at the door with his little dog. And it was fascinating because Ms. de Mazia was there. And she maneuvered him so he thought he was the one who decided it was the Pascin drawing. So then he turned to me. I was standing there with my eyes going around the room. He said, "I have to put a—sign Pascin's name to it."

[00:24:32.01]

ANNE HUNTER: What? He—

[00:24:34.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:24:34.83]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, okay.

[00:24:36.30]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I said, Dr. Barnes, "I'm not that kind of a dealer." He said, "Plenty of them are." I said, "I know, but I'm not." I said, "Why don't you write on the back of it that you, Albert Barnes, feel it was an original drawing by Pascin?" I said, "That that'll be as good as any Pascin signature," because he—

[00:24:56.17]

ANNE HUNTER: Knowing a little diplomacy yourself.

[00:24:58.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So he did just that. And then he said, now, would you like to see the collection? I was just like, "What?" So he turned me loose. I was the only one there.

[00:25:09.31]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, wow.

[00:25:11.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I wandered around, and he sent Ms. de Mazia in at one point with one of his books autographed to me. And then he sent word that I was to come into the house to see him there. So I went into the house. He was on the sun porch, and it was right after his first heart attack, and he wasn't supposed to smoke. He said, "Do you have any cigarettes?" And I said, "Yes, Dr. Barnes." He said, "Give them to me." I didn't give a damn. If he wanted to kill himself, it was his business. I handed him my pack. He said, "Now you can go through the house and see the prints in the house." So he allowed me to wander around his house. And about two weeks later, he was dead.

[00:26:04.00]

ANNE HUNTER: What?

[00:26:04.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But he spoke very nicely about my father and me that day.

[00:26:09.58]

ANNE HUNTER: There were no hard feelings. But you had to pay your cigarettes in order to see the house. Well, he certainly has to be one of the most eccentric figures.

[00:26:21.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:26:24.59]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, I'm sure Lessing Rosenwald wasn't like that.

[00:26:26.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, he was a lovely, lovely, lovely—

[00:26:28.61]

ANNE HUNTER: The other side of the city and the other side of the spectrum.

[00:26:31.35]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, lovely man, Lessing.

[00:26:34.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Now he—

[00:26:35.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So was Sturgis Ingersoll, a lovely man.

[00:26:38.90]

ANNE HUNTER: I know less about him. Where did he live?

[00:26:42.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Penllyn—Sturgis.

[00:26:44.29]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm. I know his—I know him mostly via his contributions to the Museum, which were enormous, and the collection there. And they were both longtime members of the board, weren't they?

[00:26:59.99]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:27:01.22]

ANNE HUNTER: I didn't realize that Ingersoll was that interested in prints. Did he buy a fair number?

[00:27:06.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He didn't do very much buying of prints. He was really interested in painting and sculpture. But he was interested in—

[00:27:11.62]

ANNE HUNTER: He was interested in art. He liked art.

[00:27:13.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. And he was in Paris one summer, and it was the summer that Vollard released the Rouault "Miserere et Guerre" series. And so he telephoned me from Paris that he was getting us a set as a gift to sell.

[00:27:34.17]

ANNE HUNTER: And you said?

[00:27:35.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: "Thank you, Mr. Ingersoll!" And so that—we had a Rouault show. We sold all but two. I think those were the two of the death ones.

[00:27:49.68]

ANNE HUNTER: You know, I think I've seen them turn up in people's collections—

[00:27:53.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, sure.

[00:27:55.47]

ANNE HUNTER: —as they go through things. Now, I know that you also said Seymour Adelman gave a gift like that.

[00:28:02.46]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Seymour Adelman started us—

[00:28:04.42]

ANNE HUNTER: I don't think anybody realizes what a tremendously generous person—

[00:28:08.25]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Seymour was a saint.

[00:28:09.00]

ANNE HUNTER: —he was, because he never liked his name being used.

[00:28:10.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, but he didn't want his name used on this gift. He was on our board.

[00:28:15.48]

ANNE HUNTER: Was he?

[00:28:16.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I opened the mail one day, and a letter from New York—man I'd never heard of—enclosing a check for—I forget the amount. I think it was \$3,000.

[00:28:33.96]

ANNE HUNTER: You counted the zeros several times, I'm sure.

[00:28:37.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I didn't know why this man was sending us this check, or who he was or anything else. Naturally, I deposited it. And I thought, we've got to do something. This dropped from heaven. We've got to do something exciting with it, not just use it for salaries or plumbing bills or—

[00:29:04.40]

ANNE HUNTER: And that's how the publishing started.

[00:29:05.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So that night I thought up the idea of starting some publications.

[00:29:13.61]

ANNE HUNTER: And was that—did that go to the Baskin portfolio?

[00:29:17.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It wasn't a portfolio. It was a little book, *Auguries of Innocence*. Yeah. That was our first thing.

[00:29:23.42]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, how did your publications work? Did you bring together the printer and the artist, or do you talk to the artist about what projects the artist wanted to deal with, or—

[00:29:34.70]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, in this case, I wrote Baskin, and I said, would he do a little book with—I think I suggested two illustrations. It was eight.

[00:29:50.04]

ANNE HUNTER: But he only charged you for the two.

[00:29:52.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. But he'd had his first successes at the Print Club and in prizes and things like that.

[00:29:56.97]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:29:57.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And we sold it for fifteen dollars to the members.

[00:30:08.58]

ANNE HUNTER: What size were your editions for a book like that?

[00:30:12.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, it's in the—.

[00:30:13.50]

ANNE HUNTER: But they were fairly—you could make some money on it at fifteen dollars.

[00:30:16.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes, we made money on it. We very definitely made money on it. And then we did an Ed Colker print, and we did a Benton Spruance print, and we did all sorts of things. What we would do—for instance, when we did the Lasansky print, Lasansky prints were very hard to get because he didn't like being bothered sending them to you, or sending to shows.

[00:30:39.57]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:30:43.71]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But there was a demand for them. So the mailing to our members—we had members in Paris, we had members in California, and so forth—we sorted the mailing so everybody would have an equal chance to get it.

[00:30:57.84]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:30:58.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We had to figure out how long it's going to take their notice to reach them and how long, if they answered within 24 hours, for them to get back to us, so they had just as much chance as you living around the corner.

[00:31:11.73]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. How did you have members in Paris? That was an enormous—that was maybe after the John Canady article or—

[00:31:25.02]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We had some before that, the foreign ones.

[00:31:29.34]

ANNE HUNTER: Was this—you told me an anecdote when I started working at the Print Club. One way that you were able to get people to come to the Print Club was that you had matchbooks printed up.

[00:31:40.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, that was just an advertising thing.

[00:31:42.87]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, I was always very intrigued by that. And I thought, "Well, I don't think people just poured it in the door, maybe. I bet Berthe worked on it a little bit." How were you able to do that? I know the matchbooks were—I should say for the tape, so the tape knows—

[00:31:57.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I used to go around with them in my pocket, and I'd—

[00:31:59.39]

ANNE HUNTER: And drop them at the commercial galleries.

[00:32:01.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And drop it in the gallery. [They laugh.]

[00:32:07.33]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the problem is people don't smoke enough now. [Laughs.] You could do it with candies, I suppose.

[00:32:15.60]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, I had an awful lot of fun in that job.

[00:32:18.94]

ANNE HUNTER: I don't think the Print Club advertised in—oh, you know, I was going to ask what magazines.

[00:32:25.45]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We didn't have the money to advertise.

[00:32:26.84]

ANNE HUNTER: Of course not. Advertising is always terribly expensive. But the papers were kind to the Print Club, weren't they?

[00:32:32.98]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:32:33.37]

ANNE HUNTER: And they—in fact, the papers carried more art reviews and news of the arts than they do now.

[00:32:40.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, no, no. It was only once a week.

[00:32:43.06]

ANNE HUNTER: Once a week? Who were the reviewers? There was—

[00:32:47.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mr. Bonte and Walter Baum.

[00:32:52.57]

ANNE HUNTER: Right, Walter Baum, who was also a painter.

[00:32:55.30]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. And Dorothy Grafly.

[00:33:01.20]

ANNE HUNTER: For a long time. And now, Royal Cortissoz was in the '20s.

[00:33:07.80]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I was not active in the '20s.

[00:33:10.80]

ANNE HUNTER: I'm trying to also—was Christian Brinton was somebody active in the '20s and '30s? And I don't know how long he lived, whether he was—

[00:33:17.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, Jasper Brinton was one of the founders, and there was a Christian Brinton. And he was some relation to Jasper.

[00:33:26.64]

ANNE HUNTER: I think brother.

[00:33:28.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Could have been.

[00:33:28.92]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. And he wrote for the *Times*, I think, the *New York Times*. But I've always wondered what kind of influence he had here in Philadelphia. Apparently not enormous, because you didn't really know about him—answers that question. I tried to write down the name of the other—oh, here's a question—were the de Schauensees [Mr. and Mrs. Rudolphe Meyer -Ed.]—oh, here we go, critics—and Victoria Donohoe came much later.

[00:33:56.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Much later.

[00:33:57.31]

ANNE HUNTER: Wasn't one of the Pintos a critic?

[00:34:00.31]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not that I know of.

[00:34:01.37]

ANNE HUNTER: A Pinto child? No? And were those—it doesn't sound like they could make or break a show the way they can now. Having a review by a critic in the paper didn't seem to be that necessary to bring people.

[00:34:17.42]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, I said I'm afraid most of the things that [inaudible] wrote were pretty darn stupid. It wasn't going to make or break.

[00:34:26.50]

ANNE HUNTER: So you were pretty much—I guess that's why being a member and being on the mailing list was important because that was the way you could find out that things were going on. Were the de Schauensees involved with the Print Club at all?

[00:34:40.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Never terribly active. One of the De Shaughnessy twins was on our board for a while. And the de Schauensees were members, and they came in. But I wouldn't say that they were very active.

[00:34:51.85]

ANNE HUNTER: How about Carroll Tyson?

[00:34:55.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was a member, but he never was very active.

[00:34:59.05]

ANNE HUNTER: These were painting people. But Diana Dorrance was pretty active, wasn't she?

[00:35:04.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, she wasn't Diana Dorrance then. She was with her first husband. Oh, dear, what was his name?

[00:35:10.48]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, I should know that, too.

[00:35:11.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then she was active, yes. She was president for a while.

[00:35:16.11]

ANNE HUNTER: I think so. And, of course, you didn't have to sort of—I expect people were shoveling money into the museum to a large extent, but the Print Club really didn't require it, because it was a solvent organization.

[00:35:30.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, it did require it because we were pay—I mean, we could use decent salaries and a few amenities like that.

[00:35:39.58]

ANNE HUNTER: But you did a lot of work on that building, too, between the time after the war and the '50s. It looks a lot cleaner in the '50s. There are lights. And, of course, then you built the addition.

[00:35:53.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:35:58.91]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the addition came through with a Ford Foundation grant?

[00:36:01.19]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:36:01.88]

ANNE HUNTER: How did that happen?

[00:36:04.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Barry Wolf was instrumental in that. And he and Ben Spruance, and I forget who else went over and—

[00:36:13.67]

ANNE HUNTER: I think it was one of their first grants to the arts.

[00:36:16.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:36:18.26]

ANNE HUNTER: It made a big difference. That made it possible for you to have more workshops.

[00:36:23.57]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, the lithograph workshops that we set up there was not a success. The artists had all said, oh, they would love to have a place to print, and a printer. Well, then, when you got one, they didn't use them.

[00:36:39.95]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, that was an act—that was a different setup from the Hayter setup—

[00:36:43.25]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yeah.

[00:36:44.27]

ANNE HUNTER: Because that would have been a collaborative situation where you had a printer there. And you didn't like—the printer, you felt, didn't hold up his side of the bargain?

[00:36:52.76]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. Paul Narkiewicz was quite a good printer, but he was a dreadful liar.

[00:37:00.39]

ANNE HUNTER: Where did you find him?

[00:37:02.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I forget how we found him. And, well, he wasn't reliable.

[00:37:09.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. In terms of not turning up? In terms of not finishing editions?

[00:37:14.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:37:14.56]

ANNE HUNTER: In terms of not returning calls? In terms of everything?

[00:37:17.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:37:19.06]

ANNE HUNTER: So that sort of drif—

[00:37:20.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was just in my last couple of years.

[00:37:22.41]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Well, probably, we should—why don't we call it quits for now? Yeah, because I'm getting a little tired, are you?

[00:37:38.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, I'm exhausted.

[End of November 26, 1990 interview. -Ed.]

[END OF TRACK AAA_vonmos88_7515_m]

[00:00:02.20]

[January 12, 1991 -Ed.]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: [In progress]—from the permanent collection, used to always buy them. But I think it they paid for it, not the museum, itself. We didn't—I don't think we gave them—

[00:00:14.97]

ANNE HUNTER: I want—I think—I don't know if they have been cataloged at the Art Museum as Print Club publications.

[00:00:21.57]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They should have been.

[00:00:22.60]

ANNE HUNTER: And I'm tempted to go up and do a little work on that, to be sure that it's all straight.

[00:00:27.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Yeah. Another thing you might check is whether the prize-winning prints that were purchased prizes for the museum, whether they're put down as Print Club.

[00:00:38.08]

ANNE HUNTER: As—those are put down as the Print Club's. They're called the "Print Club Permanent Collection."

[00:00:45.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, they weren't necessarily part of the Permanent Collection, because that was a separate thing.

[00:00:50.00]

ANNE HUNTER: Was it?

[00:00:50.89]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:00:51.67]

ANNE HUNTER: So the Print Club Permanent Collection was—

[00:00:54.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was money that we raised each year, and the committee chose the prints that they were purchasing. They didn't have to be things that had ever been shown at the Club.

[00:01:03.91]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:01:04.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: There were a lot of old master prints. And—

[00:01:08.93]

ANNE HUNTER: And they were things that the committee felt it was important to have at—

[00:01:12.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: At the Museum.

[00:01:12.71]

ANNE HUNTER: —at the Museum.

[00:01:13.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:01:13.81]

ANNE HUNTER: There are some beautiful prints in that collection.

[00:01:18.02]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, Rosenwald, and Zigrosser—

[00:01:18.74]

ANNE HUNTER: —Paul Claire [ph].

[00:01:19.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —and Bob Walker were on the committee. And Ingersoll was, at one time. I mean, they were people who really knew. And they would have the things sent to the Club from dealers in New York, or Paris, or London, or from an artist, direct.

[00:01:36.29]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:01:37.16]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And, occasionally, they would buy something out of one of our shows.

[00:01:41.91]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the committee would look at the things that were sent in.

[00:01:45.50]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:01:46.10]

ANNE HUNTER: And were they—

[00:01:46.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: At their request, uh-huh [affirmative].

[00:01:47.29]

ANNE HUNTER: And would choose a certain one from five or—

[00:01:49.67]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, let's say we'd raised \$2,000 that year. They would—

[00:01:53.54]

ANNE HUNTER: Buy \$2,000—

[00:01:55.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Dollars' worth. One reason that the Permanent Collection thing ended was because prints got so expensive.

[00:02:01.82]

ANNE HUNTER: \$2,000 would not necessarily—

[00:02:03.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: You know, do anything.

[00:02:08.07]

ANNE HUNTER: Probably, also, the art museum, by then, had started to purchase on its own. Because, probably, when the Print Club Permanent Collection started, you were the purchasing arm of—

[00:02:18.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. The Permanent Collection started—I think it was the year before I became Director. And it stopped about the time I stopped.

[00:02:31.00]

ANNE HUNTER: I'm not sure that the museum was purchasing too many prints before that time. There was—

[00:02:35.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:02:35.56]

ANNE HUNTER: —no curator was there, until Zigrosser—

[00:02:37.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, Zigrosser was curator, came shortly before I did. So it was about then.

[00:02:43.99]

ANNE HUNTER: So maybe the program stopped because the need for it was less great.

[00:02:49.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, they stopped, really, because they couldn't afford it. I mean, you couldn't raise that much money at the Club.

[00:02:56.60]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the prints that were chosen out of the exhibitions were not necessarily the Print Club Permanent Collection.

[00:03:04.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, they weren't.

[00:03:05.74]

ANNE HUNTER: They weren't. They were a gift to the Print Club or—

[00:03:08.89]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, people who gave the prizes, if it was a purchase prize, that would then go to the museum.

[00:03:16.09]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I think it would be a good idea to go through the cards at the museum and be sure that that distinction is really clear—

[00:03:25.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:03:26.89]

ANNE HUNTER: —while we can all remember it.

[00:03:28.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Because nobody in the future will know the—

[00:03:31.08]

ANNE HUNTER: Right, with an explanation of what it is. And then the publications of the Print Club would also be kept by the museum—

[00:03:40.76]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:03:41.67]

ANNE HUNTER: —but not necessarily all the publications, because the museum needed to buy them, or—

[00:03:46.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, they bought all the publications in my day. I don't know what they did later.

[00:03:53.90]

ANNE HUNTER: I don't, either.

[00:03:54.98]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:03:55.59]

ANNE HUNTER: I guess we'd better find out.

[00:03:56.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They didn't do very much publishing after I left, either, so—

[00:03:59.43]

ANNE HUNTER: That's true.

[00:03:59.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Very little.

[00:04:01.35]

ANNE HUNTER: What was your last publication at the Print Club, I wonder.

[00:04:04.52]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, goodness I can't—

[00:04:05.40]

ANNE HUNTER: It's hard to remember things like that. The first was the book.

[00:04:10.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and then we did an Ed Colker print, and the Spruance print. And I can't—

[00:04:17.40]

ANNE HUNTER: When you were really rolling, you were doing several a year, right, I suppose?

[00:04:19.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Three or four a year.

[00:04:22.38]

ANNE HUNTER: And when you were deciding who to publish, did you have an idea of some being higher priced and some lower priced, or some national and some local? Or was there—

[00:04:31.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I would do some national, some local. And I tried to do different media.

[00:04:35.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:04:36.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I was the one who decided who we were going to publish. And I would go to my Board of Directors and say, "Next year, I want to publish, or, I'd like to publish." And they would say, "Yes, Berthe." [They laugh.] They were very nice. But I gave them a chance to say, "How about doing so-and-so?"

[00:04:53.15]

ANNE HUNTER: There were some of them—what do you call it? I know that some of them were very estimable artists. And there were obvious hits that—

[00:05:04.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, well, the Lasanskys sold out in 24 hours.

[00:05:08.25]

ANNE HUNTER: Because they were very hard to get ahold of.

[00:05:10.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and I tried to balance between people like Lasansky, who would be in great demand, and—

[00:05:18.66]

ANNE HUNTER: Long shots.

[00:05:19.68]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:05:21.50]

ANNE HUNTER: Which are some of the long shots that you are proudest of having made happen?

[00:05:29.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, we did—one of the few foreign ones was Paul Wunderlich. And he had gotten a prize at the Club. He wasn't well-known yet.

[00:05:39.70]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:05:41.36]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Actually, I didn't particularly like the print he did for us, but, that, I can't control.

[00:05:46.41]

ANNE HUNTER: You can't have any—

[00:05:48.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And, of course, a Baskin book, very proud of, and we did a Baskin print, also, later on. We did people like Ed Colker and Sam Maitin who were local. We did Peterdi, Carol Summers. We were going to do a Peter Milton, but he got sick or something at the time. And so that didn't get done.

[00:06:14.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, right. His first—his retrospective exhibition was organized by the Print Club, I think, with Ding McNulty writing the catalog.

[00:06:26.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He's an awfully good printmaker.

[00:06:28.67]

ANNE HUNTER: He still is, still working hard. I think he's still—we showed a suite of his two years ago, which has gotten so complex.

[00:06:40.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And let's see. Who else did we do? Valerie Thornton was one of the ones we did. I can't remember. It's hard to—

[00:06:50.55]

ANNE HUNTER: Were you acquainted with—was Will Barnet somebody who was around the Print Club?

[00:06:55.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was around the Print Club before I was. And he came over

and taught a couple of times at the workshop.

[00:07:02.02]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:07:02.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And we gave him a show, one of my early years, seems to me. We used him on juries. But he was in New York, and he moved into sort of a big-time thing. But that portfolio that they gave me—when was it—a 70th birthday, or something like that, he was one of the artists that sent in for it. He sent a lovely print.

[00:07:32.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh. Was that—I don't know what print that was. And was Bob Blackburn somebody who was also—he would have been younger at the time.

[00:07:44.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, he was. I knew him. And I can't remember what kind of connection we had, but—

[00:07:50.53]

ANNE HUNTER: He's been running the Printmaking Workshop in New York for the longest time. And it's always on a shoestring and always doing wonderful things—

[00:07:59.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, he came over—

[00:08:00.07]

ANNE HUNTER: —against all odds.

[00:08:00.34]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —and was in a jury. And he wasn't somebody I knew well.

[00:08:05.38]

ANNE HUNTER: He juried the annual my first year there, and seemed very fond of the Print Club. He said hello. Also, Claire Van Vliet was—

[00:08:20.81]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, she was one of our young artists too. And her—she's somebody who's developed terrifically, I think, from her early work.

[00:08:31.40]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Did you ever publish her?

[00:08:34.62]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I can't remember if it—I don't think so. Peter Paone, we published.

[00:08:43.06]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:08:45.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I can't remember exactly. Claire wasn't all that—she was a slow starter.

[00:08:50.01]

ANNE HUNTER: Was she, really?

[00:08:51.25]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: A very slow starter.

[00:08:52.36]

ANNE HUNTER: Hmm.

[00:08:54.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Jerry Kaplan, we published. And he did a beautiful set for us of Philadelphia views. Have you ever seen them?

[00:09:01.89]

ANNE HUNTER: I think I've seen, not the set, but individual prints. People have broken it up.

[00:09:06.13]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That, I had done because people would come in, tourists, sometimes, or something like that, where people bought them for their office and would want views of Philadelphia. And we couldn't—we didn't have anything interesting to offer them. So I asked Jerry to do these. And they were very nice.

[00:09:25.96]

ANNE HUNTER: I think they were—about how large would the editions be, when you were publishing?

[00:09:31.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, editions of, let's say, forty and the artist keeping ten for himself, or fifteen. It'd depend on the media and the artist. Spruance did a couple of them for us.

[00:09:49.31]

ANNE HUNTER: And the arrangement for publishing was strictly—the Print Club would pay for the publication—

[00:09:56.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We paid the artist something.

[00:09:57.62]

ANNE HUNTER: You were able to give money—

[00:09:58.82]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And they were allowed to keep a certain number of them for themselves, I said, which we—the unwritten agreement was they wouldn't sell them in Philadelphia until we had—

[00:10:11.30]

ANNE HUNTER: Sold out.

[00:10:12.50]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —sold out, or sold enough to make our ends meet.

[00:10:18.28]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah, that's a good idea. We didn't do that. And I was just—a couple of the other—I wondered if there were other artists, perhaps, in other media, who were also

involved with the Print Club, such as Joseph Greenberg or Boris Blai, who were also working in the city.

[00:10:39.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They were—often, people like that would be members of the Club, without making prints.

[00:10:45.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. I often think of a sympathetic relationship between people who sculpt and people who make prints because both have so much to do with the depth and space.

[00:10:56.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, both can be done in duplicate, too.

[00:10:59.78]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, that's true. There's the same issues of editioning. And I also had wondered what magazines people were reading or what magazines were around. Or were people bringing in—I put a list of the little magazines that were coming out of New York, such as *View*, or, let's see, *Instead*, and *Possibilities*, *Tiger Eyes*, *VVD*.

[00:11:24.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: *Tiger Eyes* rings a bell.

[00:11:27.78]

ANNE HUNTER: And then there were also magazines that would talk about art, like *The Partisan Review* or *The Nation*.

[00:11:33.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But we had the magazine always there, if they had anything to do with prints, but—or was—there was *Art Digest*, and things like that.

[00:11:45.57]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, *Art Digest* was a must, I'm sure.

[00:11:48.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. *American Magazine of Art* was a must, too.

[00:11:53.58]

ANNE HUNTER: It was the magazine *View* that Leon Kelly got into trouble with because of his drawing that was included in it, which the—

[00:12:02.46]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: His what? With his—

[00:12:03.63]

ANNE HUNTER: Leon Kelly had a drawing in *View*, the magazine *View*, which the U.S. Postal authorities refused to mail.

[00:12:10.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, I'd forgotten that. [Laughs.]

[00:12:11.80]

ANNE HUNTER: In 1943.

[00:12:14.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was before I got there.

[00:12:15.97]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, that's true.

[00:12:16.57]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I was more work—

[00:12:17.41]

ANNE HUNTER: But you would have known Leon Kelly.

[00:12:19.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yeah, but I was more working on the—

[00:12:22.15]

ANNE HUNTER: You wouldn't have been directly involved.

[00:12:24.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:12:26.57]

ANNE HUNTER: Then Helen Siegl was somebody who would also be at the Print Club at one point.

[00:12:32.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yeah. She was very, very much in Print Club. And we published a couple of books of hers and prints.

[00:12:40.91]

ANNE HUNTER: So hers were great favorites.

[00:12:42.82]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and when she had a show, sales would be tremendous because she sold for little money.

[00:12:51.41]

ANNE HUNTER: It was virtually greeting card—

[00:12:54.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —prices.

[00:12:55.03]

ANNE HUNTER: —for original work.

[00:12:57.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And her work is charming, I think.

[00:12:58.72]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, absolutely, particularly around the holidays because she always made a Christmas card, didn't she?

[00:13:05.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes. I still get Christmas cards from her.

[00:13:10.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, did you and Kneeland McNulty overlap when he came to the museum?

[00:13:17.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes. And he was on the board while I was. Yeah.

[00:13:20.44]

ANNE HUNTER: And he became curator, I guess, at the art museum when—

[00:13:23.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, after—he was Zigrosser's assistant.

[00:13:25.74]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:13:26.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then he became curator. And nobody—I suppose our people know. But suddenly quit—got married again, and quit, and moved out of Philadelphia.

[00:13:38.83]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, Ding?

[00:13:40.27]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:13:40.53]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. It was sudden. He was very fond of the Print Club, I know, and did a—he did the Peter Milton retrospective. And there has always been that close attachment, I guess, between the Art Museum and The Print Club—

[00:13:56.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And the Print Club, yeah, very definitely.

[00:13:57.26]

ANNE HUNTER: —including the collection, but not necessarily—well, the painting and sculpture people, were they also—I'm trying to think of who they might have been. There was Henry Gardner and—

[00:14:11.19]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Some of them came in, sure. We had various members out there and others that I'd be furious at because they didn't pay any attention to us. [They laugh.]

[00:14:22.36]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, there's that as well.

[00:14:24.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And there were some people who remained nameless. One person came in—a couple of wealthy women, these were—and looked around at the show and said, "Oh, we'll wait until this goes to New York, to buy from it."

[00:14:38.16]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, wait a minute. [Laughs.]

[00:14:40.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. This was, I think, when we had the rules, that Ingersoll had gotten us. We were underselling what they were going to be in New York.

[00:14:47.69]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, that's usually what happens. Philadelphia prices are generally lower than New York prices, unless the art is—

[00:14:53.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Because, you see, they'd wanted to be able to say that they'd bought it from such-and-such a gallery in New York and so forth, I think.

[00:15:01.56]

ANNE HUNTER: That is—

[00:15:02.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I never forgave them.

[00:15:03.23]

ANNE HUNTER: That's always a problem for Philadelphia arts and spaces.

[00:15:07.16]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Right.

[00:15:07.80]

ANNE HUNTER: Don't have the caché. Huh. And you don't—do you recall their names?

[00:15:13.74]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, but I'm not going to say.

[00:15:15.02]

ANNE HUNTER: You're not going to say.

[00:15:16.07]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. Don't worry. I didn't forget that little one. [They laugh.]

[00:15:20.96]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, here are some more galleries that I know existed then, but don't know very much about.

[00:15:25.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, there were very few galleries back then.

[00:15:29.05]

ANNE HUNTER: There was—

[00:15:29.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Robert Carlen, of course, was around. And there was a gallery called The DeBrough Gallery, and the Art Alliance, and us. And Marian Locks opened just as my—towards the end of my period.

[00:15:47.92]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, was there a gallery that was on Latimer Street as well?

[00:15:53.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Makler Gallery came in—

[00:15:54.79]

ANNE HUNTER: Makler.

[00:15:55.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —towards the end of my days, Latimer Street. And we used to try to arrange shows, openings at the same time. A perfectly nice relationship with them.

[00:16:02.65]

ANNE HUNTER: And was there also a Knoll Furniture space?

[00:16:06.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was around the corner.

[00:16:07.51]

ANNE HUNTER: It was around the corner? Because I noticed one day when I was looking at the furniture at the Print Club—and I took a good look at it, and then I turned it over, and it was actually Knoll furniture. And somebody had managed to—

[00:16:20.13]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, that must have been, I think, after I left. I don't remember getting anything—

[00:16:24.55]

ANNE HUNTER: I was sure that it was an imitation of some kind, until I took a good look. It wasn't. So Latimer Street must have been, in the '60s, becoming a nice little artistic space, which, I guess, it always had been because of the Art Alliance—

[00:16:42.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:16:43.37]

ANNE HUNTER: —is around the corner. The gallery names that I was running across is there's—the Gimbel Galleries, I think, is a New York gallery. Maybe they were local.

[00:16:54.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, that's in New York.

[00:16:55.22]

ANNE HUNTER: And Dubin Galleries? Dubin?

[00:17:00.79]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, oh, I can't remember—another name that—

[00:17:05.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:17:05.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, that was on Locust Street.

[00:17:07.30]

ANNE HUNTER: I think these are galleries that showed contemporary artists.

[00:17:13.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. I think Dubin's had a—

[00:17:14.08]

ANNE HUNTER: I think they came and went.

[00:17:14.68]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —painting show of Jerry Kaplan's.

[00:17:16.23]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, really?

[00:17:17.35]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I'm not positive about this, where that was.

[00:17:19.66]

ANNE HUNTER: And the Beryl Lush Galleries.

[00:17:22.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:17:24.61]

ANNE HUNTER: Also, I guess, active.

[00:17:26.74]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, that was towards my end of my career.

[00:17:29.10]

ANNE HUNTER: I've never run across the name Beryl Lush before or after. Was she a person who was—

[00:17:35.02]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I'm not sure it was a "she." It may have been a "he."

[00:17:37.21]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, true. There's also a Ray Hindler Gallery.

[00:17:41.50]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't remember that one.

[00:17:42.79]

ANNE HUNTER: Let's see if I can pull out any of the others. Gallery 1015 in Wyncote.

[00:17:48.43]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, that's, yeah, suburbs.

[00:17:51.70]

ANNE HUNTER: And there were the art centers, which I guess had opened by—I don't know when they opened. The Cheltenham Art Center—

[00:17:58.70]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, that was during my day. I can't tell you exact date, but that was a good one.

[00:18:03.95]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And did they always have the annual for local artists, which they do this now, which is—

[00:18:09.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, they did then, back in my day, too.

[00:18:10.88]

ANNE HUNTER: It's always a really—a very big deal.

[00:18:13.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:18:14.06]

ANNE HUNTER: People continue to—and, also, the Wallingford Art Center.

[00:18:17.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was in existence, too.

[00:18:19.28]

ANNE HUNTER: It's always—it doesn't have quite the profile that Cheltenham—

[00:18:22.82]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:18:23.39]

ANNE HUNTER: —has, I guess. Then, were the banks interested in showing art? And sometimes—

[00:18:28.79]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Occasionally, yes.

[00:18:31.21]

ANNE HUNTER: For instance, Fidelity—

[00:18:33.65]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mid-Central Penn Bank was interested in buying things. And it seems to me we had a whole group of things there at one time for about a month while the employees decided what was going to be bought.

[00:18:47.26]

ANNE HUNTER: I just realized that I need to turn up my—there. Central—

[00:18:53.78]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And they bought a whole lot of things for the employees' lounge. And we'd have—sometimes we'd have a law office come in and want to get the committee to purchase.

[00:19:06.28]

ANNE HUNTER: And those would be particularly, for instance, the—

[00:19:11.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We even had a New York firm come over and buy prints from us.

[00:19:15.05]

ANNE HUNTER: That would have been quite a windfall—

[00:19:16.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:19:17.39]

ANNE HUNTER: —because the firms have a lot of offices to fill.

[00:19:20.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, a lot of money. That was very nice.

[00:19:23.27]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, the corporations in Philadelphia, such as Rohm and Haas, and Arco—

[00:19:30.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Arco came into the Club after I had left.

[00:19:33.25]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:19:34.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: They became interested, and they've done a lot.

[00:19:40.68]

ANNE HUNTER: They've done a great deal.

[00:19:41.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:19:41.84]

ANNE HUNTER: They've been very generous.

[00:19:43.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: You may not like it—[laughs]—like I—

[00:19:46.25]

ANNE HUNTER: But they've been very generous over the years. Now, trying to decide there—were there other stores and people, generous? And I'm particularly interested in younger artists, emerging artists who might have been able to help them out. For instance, now, Provident Bank has always been interested in supporting programs for younger artists.

[00:20:16.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:20:16.71]

ANNE HUNTER: And I was looking through material and realized that the Webber Company,

for instance, gave Morris Blackburn paint during the '30s, when he, I guess, was short on cash and needed to work. That was a very nice thing for them to do. And I was trying to think of any other Philadelphia corporations or businesses for feeling philanthropic, along those lines, to artists.

[00:20:42.58]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't remember anybody else.

[00:20:44.43]

ANNE HUNTER: Hunt Manufacturing Company, which makes drawing materials, has given amounts of money, sometimes, now.

[00:20:52.50]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But I think that—industries and so forth being interested in art came towards the end of my—

[00:21:00.24]

ANNE HUNTER: With the art explosion of the middle, late '60s and early 70s. The Prints in Progress program would be something—was that something that was supported by itself? Or was that supported by philanthropy?

[00:21:19.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was supported by the Club at the beginning. And then they went—Prints in Progress, went out and got money from foundations and so on. And, gradually, they were able to support itself with these grants. And they were at the Club until shortly after I left. And then they branched out on their own.

[00:21:45.33]

ANNE HUNTER: And what they did, as I understood from Martha Zelp, who remembers it with great fondness, is allowed artists to go into the schools and show how prints were made.

[00:21:56.79]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, the so-called portable presses.

[00:21:59.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. And she remembers her fee for doing that sometimes being the rent, and that that was—this was something that was of great importance to her.

[00:22:07.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, Claire Van Vliet was doing it, and Sam. And, well, people like Ben Spruance did it also, I mean, people who were established and didn't really need the money. But a lot of the younger artists were doing it. And it was very good for the artists. And it was a good program, and it changed considerably, in its direction, since then. And instead of going into the schools, as you know, they now have their own workshops—

[00:22:32.13]

ANNE HUNTER: Their own art shops.

[00:22:32.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —in the neighborhoods. But I think that's good, that—I mean, you—they didn't just stay in the same little group, say, "This is the only way we can do things."

[00:22:43.80]

ANNE HUNTER: And they also still provide a great deal of encouragement to young artists

who teach there—

[00:22:48.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and employment.

[00:22:49.62]

ANNE HUNTER: —and give them opportunities to talk to other artists.

[00:22:53.07]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:22:53.49]

ANNE HUNTER: Because sometimes that's—if you're working in an advertising agency or something like that, you forget you're an artist.

[00:22:59.80]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, it was very good. The only thing wrong with it—this, turn this off for a second.

[Recorder stops; restarts.]

[00:23:06.16]

ANNE HUNTER: Kippy Stroud was awesome was also involved with it.

[00:23:08.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, she was on our board. And she was the person in charge of—for the board of directors of Prints in Progress for a while. And she used to go along, with the press and demonstrations. And she—Kippy was excellent.

[00:23:23.25]

ANNE HUNTER: And became interested in the process and eventually branched out to open the Fabric Workshop, herself.

[00:23:29.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:23:29.41]

ANNE HUNTER: And I think Ann Edmunds was assisting her, whose husband, Alan, went on to open—

[00:23:35.65]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, well, Ann was a paid person.

[00:23:38.65]

ANNE HUNTER: So she was a staff person, while working on the program.

[00:23:41.74]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and a nice, nice girl. And Alan was one of our demonstrators.

[00:23:45.44]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, was he?

[00:23:46.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:23:46.64]

ANNE HUNTER: So he was one of the artists going into the schools.

[00:23:48.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:23:48.65]

ANNE HUNTER: And, of course, he teaches in the schools still, as—well, he works in the Brandywine Workshop. So, but the import—and the whole program began as a wing of the Print Club, before it took off on its own, that way.

[00:24:06.67]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:24:06.95]

ANNE HUNTER: So, at one point, under the same roof, there was Prints in Progress, and the workshops, and The Print Club's own exhibitions. It was quite an active place, wasn't it?

[00:24:19.29]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:24:20.25]

ANNE HUNTER: Everything grew up. We were—

[00:24:26.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was a three-ring circus. [Laughs.]

[00:24:29.26]

ANNE HUNTER: Because your staff was never very large.

[00:24:31.30]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, we had some—when Prints in Progress first started, my assistant would be in charge of Prints in Progress. They didn't have a paid person themselves. I mean, they paid that person something, but then, as it got more and more busy, they had to hire their own person.

[00:24:50.99]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:24:52.30]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And that was Ann Edmunds. And Carol Curran was—she was before Ann, I guess.

[00:24:57.97]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Then we were just talking about the workshops, at the end of the last interview. And I was very interested in what—you were saying that they worked, and then they didn't work. And one of the reasons that they didn't work was that the printer was not as responsible as he might have been.

[00:25:19.13]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:25:20.06]

ANNE HUNTER: And that cuts both ways because it's—

[00:25:23.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And, also, the artist had said, "Oh, we need a lithograph workshop—we will come in, and we will support it by having our work done."

[00:25:32.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:25:32.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Then, when it came down to it, they didn't.

[00:25:34.70]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, it's expensive, too.

[00:25:36.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:25:37.31]

ANNE HUNTER: The artists would have to have paid part of the fees for the printer.

[00:25:41.60]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:25:41.99]

ANNE HUNTER: And it's a long task, so that would—perhaps, in Philadelphia, the fees would not pay—the sales of the editions wouldn't pay for the fees.

[00:25:53.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:25:53.93]

ANNE HUNTER: And maybe the artists discovered that. There were only a couple—he was only there for a couple of years?

[00:25:59.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:26:00.89]

ANNE HUNTER: And then there was a—I think it was a portfolio that you must have printed to support the workshop.

[00:26:08.09]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, to raise some money.

[00:26:09.26]

ANNE HUNTER: And it had prints by Benton Spruance—

[00:26:12.31]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, and Jerry Kaplan.

[00:26:13.35]

ANNE HUNTER: —and Jerry Kaplan.

[00:26:14.21]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And Romas Bieselus was one.

[00:26:17.45]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, and I wanted to ask about Romas, too.

[00:26:18.71]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Romas did one of our publications.

[00:26:19.54]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Was it one of his big prints?

[00:26:22.31]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. The publication was a little one.

[00:26:24.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Was it a little print?

[00:26:25.43]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. I'm sorry I didn't get it. But, you see, I was paid so little. I couldn't afford to get that little publication. [They laugh.]

[00:26:32.32]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, dear. Now, Romas is an interesting figure. And there was some feeling of trying to put together a retrospective of his work.

[00:26:43.37]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It'd be a very nice thing to do. He was very much a part of the Print Club.

[00:26:47.00]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And the Print Club has walls big enough to show some of the really big prints.

[00:26:50.95]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Yeah.

[00:26:51.86]

ANNE HUNTER: It might be an interesting thing to do. Now, photography, you did start to show some photography at The Print Club, while you were there.

[00:26:59.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:26:59.51]

ANNE HUNTER: And there was an Ansel Adams show, in the early '60s, that people remember, and people bought at it, I guess.

[00:27:04.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That was after I had left.

[00:27:08.09]

ANNE HUNTER: When was it?

[00:27:09.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Just after I had left, seems to me, that show. But we did show a couple of—

[00:27:14.28]

ANNE HUNTER: You showed George Krause, I think, or—

[00:27:16.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, he was a member of the Club.

[00:27:17.94]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And what other photography?

[00:27:22.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, somebody whose name I forget, from New York, we showed.

[00:27:27.38]

ANNE HUNTER: And this was while—this—I never mentioned this on the interview before, but The Print Club is two floors.

[00:27:33.80]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes.

[00:27:34.35]

ANNE HUNTER: And when you had shows, there would be staggered shows. There would be every two weeks—

[00:27:42.45]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: We did the whole building at once, seems to me.

[00:27:45.69]

ANNE HUNTER: You did?

[00:27:46.17]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. And then we had the one opening for the—

[00:27:48.45]

ANNE HUNTER: For two shows or three shows.

[00:27:50.99]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: The shows would stay up, well, for, actually, a month, but three—officially, for three weeks, so that you had a day or so for taking them down—

[00:27:57.90]

ANNE HUNTER: To turn them around.

[00:27:58.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: —and a day or so for putting them up, and getting your labels up, and all that.

[00:28:02.24]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, by the end of the time you were there, the building would have grown

to its present proportions, which—

[00:28:08.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, before I—several years before I left, the addition was put on.

[00:28:12.42]

ANNE HUNTER: The addition of the back area, which makes it a very large space—

[00:28:17.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:28:17.70]

ANNE HUNTER: Really, room for three whole exhibitions, plus the printing in the back. So if you had had—if you were showing photography, would there have been one show downstairs and two upstairs?

[00:28:28.04]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. That's what I mean.

[00:28:29.49]

ANNE HUNTER: So it was generally three shows?

[00:28:31.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then our national competitive shows, that would be the whole building.

[00:28:40.08]

ANNE HUNTER: Right, which can hold about 70 or 80 works.

[00:28:44.85]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:28:45.78]

ANNE HUNTER: The addition came about because you must have been outgrowing the building, with all of this activity going on. I don't know how you did it, with the area being—

[00:28:53.46]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, I don't know how we did it, either. But that's—we had got some money from the Ford Foundation and raised some money, ourselves. And that's how we got the addition. And it gave us—although of the workshop was downstairs, in the back room, the upstairs—it gives upstairs extra room.

[00:29:12.81]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, did you use the upstairs, the mezzanine on the top floor, right under the roof?

[00:29:17.26]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was various periods of different things. When I first came to the Club, they had the etching press up there. And people bought—could come use it and bring all their own stuff. Then, when we had started the Hayter workshop, the press was moved down to the second floor. And the acid and that kind of thing was kept up in the balcony.

[00:29:40.28]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. There's still big fans there for wafting away the fumes.

[00:29:46.19]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. And after somebody was finished working on the press, they were supposed to return the blankets and so forth to the balcony. Of course, half the time, they didn't, and Berthe would be cleaning up.

[00:29:59.57]

ANNE HUNTER: And then with the addition, the press was moved down to the first floor.

[00:30:06.54]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, the etching press was still on the second floor. But the lithograph press and so forth was in the addition. The addition was—the back room was supposed to be for lithography workshop.

[00:30:18.99]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Now, you would have exhibitions around the press then, on the second floor?

[00:30:22.83]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:30:23.20]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. And did you have exhibition—no, you wouldn't have been able to have exhibitions around the lithograph press because that's all windows in the back.

[00:30:32.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, that was nothing—no exhibitions there, no.

[00:30:35.79]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Who designed the addition?

[00:30:38.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I think it was Irv Maitin, Sam's brother.

[00:30:41.24]

ANNE HUNTER: Irv Maitin?

[00:30:42.46]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:30:43.38]

ANNE HUNTER: It's a very—it doesn't look dated at all. It's a very nice, international-style look there. The little garden in the back would have shrunk—

[00:30:58.70]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Considerably, yeah.

[00:30:59.72]

ANNE HUNTER: —considerably. Was it a showplace before the addition was—what was it used for, before the addition was there?

[00:31:08.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, it was, supposedly, when they used to have social teas

and things like that, that all fit in. As the Club got busier and, also, other things were happening, I'm afraid that there was—we had those bins built for the trash cans.

[00:31:22.04]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:31:23.02]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But when you have a national open show, you'd have more cardboard. I mean, even though you save cardboard, but when you reused it, you still had more paper and so forth. And there'd be overflowing with trash until trash day came.

[00:31:36.70]

ANNE HUNTER: [Laughs.] So that's what the beautiful garden became.

[00:31:38.55]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, we tried to keep it decent, but—

[00:31:41.38]

ANNE HUNTER: Particularly because you have that clear view through the—

[00:31:44.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, when we had an opening or something, we'd see that it looked decent.

[00:31:49.24]

ANNE HUNTER: Our openings always hit on trash night, which was terrible, because we'd get the trash out, and as people were coming in, the garbage trucks would be coming down Latimer Street. But we were glad to see them. I think Ray Metzker may have been a photographer who was showing at The Print Club. He had a one-person show there much later, in 1974. But I think he—as a young artist, he—I'm going to be talking to him and ask him about his impressions of it then.

[00:32:18.73]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: What were his impressions of it then?

[00:32:20.18]

ANNE HUNTER: I haven't talked to him, yet. That's why—

[00:32:21.66]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh.

[00:32:22.18]

ANNE HUNTER: I'm looking forward to hearing it. Now—

[00:32:23.90]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Have you talked to Sam?

[00:32:25.48]

ANNE HUNTER: No. I don't think—I don't know if he's being interviewed under this. I'll make that suggestion because that would—

[00:32:30.34]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, Jerry Kaplan and Sam would be good people for you to talk to about the Club in my day.

[00:32:35.94]

ANNE HUNTER: Excellent. I'll suggest that to the Archives people. I wonder—Sam may have been interviewed by somebody else. And I'll listen to the interview and see if there is anything he can add to it. But, yeah, now, Ruth Fine was at Alverthorpe?

[00:32:51.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. But she was a printmaker, herself.

[00:32:55.30]

ANNE HUNTER: Uh-huh [affirmative].

[00:32:55.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And she—we knew her before she was at Alverthorpe.

[00:32:59.80]

ANNE HUNTER: So she had been involved with The Print Club.

[00:33:01.80]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes.

[00:33:02.11]

ANNE HUNTER: And then she was at Alverthorpe and continued to be involved. And then I think she—did she catalog that collection prior to its going to the National Gallery? I guess—

[00:33:15.30]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Which, the [Lessing -Ed.] Rosenwald collection?

[00:33:16.97]

ANNE HUNTER: The Rosenwald collection.

[00:33:18.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, she did all sorts of jobs there. Cataloging was part of it.

[00:33:23.01]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:33:25.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: She wasn't the first person there, you see. Betty Mongan was there for years.

[00:33:29.22]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, I didn't realize that.

[00:33:29.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:33:30.75]

ANNE HUNTER: Aha, that's why she was interested in Betty when she interviewed you, as well.

[00:33:34.34]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:33:35.11]

ANNE HUNTER: So Betty Mongan was in Philadelphia for—

[00:33:37.08]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes, she was the first one who was curator for Rosenwald.

[00:33:40.50]

ANNE HUNTER: Hmm. Now, his collection, he—when he was involved in the Print Club Permanent Collection and he would advise as to what the Print Club should buy for the art museum, he was probably also buying at the same time. And was he—do you know if he was being careful not to overlap?

[00:34:03.41]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't know. I'm sure he probably was.

[00:34:06.95]

ANNE HUNTER: I was curious about that. Of course, that's how he knew what was out there, because he was looking, himself, an active collector like that. It would be interesting to check. Now, Antonio Frasconi was well-known, nationally.

[00:34:25.88]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was not well-known, nationally, when we first started to show.

[00:34:28.97]

ANNE HUNTER: Really?

[00:34:29.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. He and Leona sent into our annual competitive show. They'd get in, and get prizes, and things like that. And I remember, one day, I was sitting, working in the back of the—at the long bench, at the back of the first-floor gallery, where I would sit and do my work, so that when people came in, I could be aware of if they needed help or anything. And a girl walked in. And I looked up and said, "Oh, you must be Leona Pierce." It was.

[00:35:04.44]

ANNE HUNTER: It was? [They laugh.]

[00:35:06.84]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So she somehow just—I just—and I wasn't expecting it.

[00:35:12.37]

ANNE HUNTER: That's very strange.

[00:35:14.12]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: What?

[00:35:15.02]

ANNE HUNTER: That's very strange.

[00:35:16.01]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:35:16.34]

ANNE HUNTER: I guess that's how things work. And I guess I have a couple of questions that—as we go into the '50s and '60s, when you were less involved with the Print Club, whether some of these people were also involved with it, such as Neil Welliver, who started teaching at the University of Pennsylvania.

[00:35:39.25]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:35:40.01]

ANNE HUNTER: Probably not. And, also, the—what you must be interested in is the revival of this area, where you live, the old city area. Because you—when did you start to live here on Delancey Street?

[00:35:53.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I lived in an apartment on Spruce Street. I moved into that in '57. And three years later, my landlord was muttering about raising the rent. By that time, I knew I liked the area. And I had friends down here. And I wanted to stay. So I bought this house. And that—

[00:36:13.64]

ANNE HUNTER: You must have been a pioneer.

[00:36:15.65]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, yeah, there were only twelve of us in the new wave of people down here. It was a complete slum.

[00:36:20.84]

ANNE HUNTER: Uh-huh. And, of course, now, it's quite lovely.

[00:36:23.93]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:36:24.47]

ANNE HUNTER: Who were the other pioneers down here?

[00:36:26.60]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, Frank Graham, who was eventually chairman of education—or Curator of Education, rather, at the museum, was down here. He was an architect and city planner. And I don't think anybody—whose name would mean anything to you. Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson, and Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, and Jerry Dive, who's still here, up the street. Charlie Peterson, who was with Federal Park Service, an architectural historian. That's where I had my apartment, actually.

[00:36:55.77]

I had an apartment up at around 1914 Spruce. My landlord had a big old house next door, and he and his wife had been friends with my family. And they invited me to a dinner party. And I was sat next to Charlie Peterson. And he was telling me about this house he was restoring down here. And he was going to have apartments in it. It was two houses thrown together, actually. He was the first person to do this down here. Well, that was—the party was in May. And I went abroad that summer. And when I got home, I got an invitation from Charlie to a cocktail party.

[00:37:31.20]

ANNE HUNTER: Come and see it.

[00:37:32.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I couldn't remember what he looked like. I remembered the conversation and the man, but not the look. And I thought, well, heavens, if I go, how am I going to recognize my host at a cocktail party? So I decided I'd go, but I'd go—we were invited for, let's say, 5:30. I'd be prompt. And it wouldn't be very much choice.

[00:37:55.83]

ANNE HUNTER: He would be the one who was there. [Laughs.]

[00:37:58.74]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, I didn't know Charlie. You see, I just only met him once. I didn't know that he was always late. So I got there. And a man I'd known when I lived in Chestnut Hill walked up the steps at the same time as I did. I said, "Oh, I'm so glad you're here, George, because I don't know what my host looks like." And he said, "Well, I'm meeting my wife here. I've never met him." [Laughs.]

[00:38:22.05]

Anyway, Charlie let us in. And he was absolutely horrified at our being there. And he said, oh, I'm not ready. I'm not ready. Go look around the house. There were still workmen in it. So we wandered around for about half an hour. And up at the top floor was this very nice apartment, bigger than the one I had uptown. And I—that night, I couldn't sleep. I was furnishing that apartment.

[00:38:47.81]

ANNE HUNTER: In your mind, yeah. [Laughs.]

[00:38:49.78]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So I wrote him the next day and said, I could—this is what I could pay in rent and would you be interested in having me as your first tenant? And he said, sure. So—

[00:39:00.46]

ANNE HUNTER: And he must have been in love with the houses in this area.

[00:39:03.64]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he's an architectural historian. Yeah.

[00:39:05.47]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:39:08.22]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: So, anyway, that's how I came down here.

[00:39:10.71]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, were you afraid for your personal safety at all?

[00:39:13.76]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was safer then than it is now.

[00:39:15.81]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, that's true, sadly true.

[00:39:17.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: That was a question we used to get awfully tired of, if—"Aren't you afraid to live down there by yourself?" We were absolutely safe then. We're not now, but we were then. I remember one cocktail party in Chestnut Hill, when the man who'd had too

much to drink kept coming up to me all evening. "Aren't you afraid?" And I finally just looked him in the eye. I said, "I've only been raped seven times."

[00:39:39.56]

ANNE HUNTER: [Laughs.] He was going—[They laugh.]

[00:39:43.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It shut him up.

[00:39:46.85]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, your brother was involved with the redevelopment of—

[00:39:51.49]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, he was Chairman, which meant I couldn't get one of the houses that they were buying and selling cheap.

[00:39:57.81]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, right.

[00:39:58.86]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Because you could imagine what the front pages of Philadelphia newspapers would have been.

[00:40:03.54]

ANNE HUNTER: But that was how some of the development was done over here.

[00:40:06.96]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And this house had been bought by somebody else at this cheap rate. And their mother-in-law fell and broke her hip. And so this couple who already had a child, had to—knew they were going to have to take care of mom for the rest of her life. And she was an old lady and—

[00:40:33.00]

ANNE HUNTER: Needed to be on the first floor, too, I'm sure.

[00:40:34.98]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, all that kind of thing. So they had to unload quickly. So, although I paid more—

[00:40:42.55]

ANNE HUNTER: You paid considerably less than you might have in other circumstances.

[00:40:46.18]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I paid \$18,000 for the house.

[00:40:47.94]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, man. When was this?

[00:40:50.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: 1960.

[00:40:53.05]

ANNE HUNTER: My goodness. [Laughs.] Well, that's—

[00:40:57.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And if it had been an OPDC house, I would have gotten it for eight [thousand dollars].

[00:41:01.15]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. And if you were to sell it today—don't even think about it.

[00:41:05.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, today, you can't sell anything at the moment.

[00:41:07.93]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, sell it last year or next year, but not this year. Now, was your brother chairman of the Redevelopment Authority when the one percent for art—

[00:41:18.85]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. He put that through. That was his—

[00:41:20.59]

ANNE HUNTER: Can you talk—because he won't be interviewed under this program. And so, we're as close as we can get.

[00:41:25.69]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he has just moved to Florida, so you can't. I mean, you'd have to take a trip to Florida to interview him.

[00:41:30.34]

ANNE HUNTER: But if we could ask you a little bit about that, well, would that be—

[00:41:33.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, oh, I can't give you very many details, really. It's been written up often, if you—

[00:41:38.23]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Oh, I thought it was probably less than coincidental that you both came from the same family and made that wonder—and he made that really wonderful—

[00:41:50.20]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Contribution, yeah.

[00:41:51.38]

ANNE HUNTER: —contribution to Philadelphia culture.

[00:41:52.39]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Actually, Mike is not particularly interested in art. His wife is a painter. But I forget where he got this idea. And he decided Philadelphia should do it.

[00:42:03.97]

ANNE HUNTER: You don't think he got it from you?

[00:42:05.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, no, he didn't get it from me, no.

[00:42:06.91]

ANNE HUNTER: [Laughs.] He didn't get it from you. You probably encouraged it, once you heard about.

[00:42:09.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, sure, I thought it was a wonderful idea.

[00:42:11.99]

ANNE HUNTER: And continues to be a wonderful idea.

[00:42:14.11]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: But I get—absolutely should get no credit for that one. That was Mike.

[00:42:18.52]

ANNE HUNTER: That was Mike. But you did—but perhaps your family gets credit for it, for having produced the two of you.

[00:42:24.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:42:26.52]

ANNE HUNTER: Now, also, other names that I thought might be involved with the Print Club, these are—because these are people who are important, I think, to Sam Maitin, would be Ezio Martinelli.

[00:42:40.15]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes, Ezio was one of my boys.

[00:42:42.46]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:42:43.03]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then he moved to New York. And, eventually, we lost touch with him.

[00:42:45.94]

ANNE HUNTER: Hmm. Did you publish him or—

[00:42:49.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. We hadn't started the publications when he was here.

[00:42:51.94]

ANNE HUNTER: When you were doing—

[00:42:53.32]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And then he got into paint—more into painting and sculpture, after he left here. And he was teaching at Sarah Lawrence, and—

[00:43:01.39]

ANNE HUNTER: And drifted, I suppose. And then Paul—is it Paul Froelich, who taught—

[00:43:08.60]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, he was a sweet man, not a terribly good printmaker.

[00:43:12.13]

ANNE HUNTER: And then what I was interested is that Benton Spruance taught Sam Maitin art history at the then-Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Art.

[00:43:20.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:43:21.55]

ANNE HUNTER: So I guess, as Spruance was able to think, and teach, and work with a great deal, very—

[00:43:27.52]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[END OF TRACK AAA_vonmos88_7516_m]

[00:00:04.01]

ANNE HUNTER: This is an interview with Berthe Von Moschzisker on January 12—I think—1991, in her home in Philadelphia. And I think we can probably just—I think a lot of these people are really after your time. One question. Were you involved in choosing Robert Grigor-Taylor to be—

[00:00:27.05]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No.

[00:00:30.27]

ANNE HUNTER: —your successor?

[00:00:31.97]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, the board wouldn't let me have anything to do with that. That was their privilege.

[00:00:37.23]

ANNE HUNTER: Their choice.

[00:00:40.40]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And I found out, of course—it was announced to me. They told me a couple of hours before a board meeting who they had chosen and where he worked. And the place people he was working with was an English firm that had a very bad reputation.

[00:01:00.37]

ANNE HUNTER: Which firm is that?

[00:01:01.63]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I don't remember the name. And I wouldn't want that to be on the record anyway. And I said to the committee I thought it'd be a good idea if they checked in a little further on this young man. I said, "Maybe he left the firm—this other firm because he didn't like what was going on." Well, I think you know that he was a disaster.

[00:01:29.51]

ANNE HUNTER: I don't know, actually.

[00:01:31.48]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh. Well—

[00:01:31.96]

ANNE HUNTER: There isn't—I don't know a great deal about him.

[00:01:33.92]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He was very charming. But he didn't pay his bills, he didn't answer his letters, he—well, I won't say.

[00:01:45.76]

ANNE HUNTER: He sort of left without a trace, too. I don't think he—

[00:01:49.57]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: He left, went back to England. And he lost a couple of jobs he got there in the art world, and eventually ended up running a pub.

[00:02:03.46]

ANNE HUNTER: Hmm. Well, that's an uncomfortable story.

[00:02:07.75]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, that's censored. [Laughs.]

[00:02:11.32]

ANNE HUNTER: But his assistant was Margo Dolan.

[00:02:12.94]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yes. And she, Margo, I think, was very bright, very able.

[00:02:18.28]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. And managed to clean up after him, I suppose.

[00:02:20.77]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah. Well, she was awfully young at the time and inexperienced. I mean, it was—and she's, I think, very fond of him. He was a charmer. My niece actually had an affair with him. [They laugh.]

[00:02:38.56]

ANNE HUNTER: Really? He managed to become close to his job in Philadelphia. [Laughs.] Well, he was only here for a year or just a couple of years, I think.

[00:02:47.10]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, more than that.

[00:02:48.16]

ANNE HUNTER: Really? He brought some flashy art to the Print Club, I think. I think he brought a Pop art print show, when it was still something that would raise people's eyebrows. Wow. So when Margo became director—

[00:03:08.89]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Margo did a good job.

[00:03:10.09]

ANNE HUNTER: And she also seems to have retained the interest of a number of the people who you had been working with, so she can—she printed Jerry Kaplan as well, I think.

[00:03:20.02]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, she didn't do a print of—she didn't publish him.

[00:03:24.73]

ANNE HUNTER: She remained close to Sam Maitin and, of course, Benton Spruance.

[00:03:29.47]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Benton was dead.

[00:03:30.73]

ANNE HUNTER: He was dead already? Well, maybe she didn't. [Laughs.] Do you think that she brought her own direction rather quickly following that?

[00:03:41.68]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:03:42.34]

ANNE HUNTER: Yeah. And of course, under her, the Print Club was very successful. It was during those years, I guess—had the Prints in Progress already spun off when you were there? I think not.

[00:03:56.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No, they spun off during Margo's day.

[00:03:58.99]

ANNE HUNTER: And the Fabric Workshop spun off.

[00:04:01.00]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, the Fabric Workshop started after I left.

[00:04:03.61]

ANNE HUNTER: And Brandywine. Well, there—oh. Here's an interesting—did you have an exhibition with Sidney Goodman in 1958?

[00:04:20.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I guess I did if it was 1958.

[00:04:22.22]

ANNE HUNTER: I think so.

[00:04:23.53]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: No. What year did I leave?

[00:04:27.47]

ANNE HUNTER: It was around '65.

[00:04:28.33]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah, in '58. Yeah. 'Cause he was—

[00:04:32.41]

ANNE HUNTER: And he's also being interviewed under this program, but I'm not interviewing him. It'd be interesting to hear his reactions to that. And did you ever show—like I guess Larry Day has never worked in prints, has he?

[00:04:49.70]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Not to any great extent.

[00:04:52.13]

ANNE HUNTER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Thinking of the present generation of painters who've been very influential.

[00:04:59.24]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Ruth Fine's first husband was a printmaker, Leonard Lehrer.

[00:05:04.31]

ANNE HUNTER: Oh, really?

[00:05:05.06]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:05:05.09]

ANNE HUNTER: I didn't realize that was her first husband.

[00:05:07.76]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And we published one of his, seems to me.

[00:05:14.03]

ANNE HUNTER: Well, I think maybe we've gone through it. I know that Richard Frye wanted me to be sure to ask you specific questions about the addition. I'm trying to think of specific questions about it, because it's—architecturally, it's something that the building needs to deal with as it continues to grow.

[00:05:36.23]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, if he wants to ask specific questions, I'm sure I'm right that Irv Maitin was—Sam's brother was the architect. He ought to go to Irv.

[00:05:45.02]

ANNE HUNTER: I probably should do that. Maybe find the plans and put them in the Archives. That would be fun. And see what—what previous ideas had occurred before that plan was lit upon, which seems particularly suited to a lot of things. It's too bad that it's hard to ventilate something like that to contemporary standards. And I think if it were to be used as a workshop again, the wall would have to be dropped between the public portion of the Print Club and the workshop. And somebody would have to figure out how to get a door through there.

[00:06:21.74]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Well, I hope they don't try doing a workshop again. It's not needed now with the University of the Arts having an active print department.

[00:06:31.37]

ANNE HUNTER: That's true, isn't it?

[00:06:32.13]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: It was needed back in the early days, when there was less being done at the schools. Now Tyler has a good one.

[00:06:38.90]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:06:39.59]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Academy of Fine Arts has some.

[00:06:42.26]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. Even Moore College has one, too—which, did you know Chen Lee?

[00:06:47.91]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I knew Leonard Nelson very well, who taught there. Probably retired by now.

[00:06:53.89]

ANNE HUNTER: I think he is. And Chen Lee and Charles Fahlen.

[00:06:59.44]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Charles Fahlen, I know. Chen Lee, I don't remember that.

[00:07:06.57]

ANNE HUNTER: He was a printer who went to Tamarind briefly when the workshop at Tamarind was being founded. And you knew June Wayne?

[00:07:14.51]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes.

[00:07:15.57]

ANNE HUNTER: And I guess you were both on the Print Council, or—

[00:07:20.67]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I was on the Print Council, but I don't think she was in my day.

[00:07:23.70]

ANNE HUNTER: Really? But you must—you probably heard about her project and so forth.

[00:07:31.38]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Oh, yes, the Tamarind had started. And I've heard plenty about it from her and other people.

[00:07:37.53]

ANNE HUNTER: Everybody else. I think Garo Antresian is speaking at the Print Club in a couple of weeks about Tamarind, which should be interesting. Yes, it's—I guess there still are few places where an artist can go and make prints if that artist is not affiliated with a school. And that's a problem which people point out periodically. And people use Fleisher Art Memorial, because of that.

[00:08:06.30]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

[00:08:06.87]

ANNE HUNTER: That's a place where an artist can go and use the press once a week. And there we were talking and sort of dreaming for a while of opening a workshop down in that area, where the real estate is a lot less expensive. And having it something where you could have a collaborative print situation during the day, and use the same facilities for workshops at night, so that they could be used for—

[00:08:31.78]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Don't let them encourage the Print Club to think they can do it, because they don't have a big enough space. And space is needed for the gallery.

[00:08:40.06]

ANNE HUNTER: Right.

[00:08:40.42]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: And just to say, it—

[00:08:47.88]

ANNE HUNTER: You must have really—

[00:08:49.42]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Times have changed. I mean, it was—the Hayter workshop was needed at that time because the art schools weren't doing anything.

[00:08:55.93]

ANNE HUNTER: Right. As the Print Club Permanent Collection was needed because the art museum wasn't collecting prints.

[00:09:00.07]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: Yeah.

[00:09:01.33]

ANNE HUNTER: To each time comes its own needs, but I think there probably still is a need. And I don't think that—I can't imagine how you ran an etching workshop and a lithograph workshop in that space with exhibitions as well.

[00:09:15.25]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: I have to say, it was a three-ring circus often. Look, dear, I've got to—

[00:09:19.81]

ANNE HUNTER: Okay. I think we—I think we have worked through. Thank you very much.

[00:09:24.61]

BERTHE VON MOSCHZISKER: You're welcome.

[00:09:26.80]

ANNE HUNTER: This is tape two of Anne Schuster Hunter interviewing Berthe Von Moschzisker for the Archives of American Art on January 12, 1991.

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]