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Oral history interview with Dimitri Hadzi, 1981 Jan. 2-1990 Mar. 9

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Dimitri Hadzi on January 2, 1981. The interview took place in Cambridge, MA and was conducted by Robert Brown for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

2 January 1981

(Transcription from cassette recording. Sides one and two of eight.)

DIMITRI HADZI: Happy New Year.

ROBERT BROWN: Why don't we just start talking about (how) you were born in New York City in 1921...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I was born actually in Greenwich Village and it was very nice for me to go back to that area to go to school at Cooper Union. So I was born on the first day of Spring in 1921 of Greek parents. And after a number of years moved to Brooklyn where I spent most of my young years.

ROBERT BROWN: And were your parents, had they been over here long?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I think they must have come over, (I) never got that very straight. I suppose during the Balkan Wars. My father was from Kastoria(?) in Macedonia which, incidentally, Lucas Samarras is from also. And my mother was actually born in European Turkey of Greek family and her father was a grain merchant. She actually spent very little time in Greece. And I suspect, I think it was the Balkan War which brought them over.

ROBERT BROWN: And (was your) Dad the same? Did he come from, did he leave Macedonia, or did he grow up there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, he grew up there. I guess he came to the, he must have been in his early twenties when he came here and so he often spoke of his youth in Macedonia, riding horses and hunting. And he was a furrier, the way most Kastorians are...

ROBERT BROWN: Do you mean that's a traditional profession among them?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, they still are. And they are unique in that they work from scraps, fur scraps. And they stitch them all together and they make rather remarkable pelts in that you can't see they're made from scraps. Now they're sending scraps from all over the world -- from Germany and Sweden. It's a very active and it's quite an affluent city right now.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you remember some of that business? When you were a boy?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I tried to, sure, because during the depression my father kept a shop. I tried to work there a few times, my brothers were more successful, they spent more time working there and I wasn't very good with a sewing machine. It's just as well (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: But you had brothers and sisters?

DIMITRI HADZI: Two brothers and two sisters, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: So it was a pretty big family.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, five in all.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you one of the older?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was the second. My sister was interested in theatre and she did some work in Greek theatre in New York and they did some travelling around America. But I guess that career didn't last too long.

ROBERT BROWN: What were your interests as a little fella?

DIMITRI HADZI: I always drew, and I was encouraged by my uncle who was a machinist and it was my first experience spending time in a shop. One uncle was a machinist and the other uncle was a candymaker. But my machinist uncle was a very inspiring man to me. He used to take me to the Metropolitan Museum and he was a

Sunday painter. He used to belong to some artists' societies and he exhibited at (sort of you know) amateur exhibitions. But he had me copying postcards and things like that. It was my first introduction to oils. But what happened was that I went into Chemistry. And how that happened was that I was going to junior high school in Brooklyn. Do you want all these details?

ROBERT BROWN: Oh, yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And I guess that, in that area in Brooklyn...it was during the Depression and none of us had any idea of going to college. Actually, very few of us even graduated from high school. I guess we never took the academic world too seriously. We just wanted to get finished, get your working papers when you were sixteen and get a job. And that was the basic mentality. But I was very eager and I was very curious. I used to do alot of reading and drawing and building model airplanes and ships. I used to stay up 'till two or three. My mother was very sympathetic in that case because she'd stay up with me until two or three in the morning with a kerosene lamp because we didn't have electricity. We couldn't afford it. I was at Dewey Jr. High School in Brooklyn. I was called into the office one day...by this vocational guidance woman, Mrs. Anderson, I'll never forget her. She asked me what my plans were, because I was getting close to graduation. And I said, well, I'll just probably go to manual training school where all my friends (go) and get the working papers. And she said, "well you have very good grades in math and physics and science. Have you ever considered going to Brooklyn Tech?" That was Brooklyn Technical High School. Well, that was, to me, a stunning blow because Brooklyn Technical High School was like the Acropolis in New York. I used to watch kids with Brooklyn Tech on the back of their shirts and say...You envied them because it was a kind of...untouchable kind of a place. And to even be considered for that was a staggering experience.

So, anyway, I went and took the exams and to my astonishment, I passed. So I was able to go to Brooklyn Tech. And they told me that I would need a drafting set when I started for my first year. So I told Mrs. Anderson, "My family doesn't have any money. How can I possibly get the drafting set?" And she said, she thought for a while and said, "I understand you shine shoes after class." I used to keep a shine box in class and at three o'clock I'd go around and shine about four teachers', about four or five teachers' shoes. And that way, I'd earn some extra money. Of course I used to shine shoes from age nine. And she said, "why don't you come every Saturday morning,"-- this was during the summer -- "...and shine the family's shoes?" She lived in an enormous house in Bay Ridge. And I don't know how many members of the family (there were), but there were at least fifteen to twenty pairs of shoes down in the basement. And I'd shine them and she'd bring me coffee...er, milk and pie in the midst of this. And at the end of the summer I'd raised enough money to buy the drafting set. And I still have it here (laughs) Yes. A German set. So I went to...

ROBERT BROWN: You were pretty pleased that you were going...

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I was terribly, I was very excited. Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Was your family very pleased, too?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. They were quite excited because they realized that it was a tough school.

ROBERT BROWN: What about the pressure to go to work, though?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, that was the understanding. I had to make a deal with my family. The only way that I could go to Brooklyn Tech was if I were,...of course because everyone had to contribute money to the family. The only way I could go there would be to get a part time job. So I got one, from Friday evening, in a fruit and vegetable shop, and all day Saturday. This was like sixteen to eighteen hours on a Saturday. And that involved...(working) mostly as a delivery boy, but also helping in the shop, waiting when the pressure was high. All sorts of odds and ends jobs. These were...I was working for some Greeks. And they were tough, tough customers. They would really demand alot. But it was good, you know it's, I think, the abuse I went through, I think most of the kids today would quit. But that's part of the training, if you notice, that even in Italy, in the foundries and what not, there's a certain apprenticeship which the young kids have to go through. It's like hazing in a way and there's a certain point when you mature, when you rebel and you're respected.

ROBERT BROWN: Did they make sure that you did alot of the dirty work?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I had to do everything. Bringing in the bags of potatoes, moving the trucks, sweeping, and of course, in that neighborhood, in South Brooklyn, which is getting quite popular now and getting reactivated, the streets are very hilly going up to Prospect Park and the delivery...I had a delivery truck, do you know? I don't know what you call them...

ROBERT BROWN: Hand trucks or push carts?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, push carts, with two big wheels and a small one. And that used to get loaded to the point

where I couldn't even see above it. And I had to push that uphill usually up to Ninth Avenue. That was pretty exhausting. I earned some money on tips that way. But it was very physical. I think the thing that used to almost kill me was that, around ten o'clock at night I'd have to make the deliveries to a chinese restaurant and they involved carrying two one-hundred-pound bags of potatoes up one flight of steps and that was just almost killing. (laughs) And one way in which I used to relax from this was that they'd have midnight shows at the local movie house. Everybody would go with their girls and what not, I'd just go there to flop out until two or three in the morning. (laughs) But also that job pulled us through the Depression, because, besides earning that money I would also bring home two to three big baskets...remember those wonderful wooden baskets full of fruit and vegetables which were going bad, but certainly good enough for just...to clean off, so...

ROBERT BROWN: To eat right away.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well to cook into sauces and things like that. So I used to, every week there were two to three of those baskets of fruits and vegetables and that helped keep the family going.

ROBERT BROWN: Was your family mainly within a Greek community?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, no, it wasn't a Greek...Well we were near a Greek church and there was, there were Greeks around, but it wasn't like, say, Chicago -- you know the great type Greek neighborhood. There were Greeks sort of scattered around, mostly around the church, too. But it was nothing like what I've seen in, or say in Manhattan, New York, on Eighth Avenue in the twenties -- a very compact Greek area with Greek shops and all that. We didn't have that. It was mostly mixed: Irish, Italian, Polish, Jewish. Very mixed.

ROBERT BROWN: And your family itself, was it blended in with various different groups to some extent?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Yes, we had Russian, Polish friends, some Greeks. I guess fewer Greeks because my mother came from Anatolia. They used to call us the Turks so they really had a little harrassment there.

ROBERT BROWN: There was some feeling...

DIMITRI HADZI: (laughs) Yes. Even then!

ROBERT BROWN: Even though the Anatolians had been persecuted by the Greeks.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly. Yes. It's just a...

ROBERT BROWN: It's a real provincial rivalry.

DIMITRI HADZI: Real provincial, yes. So anyway, I went to Brooklyn Technical High School... I did quite well in the first couple of years. And then the family problems were getting more and more complicated and difficult. But I graduated.

ROBERT BROWN: And you specialized in Chemistry?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. What happened was that the first year everyone took the regular course and then you elected what direction you were going to go into. They also had an art course there and they were trying to put me into that. It's more like commercial art, which was quite different from...I don't know how they explained themselves with that -- at Brooklyn Technical High School. But somehow or other, a friend of mine that first year gave me his chemistry set, which he hated -- chemistry -- and his family gave him as a Christmas present this wonderful Gilbert (?) chemistry set and I just loved it and couldn't stop playing around with it. And that hooked me into Chemistry. So I dropped art, but everyone had to draw anyway. They had... The good thing about that school was that they had free hand drawing and drafting. And that's where I became convinced that anyone with training can draw.

ROBERT BROWN: You felt that then, you saw that many people...

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh people that couldn't draw anything. And they would set up machine parts, telephones and stuff like that and then by the time the fourth year came around all the students could draw. So I became convinced of that. Conceptual drawing is something else, of course, but making renderings I think anyone can learn that. So I graduated in Chemistry. And from there I went to, I got a job with InterChemical Corporation in the research labs in Manhattan on Forty-fifth Street and I worked there for three years.

ROBERT BROWN: What did you do there? You didn't have an advance degree but...

DIMITRI HADZI: No. What happened was because of the training at Brooklyn Tech. Because we worked with college manuals and handbooks...and we were trained in qualitative, quantitative analysis and industrial chemistry. So we could take on a lab job. And of course the industry loved us because we... they wouldn't have

to hire someone with a degree...Now they would get people from Columbia or Fordham for $25/week at that time, and they would get us for $15. So they'd save $10/week on us. Which was alot of money in those days.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And as most of the young people in the labs, we were all going to Brooklyn Polytech at night for our degree. The minimum was eight years at night for a bachelor's.

ROBERT BROWN: Not to the High School anymore?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. The High School is Brooklyn Technical High School. And the other was Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute.

ROBERT BROWN: And you began going there, too.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I went there for about three years. And that was tough because you work all day and then you go there four nights a week and then on weekends you work in the labs, you know, the school labs. That was pretty rugged because I'd get home after working and going to school and then I'd start doing homework until two or three in the morning.

ROBERT BROWN: And then back to work. What were your work hours like? Eight-thirty?

DIMITRI HADZI: They were nine-to-five, and then, usually, at lunchtime, you would do your homework.

ROBERT BROWN: Was there anything in that work at InterChemical that related at all to art?

DIMITRI HADZI: Very little in the sense, no.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you do any drawing or graphic work?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. Nothing, no. Just pigments. I got familiar with pigments and solvents and stuff like that which came in handy later on when I was grinding my colors. But, aside from that there was very little. I was more interested in music at that time. And one of my colleagues there...We used to bring in classical records during lunchtime and play them. The two of us would have lunch. We would bring in sandwiches and play the records. And little by little more and more of these people, the lab people would come and sit and join us. And it got so big we had to move to the stockroom where there was more space. And we had to create a program so it was the H & G music foundation -- Hadzi and Greening. And we would bring not only records from our home but we would go to the Brooklyn Public Library or (the) Library in New York and bring records. And we would post a weekly program. I mean, we would get thirty to forty people coming to that. But then, the war came and I had to leave.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you interested in playing or just interested in listening?

DIMITRI HADZI: Listening. I was a listener. Yes. So how it started was that my friend, Ed Greening, and I would listen to Wagner records and or whatever opera and then we'd go to the Opera. See, we would get seats to the Opera and then a week or so before that we'd listen to records and get familiar with the opera. But as far as any drawing or painting, I wasn't... I'd go to the museum occasionally...but, I was looking at some grades the other day. I found my report cards at the public school there and I was getting grades like, this is astonishing. In art, like 60 and 55 and 65! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Whereas your grades in science were very good.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I had 90's and 85's and 99's. They were all very (laughs) Well, it's mostly that, they weren't teaching... It's funny because in high school I didn't do too much. But in public school, I was singled out of the class to be the artist. And I would do, for the hallways, big posters. Color things of...battles, of some famous Revolutionary battles. There was George Washington crossing the Delaware and Burgoyne (?) and all these people. And I would be the one to paint these big murals for the hallways and be excused from the classes because I was the artist.

ROBERT BROWN: But on the other hand, in the art class, you didn't do too well?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, this was in the junior high school. And it was drawing, making patterns. And I would find it quite boring. Only once did the teacher get inspired. Because I used to go to the Metropolitan Museum and draw the plaster casts. And she said, "look, look at Hadzi. He's so good. Why don't you do it?"

ROBERT BROWN: But the basic teaching was arduous and pretty dull?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. In junior high.

ROBERT BROWN: Copy work?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It was patterns. It was more design, not even what they call design now.

ROBERT BROWN: And at the Technical High School it was rendering mainly?

DIMITRI HADZI: It was rendering, yes. And drafting. So I was a very good draftsman and I used to do projects for the teacher in the back room. His own projects. So I was very good. He was ready to have me...he was going to send me to some school just to major in drafting. He thought that I was that good at it.

ROBERT BROWN: At the college level did you have drafting, too?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. That was strictly chemistry, yes. Physics and math.

ROBERT BROWN: Well, you continued at InterChemical and going to night school until, when? 1943 or so?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, the war came, when? December 7, 19...?

ROBERT BROWN: '41.

DIMITRI HADZI: 1941. I enlisted July 4, 1942 for the Air Forces. This was funny because I enlisted in the Air Forces Pilot Training. And all my friends laughed at me. They said, "what are you, crazy? Why don't you wait to get drafted?" I said, "Well, I want to fly. This is my opportunity." And they laughed. But as soon as I got in I took the exam and passed. I immediately got a letter saying that because all the airfields are tied up we'll put you on a waiting list. And I waited six months before they called me into active service. In that six months I went to all the farewell parties where all the guys were laughing at me. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: So you continued working down to the last minute?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And you were still living at home with your family?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I was living in Brooklyn. Right. And then, of course, that's where the next phase of it, my art career starts -- when I washed out of pilot training and navigation training and all that.

ROBERT BROWN: But you did get, I read that you got stationed in the South Pacific and you had some time to do drawing.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. What happened was that I went to Salt Lake City for overseas... final training and went to the west coast. San Francisco and I was ready to be shipped out and we had one day off or two days off and it suddenly occurred to me that ...I knew that I wouldn't be able to use my camera probably a great deal. So I thought, why don't I get some sketch pads and start drawing? I hadn't done this in years, now. So I went out and I bought pads and pencils, colored pencils and what not. And I took them back. And we were on the ship for over thirty days without escort. So I had plenty of time on the ship and I started drawing. I should show you these drawings next time. They should be recorded anyway for the Archive. And I did the guys lounging around, relaxed, and the gunners. Now that I look back at it, they're quite good drawings -- considering that there was a long span of time that I haven't drawn, since as a kid. And one of my officers...By this time I had washed out of pilot training. So I became an enlisted man, a private.

ROBERT BROWN: They'd decided you weren't pilot material?

DIMITRI HADZI: I washed out after nine hours. I had a terrible instructor who hated New Yorkers. I mean, I can only learn when I'm relaxed and this guy really made it nerve-wracking. My knees were black and blue from getting banged by the control stick. Every time I made a wrong maneuver he'd bang my knees with a stick. So...Then I went up to Navigation, of course. Navigation I got within ten days of my commission and I fouled up badly with my admission. So they (laughs) washed me out. Well, fortunately, it was lucky for me because if we weren't losing navigators, at that particular time, they would have put me back one class -- three weeks and I would have made it with no problem, you know. I was quite good. But we weren't losing navigators at that time so they deliberated over it, the WASH (?) Board, they called it, deliberated a long time over my case because they knew I was very interested in navigation. But they just weren't, you know, they had an ample supply of navigators. So I washed out. But they said, well, of course your grades are still high in bombadiering. So I said, "I've had enough of the Cadettes!" After a year or so in the Cadettes, I became a radio man, an enlisted man.

ROBERT BROWN: So that's what you were doing when you were on board?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. So I went to the islands as a radio man. So anyway. One of my officers noticed me drawing all the time and he got really interested and he said, "gee, well you should do some watercolors." And I said, "well, I don't have any watercolors." So he took me up to his cabin and he opened up his footlocker. He was a biologist so he had his microscope and watercolors for making drawings of various bacteria, etc., etc. So he lent me his watercolors and he also gave me permission to be up on the officers' deck so I could draw down. They were separated then. I suppose they still are. And then we arrived in New Guinea and it was a rather remarkable thing for the Air Forces... They would interview each man and, really, to find out if they were really interested in doing what they were doing. What they wanted to do. Like if you said, "well, I really hate being a radio mechanic," they'd take you out of it. After all that training!

ROBERT BROWN: And put you into something else?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Whatever (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: It seems a little late to do the interviewing.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I know. Maybe it was not quite that way, but you were interviewed, and it was for spotting what kind of activity...If you were adventurous, why they'd probably send you way up to the front lines or something like that. Anyway, then, I'll never forget. This Major Green, when my turn came, he said, "Oh, you're Hadzi." He said, "Lieutenant ------..." (I should, I forgot his name at the moment) "showed me the work you did." He wanted to show Major Green. And he said, "That's very impressive, what you're doing. I think you should continue with this drawing. We can fix you up here in Halandia. The promotion would be good and all you'd have to do is paint an occasional sign or do some illustrating for the local paper and it's a good way to finish the war." But I was interested in ultra-high frequencies and radio and had a big duffel bag full of books on electronics. And I said, "gee, that's fine but I'm really interested in (electronics)..." Boy, he was just staggered (laughs) This guy was really setting me up for something, you know!

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. A real soft spot! (laughs)

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. He said, "well, I paint a little myself, but you should...I'll tell you what, but you've got to promise me that you're going to keep drawing. I'll send you to a place where you're going to have lots of time to do your radio work and everything." So the next scene is this Catalina Flying Boat circling this rock (laughs) in the Timor Sea. One tree on it! So there were exactly twenty men on that island. Eight square miles. Champagny Island in northwest Australia in the Timor Sea.

ROBERT BROWN: Champagny.

DIMITRI HADZI: So that was quite an exciting...(laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: What was your job, to keep the radio going?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was there as a radio mechanic. But they already had radio mechanics there. So I did all kinds of jobs. They found out I was trained in chemistry, so they put me in charge of the water distillation unit. So we had to pump sea water to make fresh water. And you know, with twenty guys on the island, you really had to do lots of things to keep yourself busy. I did all kinds of things... Among them I started drawing, for one thing, and painting. I also would figure out...They have enormous tidal drops in Australia. In Darwin, I think it's forty to sixty feet -- something like that -- and we had big drops, where, once the tide went out, you could walk out like two to three miles. There were enormous tidal pools. And so that was a problem, for when the water would come up to the end of your pipe so you could suck it up into the distillation unit. So I worked out charts so I'd know exactly what time the water would reach and I could hop in the Jeep so I could get down there and start the engines, you see. So there were things like that. And I also used to make drawings of the constellations and watch meteoric showers. Keep track of those (laughs). There were all kinds of things like that to keep you busy. And then, because we were on sort of isolation duty, we had special privileges. Like extra cigarettes and liquor and the books. We used to have these paperbacks during the war.

ROBERT BROWN: What do you mean? Just popular -- mysteries? And...

DIMITRI HADZI: No. It was...Well, not quite comic books. No, there was heavy weight stuff, too. Like Thomas Mann, etc., etc. There was a big range. So while in the midst of this drawing and fantasizing, I read Lust for Life (by) Irving Stone. The whole setup there, being on this island, the fantasy department working overtime...

ROBERT BROWN: (laughs)

DIMITRI HADZI: I really got quite fascinated and I decided that, gee, I've got to go see some museums when I get back and... And it was there that I met Phil Wexler from the Bronx, who was on one of the other adjoining islands there in this chain with their long range navigation -- Lorenz stations. And we ended up in Sai Pan together. And

we decided that, instead of getting our Army discharge on the East coast, where everyone was flown right home, we would get it on the West coast and from the West coast, we would hitchhike across the country and stop at all the museums. For after all it's easy to travel now, but to get across the country in those days was a big, costly operation. So we thought, what the heck, we're going to be on the West coast. Why don't we take advantage of that geographical position and just work East by hitchhiking? So it took us three months and seventy-five rides (laughs). And we stopped all the way. We went to the, all the great museums -- Toledo and the Cleveland Museum, and the Chicago Art Institute.

ROBERT BROWN: Were people willing to give you rides pretty well?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. With the uniforms, yes, it was no problem. Oh there was once, we got stuck outside Reno, I think it was. We got out in the desert and the guy let us off there by just turning in. And we had to hitch back into town because no one would...

ROBERT BROWN: To keep stopping rides.

DIMITRI HADZI: No. It was cold.

ROBERT BROWN: Nothing else happened with your Air Force experience? This was before you got back from that isolation duty.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well I did alot of drawing there and thinking.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you able to bring back the drawings?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I have the drawings. Yes. Well, I was still interested in Chemistry. So, when I got back to New York, and hell, my mother was really upset. Because everyone had just flown right back home to see their mamas, you know. And we just took our time. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Did you write her postcards?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, occasionally. I would send her a postcard here from Wyoming and you know...

ROBERT BROWN: You said that you went to the Art Institute of Chicago and saw the Lachaise?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, yes, the Lachaise, oh just knocked me out. (It was) right on top of the steps there. And just recently, a few months ago I was back there and I saw it again, so it's a very meaningful piece for me -- that great Lachaise.

ROBERT BROWN: What do you suppose it was about that. At that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, aside from being a sensual sculpture, it was, that's what art's about -- a certain sense of mystery which you really can't explain. What puts this whole thing together, you know. But there was... the thing that I remember was the proportions and this buoyant quality of this relatively huge woman just floating. It's just an amazing sculpture, I thought. And I still feel the same way about it. It's just a remarkable thing.

ROBERT BROWN: Did this possibly get you interested in doing some sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, I'm sure it did, I'm sure it did, although not...

ROBERT BROWN: It didn't emerge just then?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not then, no. And I got back to New York and I went back to the laboratories where our jobs were promised and fortunately, they were redoing the labs. And so they said, "well you've been gone three and a half years. Why don't you take off a few more months and come back when you're ready?" (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Did you have any money to go on?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I was, I guess maybe I could have got (by) on Substitute 20, where after two weeks you could collect $20/month or something. I forget what it was, but I wasn't worried about the money. Then I was getting interested...After the trip across the country I really started getting interested in museums and galleries and I started going. And I saw an ad in the New York Times of art classes at the YMHA (Young Men's Hebrew Association) on Ninety-second Street and Lexington (Avenue), which is famous for its chamber music and poetry readings and I knew nothing about this place, but it didn't take me long to realize what a marvelous place it was. And I decided I could, I signed up for one night a week. That was all that I could afford. And Aaron Berkman was the painter who taught there and he was very encouraging. Berkman, Aaron Berkman.

ROBERT BROWN: And he was a good teacher, wasn't he?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. He was great. He just encouraged me. He said, "gee, you should come in every night." And I said, "I can't afford it." And he said,"That's o.k."

END OF SIDE ONE.

BEGIN SIDE TWO OF EIGHT.

DIMITRI HADZI: And I was making such progress, he said, he told me, "you should start working with color." And I told him that I had no money for paints. So he went and opened the closet and there were all these huge, unfinished canvases and half-dried tubes of paint. And he said, "just help yourself." So I started painting and I was really excited. Of course he was very, he was just thrilled with my progress, obviously. It was good for the class, too, see. And it was there I met these friends and this gal who I went with for quite a while. We used to go for coffee after class and one night they said that they were going down to Cooper Union to take the entrance exams. Of course, Cooper Union was an Art... free school. Art and engineering and architecture. So I went with them, just for kicks, you know. Because I knew I was going back to chemistry, I had a job waiting for me so I thought, why not? I guess I was curious to find out if I was good and I passed and they didn't. And that was a real blow to everybody. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: That hurt some of the friendships?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. That really did alot of rupturing there.

ROBERT BROWN: So, Berkman had encouraged you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. He was absolutely delighted of course, because he'd really helped me, see.

ROBERT BROWN: What kind of exam would they have had, by the way, the entry exam?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it was in two parts. And if you could pass the first part, they'd send you a card. Well, after the first part, I was sure I didn't pass, so when I got this card saying bring a pound of plasticene for the second part, I was ecstatic. And after I took that second part I was just ready to give up. And when I got this, "Congratulations, you..." and I realized that ninety out of a thousand made it...so that's pretty good odds. With my gambling instinct, I didn't go back to the laboratory. That was the end of the lab. The end of chemistry.

The exam was a very interesting one, because, I think...I don't know what they do now. But the first part has a general intelligence kind of thing, you know -- vocabulary...But then, they have spatial problems, blocks and how many, they show you one view of it with two sides and you're supposed to figure out how many (there are). And then, I thought, simple, extremely simple-minded things like they have on a page two railroad trains and you're supposed to draw around each one to show one in a valley and one on a mountaintop. I thought it was very simple -- they looked very simple, these things to me. And then you're supposed to draw a scene from a movie. Your favorite movie. But in any style you want to. So I did that Henry V, the guy shooting with bows and arrows, with big, massive arrows...and then we were supposed to design a house for three people and then you were supposed to do a portrait out of plasticene. That was in the second part. But where I was getting discouraged was, why I thought I failed both parts was that I was watching these kids. Most of them were from Music and Arts High School and they...We all took this test in a great auditorium and we were all separated so you could watch these kids with great facility knocking out these drawings or playing with that plasticene and (I thought), "Oh my God!" (laughs) Well, so I was all the more excited when I passed and some of the other people failed. So it must be a good system because they have a very high rate of success with these people who have gone there.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. And they were able to winnow through the very facile ones to find those that...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. That's really, that's, yes. They could see right through that.

ROBERT BROWN: It was your point earlier that anybody can learn to render, essentially that's what those students were doing.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. They were very...yes. So I think they were looking for something more and I think they could tell more, maybe in the house we had to design or the scene from the movie and other tests, you know. And also how we handled the plasticene -- I suppose if you had a real plastic sense.

ROBERT BROWN: About when did you start at Cooper Union?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was twenty-five and that was '46, 1946. And I got out in 1950 (telephone interruption).

ROBERT BROWN: So you started, was that in September or so when you started?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. September 1946 night school.

ROBERT BROWN: Night school? Because you were going to work during the day?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I couldn't see kind of just being a student during the day. I had to earn money, for one thing. But, however, by going to night school and going to Cooper Union, I saved my G.I. Bill (benefits) which plays a big role in my European trip.

ROBERT BROWN: You could use it later?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly, right. So I used part of it, very little, at Cooper Union. And some at the Brooklyn Museum. But I had a least three years coming when I went to Europe. (Which) made it possible to survive there.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you get a job during the day that was...(?) not too arduous?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I started out. I'm trying to remember which was the first job. I was working in commercial art, as an artist's model, a bus boy and a waiter. Those were my jobs (laughs). I met, in the Army, in the Air Force, in Texas, I met a fellow G.I. who was an artist and little did I know that eventually this man would be hiring me! (laughs) And I forget the circumstances, but I met him in New York and he was all excited that I remembered him, and that I was going into art and I was looking for a job. And he and his brother, Stringbands were just starting a little agency, advertising...

ROBERT BROWN: Stringbands?

DIMITRI HADZI: Stringbands, yes. And they, they hired me. So I worked for $20/week, very little because they were just starting out...

ROBERT BROWN: That work was reasonably compatible, then, with your artwork. I mean with your training at night. It wasn't an utter contrast.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh it was compatible. I was getting an insight into how, in those days they were called commercial artists. Now we call them commercial designers, and I was enjoying it. I was getting quite good at it. Although I, there were alot of things I didn't like about it. Like answering the phone and constant lying, like, "oh, yes, it's on its way!" and you know! (laughs) That was the business. Anyway, I forget how long that job lasted -- close to a year I think. But they had to let me go because they couldn't support me. And they were very upset and sorry because we were very friendly. We worked (together) very well. And they said, "Dimitri, this may be the best thing that could happen to you because you're really a good artist and maybe you should think of seriously being an easel painter, or whatever." So I became an artist's model after that, working at the Brooklyn Museum, posing for housewives and what not.

ROBERT BROWN: Was that easy enough, or just very boring?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it was boring and it was interesting. I make every job interesting. When I was posing at the Brooklyn Museum, I would, on all the easels around me, I would tack up photographs of sculpture. So, as I was rotated, as I was being rotated I would be studying the sculpture. (laughs) Taking advantage of my time! And that was very eratic, also that, being a model, because you couldn't always get a job. And then I became a bus boy because I knew the one thing about working in a restaurant was that you had your food taken care of. I became a bus boy at the Broad Street Club at Wall Street and Broad. A businessmen's luncheon club, and eventually I worked up to a waiter. But then it was time to graduate and the woman I was living with at the time was also an artist -- also at the Brooklyn Museum. She was an excellent cook and I was a good waiter and someone approached us to take over a concession at Woodstock, the famous Woodstock -- which was an artists' colony in those days. I guess it still is. And so we, I quit my job at the Broad Street Club and put all my energy into planning for the summer, for, so we had a ...She was a veteran also, so we cashed our bonds, and whatever we had and bought equipment and spent the summer up in Woodstock, which turned out to be a complete disaster (laughs) !

ROBERT BROWN: What do you mean, in terms of business, or in every way?

DIMITRI HADZI: Financially, yes. We didn't have a, we weren't told that's it's important to have a liquor license. So after a couple of dinners we had to fall back on breakfasts and lunches. But it was wonderful being up there and I was lucky to get the, that was when I found out I got the Fulbright to Greece, so I knew that I was leaving.

ROBERT BROWN: So that was it?

DIMITRI HADZI: That was it, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Could we go back to some of your teachers or fellow students at Cooper Union?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, at Cooper Union.

ROBERT BROWN: Was it a structured program that you were into?

DIMITRI HADZI: Very structured, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you starting at a beginning level?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, oh yes. There were no electives. The only thing you could elect was what you were going into -- Fine Arts or Commercial Art or Architecture. And I think in the first year we had the same courses.

ROBERT BROWN: Who would teach that? Was there a rotation of teachers?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I think it was broken up into several classes that first year, anyway. So there would be, say, different sculptors teaching different classes. My first year and probably, at Cooper Union, I had some of my greatest teachers, who were George Kratina, who's still alive I think, Nick Marcicano, who's also around, a painter. Morris Kantor, who's dead now, and Bob Gwalthmey, whose son is now quite famous as an architect. And my first year with George Kratina, he was probably the most exciting teacher I've had because he, he made everyone feel that they were really doing great things (laughs) !

ROBERT BROWN: What were you studying with him?

DIMITRI HADZI: Sculpture. But he was my inspiration. For now the one thing that seems so important is to encourage the students. Even if they're bad, to really encourage them and make them feel that they're doing something because it's contagious. After a while they really start thinking they are and it really works. It was really astonishing to see what these students turned out in that class. And that's where my interest in architectural sculpture started. Because one of the problems that he gave us was to do a façade for the U.N. building which was going up at that time. And I just have it right here, I'll show it to you later. (I) just recovered it from Brooklyn. I have a waste mould over there -- I'll show it to you later. And I look at it now and I'm quite impressed with what I did because I didn't know anything about modern art or sculpture, but it was pretty good (laughs), I thought. I also did a, this man encouraged such freedom and really triggered off your imagination. I'd never heard of kinetic sculpture. And I did this wire thing with plaster on top which, you could just touch it and it would start oscillating in one direction or two directions and...I have to try to find a photograph. I think that there's a photograph somewhere. But that's all destroyed now.

ROBERT BROWN: He encouraged you, then? He encouraged everybody, but how did he evaluate? Did he differentiate between, among those that weren't very competent and those that...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I'll tell you a very funny thing about this class that was almost...particularly with the last projects...were so (that) everyone was really working and their own personalities were really coming out. They were very individual projects. And I can't honestly say that this one was really bad and that one was lousy and that was brilliant. They were all on a very high level. And the scales were unbelievable. Of course there were some women who were doing big phallic things without knowing they were doing something phallic (laughs). It was enormously impressive what the students did in their first year. We all had common problems at first. We all had to do little figures, let's say, and then make a mould and stuff like that. I forget what the other problem was. And then we did the façade I was telling you about -- architectural façade. And this final project was a free project. You could do what you wanted, and he went to, one thing, he went around and encouraged everyone in their own little directions. And I can't remember how I got onto this motion thing. I first started out with, I wanted to do something with wire. Then I was encouraged to put something on the wire and then we noticed that this thing oscillated and why not do something with that? One thing, step, led to another and we got into this very strange and interesting thing. It was a real kinetic sculpture.

ROBERT BROWN: But you didn't have to spend weeks on figure sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, no. It wasn't academic. But this was the astonishing thing because he never showed us what his work was. So a couple of years later when we kind of dropped in to see him...He'd invited us on a Saturday afternoon to visit him at his studio in Brooklyn. And his work was really very stylized, academic. Sort of National Sculpture Society type of work.

ROBERT BROWN: Like Manship?

DIMITRI HADZI: Manship-type. I remember he did some wonderful wood carvings for railroad stations. Something like that. And then he did a hooded nun, but a very stylized hood. Very fantastic technique. But mostly a kind of stylized style which some of the people at the National Sculpture Society have.

ROBERT BROWN: So it was remarkable then, the way that he...?

DIMITRI HADZI: He just kept it out. No one knew that. How he could encourage such real modern adventurous stuff...

ROBERT BROWN: By the way, were your and your fellow students conscious of, that your kind of wild things were modern at that point? Or did you just...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well we knew that they were modern, but we didn't know much about the history of art or anything. We just knew that they were...I became aware of Henry Moore in that year because in '46, they had the big show at the Museum of Modern Art. And that's interesting too -- to get away from Cooper Union for a minute. One of the things that was good about having these part-time jobs -- particularly later on, was that I could spend alot of time on 57th Street where all the galleries were concentrated and also the museums. And I spent...really knew what was going on. But I remember seeing the Henry Moore show and I said, "Oh, what junk. All those holes!" And they had all these writings on the wall. But I figured there must be something to this man because he's at the Museum and this looks like very serious stuff. So I would go maybe almost every day -- three, four or five times a week. Just go and look and look and look and read these things. And little by little the whole thing took. I realized I'd really learned and was influenced obviously quite a bit by him. That's why I don't have patience with people who just put down modern art or music because they don't put the effort into it. Everything comes the hard way with me, the same with chamber music. I had to listen to it over and over and over until something started.

ROBERT BROWN: What was it that you think you saw at that time in Moore's work?

DIMITRI HADZI: Several things. I was obviously fascinated by his different use of materials. Stone and woodcarvings and the drawings. Well, (and) the philosophical concepts. He was relating the figure to mountains and the truth of materials at that time was very strong, which much later was turned around and negated.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you mean in you?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, in Henry Moore himself. Because he'd talk of the quality of stone and wood and bronze and the certain truth of them. Of course he violated all of those. One knows that in art there are rules, but you always violate them anyway. So it was really a staggering experience. The other place was Kurt Valentin's gallery on 57th Street. I used to go there so often in my army boots and dungarees and t-shirt that, eventually, even Kurt Valentin would sort of smile and bow when I would come in. (laughs) That's where I saw my, I saw some Picassos there and that's where the Lipchitz, I got hooked on Lipchitz there. They used to show alot of his work there. And I saw Calder there and Marino Marini. And that was for me a big temple. I'll never forget the experience. I happened to walk in by chance at an opening -- the Calder exhibition. Of course the gallery wasn't that enormous like the galleries today with their huge spaces. So these big mobiles are swirling around and you had to dodge them to get through. And they were having their cocktails and they were all dressed up and there I was, in my usual t-shirt. So I got a little embarrassed by it so I started walking out and I bumped into one of the mobiles and one of those things fell off -- clank! (laughs) and it was like that scene with Lon Chaney in the "Phantom of the Opera" where this girl takes his mask off while he's playing the organ, he turns around and (laughs) everyone looks. The more I tried to juggle that thing the more it shook. It was real...It was hysterical. I just fled when I finally got that damn thing on.

ROBERT BROWN: And Valentin never appeared himself?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. No, he was in the next room.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you ever have talks with him?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. I never got to talk to him. I wish I'd had money in those days because I'd (have) loved to have bought some of the drawings and prints. They were very reasonable. But I was on fifty-two dollars, twenty dollars a week I think it was, yes. Eventually my dealer in New York, Stephen Radich, he was one of Kurt Valentin's assistants and when Kurt Valentin died, Radich got quite a few of the stock that Valentin had and so I was able to buy some of the things. I got some Picasso prints, some Beckmanns. I even have a Léger lithograph with "dedicated to Kurt."

ROBERT BROWN: Did you like Expressionistic work? Did you like the German Expressionists?

DIMITRI HADZI: No I didn't at the time, as a matter of fact. I saw my first Beckmanns there. And I even met Max Beckmann at the Brooklyn Museum where I also went for a couple of years. That was another thing that I did. I went to the Brooklyn Museum during the day and the Cooper Union at night. It was pretty intense. And my friends were studying with Beckmann or (Ruffino) Tamayo. And I didn't like Beckmann's work, and it's very odd because now I own about sixteen to eighteen Beckmann prints and I went through Germany with Peter Selz when he was collecting Beckmanns for the big Beckmann exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. So I'm really hooked on, I really like Beckmann's work very much. But it took a long...I wasn't really ready for ...I was more

into Picasso and the Cubists at that time.

ROBERT BROWN: Those you could like right away?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And I think perhaps because of my scientific training. I don't know. But even to this day I'm still basically a Cubist. I spent alot of time at the Museum of Modern Art. That was my big training ground as a museum. Much more than the Guggenheim. Well, the Guggenheim then was the, I forget the name now...

ROBERT BROWN: The Museum of Non-Objective Art.

DIMITRI HADZI: The Museum of Non-Objective Art. Right. Yes. And I used to go there quite a bit. That was a fun place. But really the Museum of Modern Art was a real school for me. I spent alot of time there in front of the Picassos, Braques and Juan Gris.

ROBERT BROWN: So museums and galleries, certain galleries were equally important to school?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, absolutely, oh absolutely. And it was fun because my teachers realized that I was spending alot of time there and they'd ask me, "Well, Dimitri, have you seen any good shows lately?" Or we'd go out for beer after class or go watch the boxing matches on t.v. and I'd go out with Marcicano and Kantor. I was twenty-five, I got out when I was thirty. But I was able to participate with these people adn they respected my interests...

ROBERT BROWN: You were a bit older than some of the other students?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, because I was twenty-five and, sure, they were just eighteen or nineteen. But there were a few G.I.'s there and we made a big difference in the class because we really were hustling. We were eager to learn and we weren't afraid to work. And that was really inspirational for the other, for the young kids.

ROBERT BROWN: Were there other teachers that were pretty important to you? You mentioned Kratina as being important.

DIMITRI HADZI: Also Milton Hebald.

ROBERT BROWN: What did he teach?

DIMITRI HADZI: He was, sculpture. Second-year sculpture. And John Hovannis. Those were my three sculpture teachers there. And Hebald was a very good teacher. I also studied with him at the Brooklyn Museum. It was funny how, (I was) working on studies for a stone sculpture. This was the second year at Cooper Union and I was doing rather badly. I'd been so inspired by Kratina and then I was having such trouble in my second year and Hebald would come around and say, "what did you get last year?" And I said, "I got an A." and he'd scratch his head and wonder how I got an A. (laughs) Then I was, through -- it wasn't boredom -- I was just really getting into a rage because I couldn't resolve...I was doing a little study for the Greek Civil War, a monument, with brother killing brother motif. Very cubistic and I just couldn't resolve it. I started very realistically and then, I got so furious and outraged that I took a knife and I just slashed the thing. And there it was! And Hebald passed by and said, "Oh! That's great!" He called out and stopped the class and said, "This is sculpture!" So I got on to another...my life started again as a sculptor.

ROBERT BROWN: But it wasn't quite an accident that you were attacking it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I was attacking it, yes. So I started with wood, to carve that, but I never finished the carving. But anyway, later on I helped Hebald with some of his projectss and the same with Hovannis who was another teacher.

ROBERT BROWN: Was the second year any different from the first except that you had another teacher?

DIMITRI HADZI: It was a different approach, but he really made you feel he had a love for sculpture and plastic quality. He was a very different kind of teacher from Kratina, but equally -- not as inspiring as Kratina, but he was just the right man, after Kratina for me. I think Kratina turned people on more in the first year than, say, Hebald would. Hebald taught me a great deal.

ROBERT BROWN: Was Hebald more deliberate and more accurate?

DIMITRI HADZI: He's really basically, he's also very Lipchitz-oriented and that's where I probably got the influence from him, also. And he hasn't changed very much, I don't think. But his whole attitude is that if he's happy with what he's doing and he's having some financial success, that's enough. He gave up the whole battle of struggling with galleries. Kratina never went to galleries. At least he's quite different from my painter teachers who were more active like Morris Kantor and Marcicano.

ROBERT BROWN: Was there among these men different attitudes about the coming, at this very time, of abstraction coming into prominence? American abstraction, too?

DIMITRI HADZI: Do you mean abstract expressionists? One certainly didn't get the feeling that, in my class, that it was being taken very seriously. Pollock was making a splash. But it wasn't like later on, when in art schools they were all copying the abstract expressionists. We were pretty much cubist-oriented because in creative design, where I can't think of the names of the teachers at the moment, they were very cubist-oriented. So with all the pattern and other things, we were doing, working with flowers or with shells, (we) were always very cubist-oriented. So there was kind of a little underclass war between the studio painting section and the creative design ones. The creative design people treated their thing like Fine Arts and, of course, those easel painters didn't consider that -- "they were decorators..." sort of a thing. But I learned from both. I don't think my fellow students, of course they didn't go to the galleries as much as I did, had any idea. And even then I think I just briefly saw, I saw the first Guston that was in front of the Eighth Street Whitney Museum. That was at the entrance. This first abstract expressionist painting. The dark red center one. That created, it seemed to me, in the ambience, quite a bit of excitement. And I remember alot of young students, probably from other schools, looking at a de Kooning black and white collage adn I'd never heard of de Kooning. But later on, toward the latter part of my, sort of the '49's and fifties, before leaving for Europe. At night, after the class at Cooper Union we would go over to the Cedar Bar and that's when I first saw de Kooning. And I never met him, never talked to him. I was introduced to Franz Kline. All that bunch would be at the Cedar Bar and...

ROBERT BROWN: Well, you just happened to go there because artists, art students went there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well that's where the artists went. And you wanted to hob nob and try to see them, like stars, you know? But they were very regular. They were heavy drinkers and stuff like that.

ROBERT BROWN: People like Kantor and all didn't seem to, at least to you as a student, resent these new stars?

DIMITRI HADZI: I never really discussed that very much with him. Kantor was almost like a solitary painter, I would say. Most of his paintings were based on Monhegan Island adn they were rock formations and stuff like that. He had a grid system which he worked within. But he was a very good solid formal, he was very good on composition. He was very sympathetic. I used to come in very tired from my working as a waiter and he would come over to me and say, "You're doing very well. Go home and sleep." (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: So you finished at Cooper Union in '50 in the spring of 1950 and you graduated with pretty good honors?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I got it with honors. I got two prizes and what not.

ROBERT BROWN: And the Fulbright, you'd already gotten, too?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I was off to Greece. I should mention that the first artist I ever met, was before the war, was...who played a big role in my development, too, was Michael Lekakis, also of Greek extraction. A Greek doctor friend of mine in Brooklyn took me to visit him. And of course I didn't know what the heck it was all about. There were these big wooden carvings that looked like primitive art. And I was in Chemistry at the time of course. So when I came back from the Army and I got into Cooper Union, I went back to see him. And he became kind of my model figure because he was very dedicated, very honest, very hard-working and that was a good model I thought.

ROBERT BROWN: Did he also go look at galleries and things?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. He did. Well that's how I became a collector. He was always...I think he was at the Bertha Schaffer Gallery at the time and he was venturing into bronzes. He was mostly a wood carver. I used to have a little owl made out of pine, which I have here now. I'd always wanted to buy it and he wanted sixty-five dollars for it, which was alot of money for me at that time. One day I'm on my way to Bond Brothers in Times Square to buy a suit and two pairs of pants for thirty-five dollars. I had my thirty-five bucks with me and I thought I'd stop in and see Mike. And Mike was just groaning about where he was going to get the money he had to cast these things for the show. He had these waxes and these figures. So I said, "Well Michael, I have thirty-five dollars if you want to sell that figure." (laughs) So I bought the little sculpture for thirty-five dollars and I didn't get the suit. That was my first acquisition. That's why I don't have any patience with people who complain about not having money to buy things. If you like something, you find ways to do it. You just give up a few things. To me the suit was very important, especially with two pairs of pants. So you just tighten the belt, you know? And that helped him, he never forgot that.

ROBERT BROWN: You make do with what you have.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

(Sides 3 and 4 of 8).

DIMITRI HADZI: So I can't think of anything else at the moment about Cooper Union.

ROBERT BROWN: But you liked it there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, I loved it.

ROBERT BROWN: It was a really good time for you.

DIMITRI HADZI: I loved it, yes. I made alot of good friends there. It was rather exciting because you knew you were at one of the best schools in the country. And it was hard to get in and hard to stay in and the teachers were very encouraging. I got very good grades there. Everyone who has gone to Cooper Union really loves the place.

ROBERT BROWN: Did everyone teach, almost all the people there were involved in teaching...they weren't administrators?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh no, they weren't administrators. The thing about Cooper Union -- they never had that much money so the people who taught there taught more because they loved the place. Of course the students were so stimulating and exciting to work with. I had a friend or two who had to quit because they just couldn't support their families. so they went to Columbia or a place like that but they all missed Cooper Union. There was something about the selection of the Cooper Union students...(There was) something special.

ROBERT BROWN: You left there in '50. Were there any European instructors coming in at that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, there was just...at the Brooklyn Museum there was Tamayo and Beckmann. John Ferrin just came from Paris. I also worked a summer with Ralston Crawford, who just died recently, and he was very exciting -- for me anyway. He was very encouraging. I had very good relationships with my instructors. They all took me seriously. They always sensed someone -- like I do now. I know the ones who are really going to be dedicated artists and you try to help them as much as you can.

ROBERT BROWN: Was the Brooklyn Museum School as good a set up as Cooper Union?

DIMITRI HADZI: (It was) very different because (at) Cooper Union you didn't just get in by paying. That's where some of my G.I. bill money went. But I also got a fellowship there to study engraving with Petterdy from Yale. So I worked with Manfredo Schwartz, who was a very good teacher for me, Ralston Crawford, Hebald, those were the main...and then Petterdy. Now I regret not working with Tamayo or Beckmann. I had the opportunity but...

ROBERT BROWN: You didn't care for them?

DIMITRI HADZI: I didn't care for their work, no. Of course now I love both of them (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: Did it look too crude to you at that point?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I guess it looked crude and...but it was also there that one started seeing some of the influence of abstract expressionism. There were some people working more abstract -- I think in John Ferrin's class. I think in Tamayo's class he was really restricted to a more figurative kind of painting and one of the things that really put me off was too many people copying.
Well, they went to work with these people because they liked their work and they wanted to imitate it. So Beckmann's students' work looked like Beckmann's and Ferrin's was like, Ferrin's was more of an open kind of thing. And Tamayo's students looked more like Tamayo. But now I realize there's nothing wrong with that. You learn by imitation and I was just super critical at that time.

ROBERT BROWN: You thought you'd find that some students never move out from under?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. That's what was happening. Some of them just stayed so...

ROBERT BROWN: If you had enough commitment you might -- you probably would have...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. The Brooklyn Museum was a fun place because the difference there was, as I've said, that the students paid there. But what was exciting was that -- besides the instructors, August, Augustus Peck did a remarkable job of getting those giants there. If you can imagine the Brooklyn Museum having Beckmann, Tamayo, Ferrin, Crawford, you name it, down to Ruben Sand. And the students were mostly G.I.'s and they were really eager, aggressive and that's where I saw my first big canvasses. Harry Jackson was one of them, do you know Harry Jackson? He does sort of Remington cowboy, cowboys and indians. He's enormously successful. He has his own foundry and whatnot, now.

ROBERT BROWN: And he was one of the students there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. But he was a real abstract, a very good abstract painter. He was our cowboy. Our "Streets of Laredo" boy. But he became very academic and a very good businessman, too.

ROBERT BROWN: When did you, did somebody encourage you to apply for this European fellowship?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I should say something about this, this is where Hebald played a big role also because I was really spending more time with painting. I had two nights of painting and one night of sculpture. I was more of a painter, let's say.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you do any figurative things at that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Ah they were mostly...yes. I remember there was a storefront (in a) Cubistic style and then we did some owls and circus scenes. But very formal type things. Not much figures, no. And then the sculpture I was doing, I was doing at Cooper Union. But the painting I was doing I was also doing at the Brooklyn Museum. I'm getting a little confused about what I was doing at that time and it was half and half toward 1949 and '50. I was doing half painting and half sculpture. But I thought I'd try for a Fulbright in Greece in painting. And then when I asked Milton Hebald for a recommendation, he said, very wisely, he says, "You probably won't get it because who goes to Greece for painting? If you're going to try for painting you should go to France or maybe Germany or England. But certainly not Greece. You should try for sculpture if you want to go to Greece."

ROBERT BROWN: Why did you want to go to Greece?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, because I spoke the language and that was one of the requirements for a Fulbright, so I switched it to sculpture.

ROBERT BROWN: (garbled) that huh?

DIMITRI HADZI: So Hebald played. Then I helped Hebald later on. I paid him back by telling him about the American Academy in Rome so he eventually became a Fellow there. So help one, you know, it works back and forth. So I left for Europe on the La Guardia with my...that was my first ship, because it was my first Transatlantic voyage, because I was on a ship going across the Pacific. And I went to Athens and I went to the Polytechnic there. And they didn't know what to do with me because I'd already graduated from a school. But you had to be attached to a school so I went there and decided to -- well my project was to study stone carving. And that was interesting because -- well interesting and not interesting because the training there was extremely academic and not even...when we worked from the model you went up to the model and measured the model and you brought back the measurements, and you stuck toothpicks in the clay. And the training we had at the Brooklyn Museum and at Cooper Union was to work by eye - no measuring. You would make a control once in a while with calibers. So they did that for about three to four years and the other thing that they did for carving, they copied the plaster copies from antiquity.

ROBERT BROWN: So this was pretty daunting to you, then?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I'd talk about Henry Moore and I'd brought books with me to show the other students and the instructor there, Tombros. who we all knew in Greece -- he's dead now, said, "That's good, Henry Moore is very good but after four years at the Polytechnic you can do what you want to do but now you have to do all this training.." Of course what happens in four years, you just become, they kill any kind of creative spirit. It was deadly. And I knew it (from) going to a great school like Cooper and I could see in what they were doing there and the good students, the ones, the creative ones quit after a year or two because they could see they were prisoners. And this business of doing this for four years of that and then you do what you want, well, you're dead. So, anyway, one day Tombros comes in and says, "Ah, I've got good news for you. Your friend is coming." I said, "what friend?" "This Henry, Henry Moore's coming!"
"Oh!," so I said, "what's happening?" So he said, "well, there's going to be a big exhibition of his work here." So I, obviously, being a Fulbright scholar, I was given an invitation to the opening. So that was my first meeting with Henry...when I just saw him in London. But that's not in Greece, that was many years later. And that was very exciting and I try to remember which came first, whether it was the exhibition or he came to the school. I think the exhibition was first. And of course not many people spoke English there. It was an enormous exhibition, a retrospective. It was...the British consul was sending around. I was excited because it was the second time I'd seen a big show of Moore's. The first time was the Museum of Modern Art in '46 and this would be '50. And Henry Moore was just wonderful because he'd be involved with all these dignitaries and whatnot and I'd be hanging around the wood sculpture and every time he'd...every once in a while he'd just take a break and come over and talk to me (laughs) So I was absolutely thrilled talking with this man and feeling this wooden sculpture, the reclining figure. He was so nice.

ROBERT BROWN: You would ask him?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, and then of course, he would be pulled away to meet some ambassador or something like that.
He was delighted that I was the only young artist there, a student. Because those things are awfully official. And then it was arranged that he was to visit the art school, the Polytekneon, and he came down and I told him...He was just really appalled by the, you know, the carving really technically very good training but there was no encouragement about creativity or creating. they carved all these...I started carving a kouros figure and I worked on that for about half a year and then I found out that I couldn't take it. All these finished objects became property of the government which sold them to businesses or banks or sent them out to embassies. So I just dropped it -- never finished it. Too bad, but, I was looking forward to bringing it back to the States -- this wonderful sixth-century Kouros, you know?

ROBERT BROWN: So at least you feel you would have done a good rendering?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Because I think that even now I, I probably can't do it in this program that we have in the Carpenter Center, but if I was to set up a program somewhere I would absolutely recommend at least copying at least one object.

ROBERT BROWN: (Because) you learn so much about it?

DIMITRI HADZI: You do, yes. I copied two things. I copied that (Kouros), and then in clay I copied the horse's head from the Parthenon pedimental group. I learned more by copying that and also that figure. But if you do that for four years, it's just too much. So I think if you just copy a few things and you'll really understand. I couldn't believe the geometry in that horse's head. That famous big head.

ROBERT BROWN: Did that take up alot of your time at the Polytechnic?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, I went there every day. I made very good friends there. When I wasn't there I was either visiting museums or traveling around the country. While I was there I also went to Turkey and Egypt. And that's where I became...I wish I knew more about architecture then, but...Oh I know what happened about the Egyptian trip. Are you interested in the Egyptian trip?

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, sure.

DIMITRI HADZI: I made friends with the people at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. And that was my first introduction to classicists and art historians and all that. And I made friends with two of them who wanted to take a trip to Egypt. So we planned on this trip and we went to the Egyptian consulate to get the visa to go there. It was absolutely forbidden. And we could not because what happened was that Queen Frederika, at the time, was at a party at which King Farouk made a pass at her (laughs). she told her husband King Constantine or King George -- I forget which -- and of course that broke, it got into the New York Times, Time Magazine and the press and all relationships between Greece and Egypt were stopped momentarily. So we couldn't get a visa. Even though we were Americans. So our next choice was to go to Turkey. So we went to see Ayia Sophia, and we went to Ankora also. And it was my idea, I said, "why don't we try to get a visa from Turkey? They don't know we're from Greece."

ROBERT BROWN: You were with these scholars?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. So Spiro Brionus and Bob Will, I guess one is a Byzantine scholar now and Fred Will is at Wellesley or some place. A poet, I think, and scholar -- a philosopher. And it was a great idea except that we needed photographs. So we went to Taxim Square. It's an enormous square and there was a photographer with a tripod and a hood and he took these pictures of us and we got on the tram and we were headed toward the Consulate and I thought I'd look at the pictures and admire them. And they were slowly darkening! So I said, "let's hurry!" (laughs) So we made it in time and we got visas and because of my quick thinking we were able to get to Egypt. So we went to Cairo and down to Luxor and it was really just a staggering experience. I'd love to go back now.

ROBERT BROWN: So the architecture as much as the sculpture in those
countries impressed you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, scale and the use of materials and the reliefs. It was really something great for a New York kid to be experiencing.

ROBERT BROWN: As you look back what were some of the effects that looking at all that ancient art had on you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I guess a sense of flaw for one thing...From a formal point of view it was very...The structure and of course, now it's showing up in my big granite pieces. Also the sense of mystery, the Egyptian, the whole Egyptian culture is still today a great mystery to me as it is to many people. But I think the scale was

just very impressive to me. I even, in those days, I don't know if you're allowed to do it now, I don't know if they stopped it. But I climbed up to the top of a pyramid in Giza, Cheops, to...just to, not from a romantic or anything...just to feel the sense of scale climbing up that thing, boulder by boulder, and then, once on top, I could see how everything was laid out.
I was always interested in scale and orientation (to see) how things were laid out and then to experience the interior of the pyramid where you walk up this inclined plane. I was just dazzled by the workmanship of the walls, the granite, finish, between one block to the next. Why I said about mystery...this enormous pyramid, this mysterious incline leading to a very small chamber where the sarcophagus was. They still haven't solved all those problems and...or the mysteries as far as I'm concerned. So those were all the things which triggered my imagination and my architectural interest.

ROBERT BROWN: How did this compare with your reactions to the classical Greek sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, classical Greek sculpture was a big surprise for me because at Cooper Union...I mean it was a great school but they never talked about the past. I used to go to the museums on my own and...but we had the bas reliefs from the Panathenaic procession from the Acropolis, the Parthenon, all around the rooms and no one ever pointed to them. so we just assumed they were just academic work. And then when I went to Greece and saw them I realized they were not very academic. They were great sculptures. That was a big revelation -- that classical Greek sculpture and architecture was really great.

ROBERT BROWN: What made it seem great to you -- classical Greek sculpture -- and not simply academic?

DIMITRI HADZI: That's a good question. There's a certain vitality. Even though the proportions are very close to nature -- you know obviously the horses and the figures and the...there's something about the big X, the unknown, what is it that separates that from academic...? And I think that one of the things is that there's certain vitality that you can't put your finger on because you know...Is it the proportions, what is it? There's some mystery there and you can see just by looking at some government procession or government relief in Washington -- you can see how static they are and no matter how much movement they try to get in, it's dead, and this thing has a certain life to it. So that's one way in which I differentiate between academic work and something that's really alive and creative. But of course the early stuff, like most sculptors and artists, they prefer the archaic because it's got more tension and whatnot. But I like good classical work, too. As a matter of fact I've gotten to like through the years, because of this prejudice everyone has toward the early stuff, I've gotten to like quite a bit of the Hellenistic work, too. And, obviously, because of my interest in the Baroque, it's moved...But, now, of course, I'm getting away from that getting back to simple, or getting towards simple shapes and forms. But I think some of the Hellenistic work is very exciting, too.

ROBERT BROWN: And you liked it then, to a degree?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not as much then, I liked the classical and archaic, then. But the Hellenistic came much later. Mostly, living in Rome, I became familiar with...I got to the British Museum and I saw the Pergamom sculptures -- I went to Berlin, and I saw the Temple there, and they are very dramatic. That's another ball game completely. It's very different. The scale is different and everything. And the other thing that impressed me enormously in Greece was the early cultures at Mycenae and Tiryns and that's all coming back now in my work now, I think. And people say, "Yes, Stonehenge." But I knew more about cyclopean walls in those cultures than I knew about the northern dolmens and all that. Actually, it's only in the last few years that I've really become familiar with those...

ROBERT BROWN: Northern things?

DIMITRI HADZI: Northern things, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: When you were there, in that year, you were able to travel and see Mycenae and all those places?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, I did alot of traveling, yes. I had a, I forget who the director at the American School of Classical Studies was. I think he's in Cleveland now. I don't know if he's still alive actually, but all my friends wanted me to join their trip around the Peloponnese because everyone --each person did their number there. I mean if you were a sculpture specialist, you'd talk on sculpture, if you were a literature (specialist), you would...you know. So in all these trips around Olympia and the Peloponnese in general, everyone had to say something about...that was related to his field. So they thought that it would be a great idea if I came along as a sculptor. (So I said,) "I'd love to." So this director couldn't see why I'd want to go and said, "well, you do contemporary sculpture, I don't see the use of you going on this trip." Can you believe that? (laughs) I hated that man and if I could remember his name, so I could mention it in the mike...! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: But the students could see the virtue of your coming along?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, sure. Because we used to go up to the Parthenon and they were always interested in what I had to say because I'd see it with a different eye and also in (terms of) techniques. I was very disappointed. It was an opportunity to hear about the literature, the history, everything. It was a two week trip -- fantastic. So I had to do all of that on my own which was not the same thing.

ROBERT BROWN: You made some Greek friends too, didn't you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Among the fellow students or...?

DIMITRI HADZI: The fellow students, yes. I wish I could track them down now because they were very important while I was living there. I realize how generous these Greeks are...(telephone interruption) To give you an example of their generosity, one of my friends in mid-winter -- winter can be very severe in Greece -- He came in wearing an army field jacket. An old war surplus type. I admired it and I asked him where he got it because I had left mine behind in New York and the next thing you knew he just took it off his back and gave it to me (laughs) and he walked home. It's impossible to give a Greek back anything, so he went home in his shirtsleeves in winter! That will give you an idea. I finally, I had to -- two of my friends -- I invited them to Mykonos. Mykonos, because the government has studios. There are four places in Greece where artists can go and stay for several weeks and work there. And so I invited two of them to Mykonos for two weeks and no arguments about payment. I'm taking, inviting you. Because it's hard as heck to pick up a bill in that country -- they're always so incredible. So I took them to Mykonos for two weeks before Mykonos got so popular.

ROBERT BROWN: And they were very poor weren't they?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes.

ROBERT BROWN: They were just recovering from a war then?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I think my friend, Kostos had T.B. and they were poverty stricken. (It was) very bad, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: The war was over, was that right?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well, the civil (war) had just ended too. I would take these trips and the buses would be stopped every once in a while and identifications checked and whatnot because there were still elements floating aorund -- communists and whatnot. One felt that there was...that the Civil War was almost still on.

ROBERT BROWN: Was there a felling of repression among the people?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it depends which side you were on, see? I was a little upset because both my friends were very left and one of them as a matter of fact was a partisan who fought side by side with the British and then later on fought against the British in Athens so I found it very hard to put these things together.

ROBERT BROWN: Was there still an element of rebelliousness among some of those students there? Even unconsciously?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, I don't think so.

ROBERT BROWN: Most of them stuck out the four years?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. They weren't... the two students I was talking about, they eventually quit because (they had) strong egos, (were) very strongly motivated and they couldn't see spending their time there doing that. Occasionally I run into people who remembered me. I'd have never remembered some of the students -- there were other classes and they remembered (me) because I was the American there, and in case I ever meet an artist they say, "I remember you at the Polytekneon. You were there..." And...

ROBERT BROWN: What would they go on to do if they stayed in Greece?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well they, some of them go, went to Paris, or go to Italy. Quite a few of them came to Italy to work because there weren't very many opportunities in Greece at that time. And they'd try to get scholarships -- Italian government scholarships to come. Some of them went into restoration or...

ROBERT BROWN: Well at the end of this year, '50-'51, I guess, did you know what you'd be doing next? Did you think you'd be coming back to New York?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I was saving my money. Because I was getting something like, what was it, $200 a month, which was an awful lot of money, particularly in Greece, then. And when I was there it was something like

30,000 drachmas to the dollar, which sounds like alot. But I'd go with a big suitcase and collect my $200 (laughs). So I was stashing that away, living very modestly and everything was cheap anyway and I was hoping to stay on a couple more years. And I wasn't as smart as my, you see some of my academic friends were very clever. They never told me that you could try for a renewal. If you're in the academic world you know about these things but since I wasn't really in the academic world I didn't know about this. And they said, did you try for the renewal? I said, "what renewal?" And they said, "well you know if you have a Fulbright you can try for another year." So I ran down to the office and they said, "well it's too late for that, but maybe we can get you an extension." So they got me a three month extension for the summer. But I could have had, being the first Fulbright artist, I could have had that second year very easily. But then, everything works out. One day I was at the embassy and by chance I looked at the bulletin board and I noticed that there was a (notice) that was addressed to the Veterans of World War II that whoever was entitled to the G.I. bill had to sign up with a registered school by July 23rd and this was July 20th, I think. Three days to go and Athens wasn't set up for the G.I. bill. Obviously, because of the Civil War and whatnot, and the closest place was Italy and Rome. So I had three years of G.I. bill time coming so I hop a plane, sign up and I spent a day in Rome, two days, signed up and flew back to Athens and I was enrolled in some...So that terminated my...I spent the summer in Greece and that terminated my stay. Otherwise I would have stayed on for who knows maybe forever. So that's how I got into...I never expected to go to Italy.

ROBERT BROWN: But you felt on the other hand that you wanted to look alot in Greece and maybe work there at some point?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, sure. Because I was comfortable with the language and I liked the people and the food. But it seems it was one of those things that really worked out for the best because I think I, well who knows? It's hard to say but I think I probably developed quicker being in Italy, being exposed to Italian culture, the Renaissance and the Baroque and the --also much more active contemporary movement. And also much more easier to get around, to get to Germany and France and other places than Greece was. So it was one of those you know, luck plays such a remarkable thing in one's life -- first meeting these people at the YMHA (Young Men's Hebrew Association) and then seeing that bulletin board (laughs).

This is the second interview with Dimitri Hadzi, Robert Brown, interviewer. Cambridge, MA, March 3, 1981.

ROBERT BROWN: We've talked now about your time in Greece and the circumstances of your coming to Rome. And that was about 1951 or so?

DIMITRI HADZI: 1951. That's right and I think I might have mentioned that I didn't have much of an idea of ending up in Italy. I was planning to stay on in Greece and once I did get to Rome, I went to the, on the G.I. bill I had to enroll in a school. And I went to several schools, but the main one was the Museo e scuola dei ars e industriale which was an industrial arts school at which I learned about ceramics, jewelry making, but mostly wax technique. And it was an interesting experience because most of the students were very young. They ranged from about nine to eighteen and it was a wonderful school in which they taught everything -- welding, metal raising and one had to attend in order to collect the G.I. bill, but I was really interested in learning this. There were many people who were on the G.I. bill who didn't attend; they just went there to collect their check every month. But I thought it was a wonderful opportunity, first of all, to get to know Italians better and to learn some of their crafts. And I guess the weather had a great deal to do with...how it got me involved in pottery because the place was very cold -- enormous studios with one pot-bellied stove in the center, and the only way to keep warm was to work on a kick wheel and dip your fingers in the warm water and just raise one pot after another just to keep warm (laughs). So what was amusing was that most Italians have enormous gifts with their hands adn those little kids could really raise pots with no difficulty at all and they would just gather around me and watch me raise this wavering thing and I was a center of amusement. But they were very patient with me.

ROBERT BROWN: Had you gotten somewhat interested in ceramics?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I learned a little about repoussee technique there and I must say that the climate was just wonderful -- I don't mean the temperature climate, but (it was) shortly after the war and Americans were very well-liked and a kind of curiosity and they were fascinated that an American would come to Italy to study. So they were very friendly and helpful.

ROBERT BROWN: And these were really very skilled masters?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, absolutely. Yes. They were professionals who put in a few hours a week teaching.

(End of side 3/of 8)
(Side 4/of 8. Interview continues.)

DIMITRI HADZI: ...and also there were some people like Fascini and Greco -- people like that with big reputations who would also teach there.

ROBERT BROWN: Were they sculptors?

DIMITRI HADZI: They were sculptors, yes. And...

ROBERT BROWN: Were they fairly conservative, though, in their tastes?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, not really. Actually, mostly, the artists who taught ceramics and sculpture were mostly leftists. And I remember that Leoncello was a communist -- he was the only one who kind of looked at me a little askance because I was an American. He was doing sort of figurative, they were abstracts but always the partisans...big reliefs in ceramics, ceramic technique of the partisans fighting the Germans, etc., etc. Which was also a theme which was quite popular and fresh in the minds of the Italians then. There was Cartuso of course the famous Forse ardientina near the Appian Way where the...

ROBERT BROWN: The massacre?

DIMITRI HADZI: They massacred 350 odd people and they did a most remarkable tomb there where Mirko did the gates and perhaps it's still the most moving monument that I know of.

ROBERT BROWN: You were the beneficiary, though, of the artisan tradition continued in Italy. If you wanted to learn a certain technique there were masters who could teach you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And you did jewelry making too?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was interested in repoussee. It always depended on, to a great extent, who was teaching at the time. And when I was there, there were a few people who were very good repoussee people -- you know, hammering metal in reverse and they encouraged me and I learned quite a bit in the repoussee technique. And repoussee technique was very popular at that time. Afro and Mirko -- that was before they became very popular -- earned quite a bit of income by making jewelry.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you working precious metal?

DIMITRI HADZI: Brass (laughs). Don't forget I was on the G.I. bill! But occasionally I would get some silver which was quite cheap --but one started out with brass and started out with very elementary exercises.

ROBERT BROWN: Then you did the lost wax technique?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes I learned the lost wax technique there. I did a Roman cat and I used pretty much the same techniques as (in) raising pottery. I created this cat by working from the inside and pushing the forms out, in wax that is. I had it cast and it was admired by the professors there and I was very excited because it was one of my first bronzes of course.

ROBERT BROWN: But this was something that you particularly wanted to do of the three things you did there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, yes. I must preface this by saying that, when I come to think of it, that wasn't really the first school I went to. When I flew into Rome to sign up for a school I met some Americans who were going to, I don't remember the name of it, it was a private studio at which occasionally a person like Afro would come for a critique and whatnot. And it was run by the widow of a painter whose name escapes me at the moment and I went there and that was a kind of...there were some serious students, but most of them were really goofing off there. And I was, I made some good friends there but I became rather disenchanted with it -- I was wasting my money there, I mean the government's money and my own time. And that's how I went to the Museo Tesconduciale because where all these various techniques were...

ROBERT BROWN: There weren't the distractions...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: You began going out to exhibitions and getting to know various artists in Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Of course I was looking forward to seeing more of the work of Marino Marini, Afro and Mirko, who were showing...I'd seen their work in New York at the Catherine Viviano Gallery on 57th Street and Marino's work of course at Curt Valentin. And so that whole Italian, Italian art was in those days quite popular and people were getting to Rome quite often and bringing back works by these people. That's all finished now. American chauvinism has taken over (laughs). Alot of good things are happening in Italy but we don't know about them anymore.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you then get to go meet some of these people?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, it was very easy to meet them because it was just like there were films...(telephone interruption).
Everything was relatively small scale at that time and the big meeting place was...two meeting places: via Veneto, which became quite popular later on for the film people, but Piazza del Popolo, Rosatti's was the meeting place and you just went there for a coffee if you could afford it. I think I bought myself a coffee once a week or twice a week there. But there was everyone there -- Fellini, Carl Levi, Afro, Mirko. That was the collecting place of movie stars and it was just one big intellectual circle there. It was just the most amazing thing. Now I realize how fortunate I was to have experienced this. And through there of course, little by little one met everyone there.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you get into this group pretty well? Did you acquire Italian pretty quickly?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, pretty slow on the Italian, but the Italians are not like the French, they're pretty sympathetic and they...if they admire your work and your energy and your curiosity then, they are much more friendly. I was well-liked from early because they saw I was serious and I took up with some of these people I would meet at the foundry and they would see that I was a serious dedicated artist so...It was a very exciting time and there was also some of those trattorias which had a prezzo fixo, fixed price, 350 lire, which was about eighty cents then, where you could have a complete dinner for that and you ate at communal tables and that was another way of meeting...of course many foreigners were there -- not only Americans but English, German, and that was for me also a very exciting time.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you get to become particular friends with any other artists at this time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I met Bernie Childs, who's in New York now. Meg Greenfield of Newsweek's a good friend, was one of them, my table companions, a very good friend. Frank Monaco, who's a photographer in London. There were all sorts of people, it was just really remarkable. That's all gone too of course, that type of...everyone was poor, everyone was in the same boat, it was marvelous.

ROBERT BROWN: They were accessible, partly because they were poor?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: What kind of work were you doing? You stayed at the Museo Industriale for a couple of years off and on?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And then I met a New England artist, Bill Compton. I think he's a Franciscan or something now. Do you know much about Bill?

ROBERT BROWN: No.

DIMITRI HADZI: He's from Boston. I think he studied with Demitrus , too. Anyway, he was quite well known...there was a big article on him with color plates in Life Magazine at the time, this would be, what? '52, '51, '53 and he was moving up to Assissiand he was getting rid of his studio and someone at one of those meetings at the Piazza del Popolo mentioned that and I went and spoke to Bill and I was able to acquire his studio which was on the top floor of a...sort of a penthouse studio. It leaked and was cold and all that and he left alot of unfinished paintings behind. And he painted on masonite and I shouldn't mention this, which I used to keep the rain out (laughs). I put them up to plug up the ceiling. And I haven't seen what's happened to Compton. Occasionally I read something about him. But I thought that since you're handling the New England area, I thought you might.

ROBERT BROWN: Had you gotten to know him a bit?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: What was he like?

DIMITRI HADZI: Now I see he's quite typically New England. Intellectually oriented, sort of... Well he's religious, in an odd way which of course was what happened. But I thought he was a little on the strange side. I think he was a friend of Bob Cook's -- he was another New England artist who was living in Boston. He studied with Demitrius also.

ROBERT BROWN: But you now had a studio?

DIMITRI HADZI: So I had the studio, which was built by a woman who was a Sunday painter. It was something that was built on top the roof and the john was, of course, the terrace. So on rainy days you thought twice about

going out there (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: You weren't able to do much casting were you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, I didn't do any casting there. The casting was always done at the foundry. But what I did was that I started working in wax and (did) lots of drawings and that's where the film, the film that Peter Hollander made was done in that studio.

ROBERT BROWN: How did that come about?

DIMITRI HADZI: He was on a Fulbright and he just finished his Fulbright and had some money left over and he was interested in making films and he had his, lots of film left over or something. And I met him at Piazza d' Espagna and he'd heard about me and he said, "I'll make a deal with you. If you can put me up in your studio, for a month, I'll do a film on you." He was interested in my work, actually, but he had no place to stay so he slept on the floor and he made tea every morning and he followed me around and it was quite a charming little film, actually. I just spoke to Peter the other day at the U.N.. He's a big shot there now.

ROBERT BROWN: In cultural affairs?

DIMITRI HADZI: I don't think it's just cultural. It's the filming, the film section or something like that.

ROBERT BROWN: What sort of things could people see of yours at that point? These wax studies?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, little wax studies, and little by little, I would cast. And I was in a group show. Fellow artists have always helped me get into galleries. My New York gallery now was due to Ed Joby, the painter, mentioning to Gruenebaum that I might be available. He was looking for a sculptor. And the same thing with...I was invited to the Schneider Gallery in Rome by two other artists. It was Salvador Meo and hmm...who was the other one? I forget now.

ROBERT BROWN: But you were in a group show in Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, that was the first time I ever exhibited.

ROBERT BROWN: Where was that?

DIMITRI HADZI: Schneider Gallery.

ROBERT BROWN: Schneider Gallery, that was about '56?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh no, that was earlier. It must have been '54 or so. That was quite successful. I sold a few thingsa nd robert Schneider invited me to have my first one man show.

ROBERT BROWN: That was a few years later?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Schneider Gallery was a pretty prominent gallery in Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. It was indeed. Now it's (having) bad times. But it was one of the real leading galleries. Bob Schneider was also a Fulbright, an older man who, I think he was in Italian literature and I think he taught at Columbia and then he decided to stay on in Rome and he started (writing) film scripts and whatnot and then he got involved with Mirko and Calye and I guess they must have talked himn into running a gallery. And the gallery was extremely interesting and successful, well Mirko and Calye were sort of directing and helping him. But then, of course Schneider thought that he could do without them (laughs)...and lost ground, I thought.

ROBERT BROWN: How would they help?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh they would, since Schneider didn't know very much about who the artists were in Italy -- because he really helped bring in lots of interesting people. Alot of leftists of course. It was an extremely active gallery...and it was there that I met Sophia Loren there and the whole crew from "Three Coins in the Fountain" and Rome was like that and you'd see these people walking like Ingrid Bergman I met there.

ROBERT BROWN: So it was a fashionable set but they weren't exclusive. They didn't...

DIMITRI HADZI: No. You'd see them walking down the street just like anyone else. That was before the papparazzi became so ambitious and...

ROBERT BROWN: Real pests.

DIMITRI HADZI: Pests, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Celebrities had to seclude themselves.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, before, no one, well occasionally someone would take a picture but they weren't pursued the way, you know...

ROBERT BROWN: You mentioned about leftism and about leftists at that time. Was that really a predominant thing? Was there a great deal of political talk? Did it affect, quite a bit, your life?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not at all. I was never left and I was always a little suspicious of them anyway (laughs) but alot of the artists were, and still are, I think after the Hungarian revolt -- I think alot of them just dropped out. They were completely disenchanted with communism. But...

ROBERT BROWN: But you really weren't a political person at that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: No.

ROBERT BROWN: You were serious about your study and your...

DIMITRI HADZI: And I think, a very chauvinistic American (laughs). I was not, I think I mentioned this, I was not and never considered myself an expatriate because I knew alot of expatriates who really disliked America. And I didn't dislike it, I mean America gave me everything I had.

ROBERT BROWN: Was Schneider himself an expatriate, more of that type?

DIMITRI HADZI: No he...he just liked living there. I don't think he had any strong feelings about...he wasn't anti-American. He liked it because it was a nice place to live and work. He was getting alot of things done.

ROBERT BROWN: Was he very effective? I mean, would he promote your work?

DIMITRI HADZI: He was, for a while, yes. I don't know, the whole thing, everything changed as the gallery became more prominent he started to rent shows and when you start doing that, then the quality drops.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you mean that shows were sent over or...?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, what I meant by that is that someone could buy an exhibition, you see, instead of just being invited.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: So then it became really commercial.

ROBERT BROWN: And it was about that time that you were married? Or that you got married? In '54?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. My G.I. bill was just getting...and I was getting thrown out...Everything was happening at once. I was still on the G.I. bill and I was getting thrown out of my studio, and for about a year or so I was seeing this attractive intelligent woman who was on a Fulbright also. But she, she had the Italian Fulbright, I had the Greek Fulbright. She was Martha Leeb, who was an art historian, who had studied at N.Y.U. and got her Ph.D. from Yale. And we got married at the Campidoglio in Rome. A real Italian wedding. And she, being a Fulbright, was living at the American Academy. So I was invited up there. I was the first husband brought up there (laughs). So we lived up there for a couple of years. I had, Roberts -- Laurence Roberts was the director of the American Academy at that time and that was an incredibly exciting time because I didn't have a fellowship. I was moved from one studio to another. So I had about five or six studios there. And Mr. Roberts was very generous and let me stay there. But it was a time when the Roberts had many parties and dinners to meet and mix these various well-known, gifted people with the Fellows. They weren't students, there were Fellows there. I met Marini there -- Marino Marini, Henry Moore, Stravinsky, right down the line, all these giants (laughs).

(End of Side 4).
(Sides 5 and 6 of 8)

DIMITRI HADZI: I think we should talk perhaps about the Schneider Gallery and the Radich Gallery.

ROBERT BROWN: We were last talking about your coming to live at the American Academy in Rome after you were married you got a studio there and what were some of the highlights.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well some of the...besides meeting some of those giants. Working with Walmar Ramish who was

from the Rhode Island School of Design. He was working on a huge commission for Philadelphia. So that gave me an opportunity to work on a large scale sculpture.
The other highlight of course, also a turning point in my career, was the meeting of Andrew Ritchie who was at the Museum of Modern Art at the time. And Mr. Roberts suggested he see my work and he did come see it and he seemed to be quite impressed and I thought that was quite nice. But the following morning in the courtyard he asked me if I would be interested in showing for the New Talent Exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. Of course that was terribly exciting, to be asked that, and of course that led to many other things - the meeting with Stephen Radich and my first show in New York.

ROBERT BROWN: What were you doing then? Were you doing things in wax or small bronzes?

DIMITRI HADZI: It was mostly small bronzes, yes. I think I was just going through a transition between the figurative and the abstract at the time.

ROBERT BROWN: The New Talent Show in 1956, or '55?

DIMITRI HADZI: '56, right.

ROBERT BROWN: It was very important, then. That was your first exposure in America, really.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes it was and actually, I'm trying to remember which, if (the) Seiferheld show came first or not.

ROBERT BROWN: No, that was a little after, in '59.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, that's right. Well the New Talent Show was very exciting for me, being in the Museum of Modern Art and also gave me a chance to see my father, almost for the last time before he died.

ROBERT BROWN: You came over for the show?

DIMITRI HADZI: I came over for the show and I think it was one of my first trips back to America.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you meet some people that became important at that time? Was Ritchie there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Not only that but I had, I think, around six or seven pieces and they were all sold out and it was interesting,...was that the collections were quite good. David Rockefeller bought a piece, Mrs. Rockefeller, John D., the third, bought one of the big ones. It was $1000, which was an awful lot of money at that time. So it was enormously successful and while the show was on, one day, I went to Martha Jackson's Gallery - I thought I'd catch up on what was going on in the New York scene. And I was admiring a head of Stravinsky there. A head of Stravinsky by Marini, and it's hard to believe it was only $1500 at that time (laughs). And so I was really studying it and I started talking with a young man at the desk there, and through the conversation I told him I was in the New Talent Show and he came, this young man, and later he told me - I ought to send Stephen Radich over. He's directing the Martha Jackson Gallery and he's interested in sculpture primarily. And Mr. Radich got very interested in the work, but mostly in the centaurs and animals and Greek dancers and whatnot.
He said if I had any other work, he'd be happy to have it in the Martha Jackson Gallery. So that was very exciting, to be in the Martha Jackson Gallery. Nothing very much happened there except that Radich went and left the Jackson Gallery and went with someone else - Butterfield I think his name was. And at that point I got a letter from Martha Jackson saying that Stephen Radich was really interested in my work and that she wasn't really interested in sculpture and she would arrange to put it in storage. Of course I would have to pay the fees. This is all ironic because a number of years later I had a cable from Martha Jackson to meet her in Basel at the fair there and that she would be interested in handling my work. And at that time I was committed to Radich and I said, "It's a wonderful opportunity but I just can't be disloyal." (laughs) Which was probably a mistake! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Radich took to your stuff right away?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, and then he either bought out or whatever happened with the Butterfield Gallery and it became the Stephen Radich Gallery.

ROBERT BROWN: You had a...back in Rome, you had an exhibition in '58 at the Schneider Gallery, right?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Was that one of the most prominent galleries there?

DIMITRI HADZI: At that time it certainly was, yes. It was a gallery which this American opened up. He was an ex-professor from Columbia and it was started with the help of Mirko and Calli who guided him and then Schneider went on his own. I just saw him the other day in Rome. He's still going there but of course, but it's not what it used to be. It's not like, the whole climate in Rome isn't what it used to be as far as the art world...

ROBERT BROWN: At that time you were already, you were mainly doing things with classical overtones, with Greek overtones. You said that it was sort of a transitional time for you. Was Ramish, working with him, any influence on you?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. He was very figurative, rather stylized and...but had, as far as the work was concerned, no influence at all. Just an enormous respect for the man and his...that sort of thing.

ROBERT BROWN: In your next, when you had this show at the Schneider Gallery, at that point I think you were involved in doing a monument to Auschwitz. Was that a commission that had come to you?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, that was a competition, which I did not win and it was a turning point in my life and career. Through it I changed from figurative sculpture to abstract sculpture. At the time, I didn't have very much money so I couldn't go to Auschwitz. But the closest place I could go was Dacchau. And I went there and spent three or four day. And I did an awful lot of reading and collecting photographs. It was very difficult to collect photographs at that time because everyone thought it was such awful stuff they just buried it away and threw it out.

ROBERT BROWN: You were attempting to collect those things in Germany?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh everywhere. In Rome too, I went to the AP, UP, and all those places. It was rather difficult to find alot of that stuff. But there was enough material plus the visits to Dacchau and what I realized when I started making this study was that those horrendous photographs with the thousands of bodies piled up - after a while you just didn't see them anymore. The whole thing - they negated each other by numbers. And that led me to do work at my project in a more abstract, to try to retain that same kind of initial punch and drama but to minimize all the thousands of parts, etc., etc.. And just to simplify it and through abstract forms to retain that kind of feeling. And that's where the change happened. Also that brought me back to World War II, we veterans who came out of the war immediately forgot the war. And very often, like most of us, I don't think we knew what was going on during the war. I certainly didn't know. And I got reinterested in World War II. As I was living in Italy, I became interested in the Italian campaign and I got to know some of the campaigns quite well. I was in the Pacific during the war. Which I should...I don't know if I mentioned it.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, you did mention it.

DIMITRI HADZI: How my career changed?

ROBERT BROWN: During the war, yes. Wherein lay your interests there? The interests of World War II for you at that time? When you were getting to know the Italian campaigns and so forth? Why did you get so much into it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Into it? Well mostly because I'm interested in history and the military. But that led into the whole development of the helmet and shield series. Which became...some rather large pieces came out of it...as a matter of fact, the Helmet, Elmo V, "Elmo" is Italian for helmet - which also suggests the atomic mushroom. That was originally shown at the Radich Gallery and that was purchased by the Guggenheim Museum and the Hirschhorn - both bought a casting of it. And then this Scudi, the shields, that was also purchased by the Hirschhorn - that is the smaller version. The larger version was bought by the Rochester Museum.

ROBERT BROWN: These are, how large are these - life sized?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. About six feet high. Yes six to eight (feet).

ROBERT BROWN: They are very brutal forms.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes they are very aggressive and the initial ones, the initial models were in the Radich, er...Schneider Exhibition of '58. You see the initial small Elmo, Number 1 and that was purchased, that was in the Museum of Modern Art exhibition. Not the New Talent Show but the one that was...American Sculpture? I forget the name of it now, but that traveled to France and they had the exhibition at the Rodin Museum and it traveled around and that was one of the pieces.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you mean for them to be enlarged, say the over life-sized versions, was that your...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, I always with the exception, well I think that had also started with going into the abstract. I'd, the Centaur and Lapith motifs, I guess about the largest of those (were) approximately 39 inches. I never visualized them on a real monumental scale. But once I got into the Helmets and the Shields I saw them on an enormous scale. I would have liked to have seen these even larger as a matter of fact.

ROBERT BROWN: You felt that was necessary to make them seem very brutal and strong?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It was also to get under them sort of and to visualize them better.

ROBERT BROWN: Now you, behind all these, in fact throughout your career lay much preparation as in drawings?

DIMITRI HADZI: Drawings, many drawings. Some I believe, one of them I had also done some etchings and engravings. And then, of course, when you see the M.I.T. catalogue I did one for the cover for it. There...Should we talk about the M.I.T. show?

ROBERT BROWN: Well we can, but that comes out a little bit later.

DIMITRI HADZI: Later, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Now, these drawings, then, what's the purpose of them for you? If you carried them so far as then going into etchings as well they must mean, in themselves, a great deal to you.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. First of all, like most artists, I love to draw, but drawing I do, most of the drawings I do are for sculpture studies. And I've always been interested in graphics and one of the reasons for doing graphics is that I don't like to part with my drawings. To this day, I don't like to. I hold on because I see ideas which I've done five years ago and they're still valid. By doing it in an etching or engraving, I can make an edition and I don't feel so badly about people having them (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: People can have these studies in that way.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: In your studies, what are you trying to get out of them? What do you suppose you're trying to develop through your drawings?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, as I look back through my early drawings...Many of them which I'd just like to and I have already destroyed...what comes through a drawing and more than anything else is the struggle of trying to arrive at a certain form or searching for forms or trying to put down in two dimensions certain feelings and ideas one has. And in looking through the early drawings and even now I can see that so many of them are bad drawings. I'm not trying to make pretty drawings. I'm trying to search for something. And I can say that now I think I consider myself a very good draftsman, but I can see that the drawings are real...

ROBERT BROWN: But that hadn't been the purpose anyway. The purpose was to work out your ideas for sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And you found the drawings an essential way to arrive at the placement of forms of a relative size and shape?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: What are some of these? Look at this drawing for Scudi II, some of these shapes express, or what do you think you were expressing when you were making those shapes?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it's hard to explain what some of those things are but one does see very often, like in the Thermopylae piece for Government Center, I had an idea of what...I was working on it but it only comes from years later of looking at the piece, that you realize that so much of what you've been doing has been subconsciously and alot of things fall into place. Obviously here we have two shield forms, opposing shield forms with very angry shapes pointing at each other. And out of this whole mixture of reasons and feelings, there's also quite phallic...And I guess that shows because usually combat is between males. Going through some of the frescoes in Italy of Raphael and Michelangelo and da Vinci, and all, you see the kinds of scary, frightening men in combat with exposed genitals. It's kind of weird how vulnerable man is. That's one way of really showing it. If the man was completely covered, it would seem that he's protected, but when his genitalia's out there he could be finished in one second. So that's kind of a conscious/sub-conscious element thrown into that. And I think that that comes into this with all these phallic shapes, too. They weren't very conscious at the time. Also this tension - I try to create a tension between these two shield forms.
Now the piece, that in Government Center in Boston. That's a very complex piece. I don't know if you've seen it recently. The theme of the Thermopylae piece is courage, based on Kennedy's Profiles in Courage. And, being of Greek extraction, I thought, well, why not take three battles where great courage was displayed. In Marathon, Salonis and Thermopylae. And, of the series, the Thermopylae series won out. And you can see it's a basic tripodal composition with very busy elements above it. It has a shield form in the front, and it's a quite aggressive piece with these elements going horizontally across. On the other hand, it's also protective so it's got this paradoxical feeling about it - aggressive and yet, being protective.

So as I look back I'm trying to think where did some of these forms and symbols come from? And I suddenly realized one day that this whole element here with the horizontal form looks like a sixth century hoplite, a sixth century warrior with an arm extended. And of course the tripod was an element I'd been playing with, working with in earlier pieces. And of course, it's ceremonial: tripods, Chinese bronzes, the famous tripod at Delphi and I remember one at the Victory of Patea. (There's) all kinds of background...And also the tripod's a very stable element as opposed to a four-legged table. It's stable.

ROBERT BROWN: But the tripod also has those connections with ceremonial or public art.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly. With public art, right.

ROBERT BROWN: Well this was, what, in the early seventies, so these forms and concerns stayed with you, did they?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes.

ROBERT BROWN: For some time, or maybe I'm a little...jumping ahead? Not quite that late.

DIMITRI HADZI: No that's about right.

ROBERT BROWN: No, I mean around the mid-sixties, something like that. Two years after. Now the helmet shape, instead of the same kind of opposing form that you get with the shield series, is a great heavy kind of form that sort of lords on with deep shadows.

DIMITRI HADZI: That's the big Elmo, the Helmet at M.I.T., which was my first architectural commission. And that was done at the same time as my big retrospective at M.I.T.. The year, the time...?

ROBERT BROWN: That was about 1963.

DIMITRI HADZI: '63, yes. '63, right.

ROBERT BROWN: But in the Helmet, it's a different grouping of forms?

DIMITRI HADZI: It's more massive and heavy, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Is the Helmet supposed to be sinking on what's below?

DIMITRI HADZI: It's more enclosed and well, I don't know. But certainly what it does create is a sense of mystery and curiosity. You are drawn into it to see what's underneath it - much more than with some of the other pieces, I'd say.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you ever consciously move away from figural work, or did it just happen when you were given this competition for the Auschwitz thing?

DIMITRI HADZI: Did I win it? I didn't win it.

ROBERT BROWN: The Auschwitz...?

DIMITRI HADZI: I didn't win that competition.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, no. But when you were in that competition, then, to express what you wanted to about Auschwitz, you resorted to abstract forms. There was no turning back from there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, there wasn't. I've worked from the figure as in drawing, making sketches, but I never was... the Centaur motif was finished and I haven't been back to it since.

ROBERT BROWN: Did that seem just too trivial after that?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it was never trivial. It was happy and sensual and sexual kinds of encounters but I just...The whole war kind of took over.

ROBERT BROWN: When you had the exhibition at one of the private galleries, the Seiferheld Gallery, in New York, in 1959, you were showing some of these early abstract things by then?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. What happened there was that Helene Seiferheld was a dealer, and is a dealer in London now, but she was a very successful dealer. She just started collecting drawings and selling them and then, later on, she became quite a known dealer in drawings. Through Leo Steinberg, the art historian, I met her and she invited me to show my work in her apartment.

She had a huge apartment in New York and I had the Scudi piece, the small ones in there. And some, I don't think I had any figurative...mostly abstract. And I remember one that the director, Bob Vais bought the Omphalos piece from there. And having met Gordon Bunshaft in Rome, I notified him and he came over, or rather, he called. He called the Seiferheld and asked, he said, did I have the Elmo and Scudi pieces there? I said that I did. So he said," well bring them over, right away, to the Chase Manhattan Bank. I think that I'd like to buy them." (laughs) So we took both pieces into a cab and rushed down and Dorothy Miller was there. And we set them up and they were sold, right on the spot. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: To Bunshaft?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, to the Chase Manhattan Bank. David Rockefeller, of course, paid (for) them. But Bunshaft was the architect, at S.O.M. and Dorothy Miller was on the acquisitions committee, or whatever they call it. So they bought them. That was a very successful exhibition.

ROBERT BROWN: And is Bunshaft somebody that you've gotten to know?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, quite well. And as a matter of fact, he's bought one of the big Scudis, which he had in Long Island. And last year, he gave it to the Guggenheim Museum, so that can be seen there. He invited me to participate in the Chase Manhattan project. For a while, I thought I might get it, but that was a whole big scene with many, many artists involved with the Chase Manhattan Plaza - starting with Noguchi, and Henry Moore, Calder, Giacometti, and finally, Dubuffet. So I was in very good company even though I didn't get the job! (laughs) I was very disappointed, naturally, not to have a piece downtown.

ROBERT BROWN: You submitted, what did you submit?

DIMITRI HADZI: I submitted four bronzes, foolishly. I learned a great deal from that. It was a heavy duty crew they had there at the jury. There was Dorothy Miller, Alfred Barr? No. David Rockefeller, Bunshaft, Hail from the Metropolitan, Perry Rathbone, James Sweeney. And I made these four, what I thought were, quite good ideas. I still like them very much. And my idea was to present them and to try to get some kind of, what they call now, feedback. A sort of think tank approach to see...And it just didn't work that way. I think they were expecting one solution. So I learned a great deal. Because when I'm going to make a presentation, just put one thing down there. Don't leave any kind of...

ROBERT BROWN: Did you come for the presentation? You were in New York?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I flew from Rome, right. So I was very disappointed in that. But what pleased me in another way was that the Dubuffet that was selected was very similar to one of my presentations. All I had to do was to paint it white and they would have...and to add another leg. That was very disappointing because we drove, Bunshaft and I, drove down to the meeting and that's when he approached - he said, "You know, I think that maybe black would be the wrong...maybe white or something..." So that was the beginning.
I think, later on I realized that he mentioned that Calder was back in the race again and that I know that Giacometti dropped out of it himself and then, of course, after Giacometti had the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, he reactivated his interest in it. But then he was hoping to do those long 10' figures for the Chase Manhattan Plaza, which, of course, it would have been too small. Anyway, Dubuffet finally got it.

ROBERT BROWN: Was the jury fair and thorough?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I don't think...I was nervous. It was my first presentation and if I were to do it now, I would be quite different. I would be more aggressive and pin them back. But I was being a nice guy and hoping there would be some kind of a thing going on.

ROBERT BROWN: Well about that time, though, you did have your first one-man show in New York at Stephen Radich?

DIMITRI HADZI: At Stephen Radich, right.

ROBERT BROWN: And that...was this show at Radich's, in '61, very important?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, extremely important. Before I had an exhibition, my work was on display in group shows and whatnot in the Stephen Radich Gallery. There obviously was a growing interest in my work. So when I did have the exhibition it was enormously successful. Hirschhorn bought two pieces, the Guggenheim bought the big Elmo, the Whitney bought the Thermopylae piece.

ROBERT BROWN: The smaller?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, that was a large version. It was about four or five feet high. That was quite large. It was a prototype, which eventually...

ROBERT BROWN: The one which eventually came here in Boston, yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And we got alot of publicity and, through that, I was invited through Peter Selz and the Museum of Modern Art, to be one of the two sculptors at the Venice Biennale.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. Along with Louise Nevelson.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Louise Nevelson. And that was, obviously, very exciting for me and Louise Nevelson was already arrived and well-known. As a matter of fact, they were hoping she would win the big sculpture prize which Giacometti won. And I was very fortunate although I only had four pieces in there.

ROBERT BROWN: The Biennale was at its height then, in terms of world importance?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, I think so. When the Museum of Modern Art was running it. It never got back to that state anyway. It was very important to the American pavilion.

ROBERT BROWN: And did you get up there to order everything?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was there, yes. And Rene d'Harnoncourt waited for me so he could give me help moving the pieces around. He was just a genius for setting up exhibitions.

ROBERT BROWN: Was he?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. (His death was) a big loss to American art. And, as a matter of fact, he bought a small Scudi himself for his own collection. I guess the last time that I saw him was on that big exhibition that traveled around Europe. And I saw him at the Rodin Museum - I had about three or four pieces in that show.

ROBERT BROWN: Out of this show, then, did that lead to others buying works?

DIMITRI HADZI: In...probably indirectly, but off the top of my head I can't think of...But these are all borrowed works.

ROBERT BROWN: Peter Selz's statement, did you get him to make this statement, or...how did that come about?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, he made it. There was also a statement in the thicker catalogue...In the general catalogue for the Biennale was a statement by Rene d'Harnoncourt, also. But I think that this was actually the first thing ever written on me. Though, (and this is) rather interesting, I wish I had the clipping here. For the Radich exhibition, I was very fortunate to be reviewed at the same time as Giacometti. Giacometti's name seems to pop up all the time. But he happened to be having a show at the same time and there was a photograph of him and his work and it was by Brian Dougherty and then I think...Well, this being connected was great, even though he started it by saying, "these are two sculptors I've never admired very much." (laughs) And then he went on and on and on. But what comes out of that, obviously, if he spent all those paragraphs, something must have attracted him. So it turned out to be a very positive review and of course alot of people came to see the show because of that. So I was extremely lucky.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you get to meet, because you were in Rome most of the time, did you get to meet a number of your American contemporaries when you were over for that show?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. And also, of course, I always went to the Venice Biennale and I would see alot of them there also. The thing is that Stephen Radich - that was one of the, perhaps one of the most, if not the most important sculpture galleries at the time. He had all these people who are now very well known. And unfortunately the gallery went downhill but it was a very exciting time.

ROBERT BROWN: Were there any friends you were making at this time among artists? Were there some new ones coming in that you were getting to know?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well Peter Augustini and Mary Frank. I can't think of the names now but I, that's, I used to stay with Stephen. He had an apartment above the gallery so I got to know quite a few of the artists.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you pretty gregarious at that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Lots of parties (laughs). And I was very interested in what was going on in New York of course and it was an opportunity to meet quite a few of them.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you think ever, at that time, of coming over to New York, of leaving Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. I liked New York, it was my home town, but I still preferred to, at that time, to work in Rome.

Of course that whole thing has changed, obviously -- being here at Harvard now.

ROBERT BROWN: But at that time there (were) excellent casting facilities - you mentioned earlier I think the skill of some of the foundries...

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh the artisans, yes. (They were) fantastic - mould makers and casters - well the whole art scene was...The galleries were quite active. The Venice Biennale was at its height. Foreign artists would visit Rome. I traveled alot. It was a very exciting time.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you have to teach at all?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, I never taught before.

ROBERT BROWN: You worked very steadily?

DIMITRI HADZI: Just on my own work, right.

ROBERT BROWN: Mostly you could have it cast in bronze?

DIMITRI HADZI: My usual way was to do the drawings and then small maquettes. If I liked them, I'd just do them. Most of the stuff was not on commission, it was just speculation.

ROBERT BROWN: But you were selling quite well.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I was very successful.

ROBERT BROWN: You had, in '61, an exhibit which you said was important in Munich at the Van de Loo Gallery?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, that was the first European exhibition I'd had. A one-man show outside of Rome and after that was Dusseldorf. And that was quite an important show. But I never followed up with my German exhibitions which was unfortunate.

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ROBERT BROWN: And there were some collectors who expressed some interest?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes they showed alot of interest, but I would get involved with commissions and whatnot. And that's the one thing I have to watch out (for) now. It's very important to keep up with your one-man shows. Otherwise they forget you.

ROBERT BROWN: Commissions can overwhelm everything else.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. You have to keep the proper balance. As a matter of fact I've even been turning down some because I don't want to get too involved with them. They are important for really giving me an opportunity to make a big statement.

ROBERT BROWN: How did you happen to have a retrospective at M.I.T. in 1963? How did that come about?

DIMITRI HADZI: It was mostly through this commission, of doing the Elmo, my first architectural commission.

ROBERT BROWN: Who commissioned you to do that?

DIMITRI HADZI: It was a committee. And I know that one of them was, what's his...? A S.O.M. partner from Chicago, I can't think of his name at the moment, right now. But it was a committee and they picked, they had a number of artists that they were considering and I happened to come out on that. And it was their idea to...with the installation of the piece...to have a retrospective. And it was at that retrospective that Gropius was able to see a big compilation of my work. I met him in Rome. But you know, in the studio you can't see too much, it's too cluttered. But (at the retrospective) here they had the whole range of the early Centaurs, the Auschwitz, and the Elmos and Scudis and the Thermopylae. And although the commission didn't come out at that time, Gropius really got a much better idea of what I was doing and he'd keep in touch with me and say "the thing is not gelled yet," or "there's no money at the moment." And one day, of course, the telegram came saying to send him an estimate of what it would cost.

ROBERT BROWN: Did he like to talk with you about your work, or would he simply look at it or...what was he like?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I would visit him in Cambridge when I came. I made many trips to the States, two or three times a year and I would always come up to Boston and I'd stop in and see Grop. And he just dropped everything

and (we) had lunch or dinner. And he was just wonderful. I wish I had a tape recorder or a good memory to remember all the things he'd say. But he was really very excited about the piece. He was one of the few architects who really respected the artist's opinion on where a piece would be installed. The original idea for the Thermopylae was inside the colonnade of the JFK building and that could have been quite an exciting idea if the colonnade were exciting. But it's pretty dull. It isn't St. Peter's colonnade, the Bernini, but...

ROBERT BROWN: You mean the colonnade along the front of the building?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, to the side.

ROBERT BROWN: The side.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, right. You can't play hide and seek there very much. So my suggestion was to pull it out of there and put it into that little piazza or it's more a plaza that's along the side.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you mean after the building was up?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. This was before the building went up.

ROBERT BROWN: Because you could see it would not be a very exciting...?

DIMITRI HADZI: That's right, yes. I made some designs for something inside the columns there which I'd sort of like to do for other things but I saw the free-standing piece and it shouldn't have been mocked in there.

ROBERT BROWN: But by then Gropius was committed to the design they had already...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. He said if you really believe that it should be outside, that's where it goes.

ROBERT BROWN: Because there was no changing the colonnade by then?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh no! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: That was his? He was fixed on that?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well the colonnade had to stay. That was part of the original (design). Sculptures always secondary.

ROBERT BROWN: At least he was an architect, you say, who would give you your lead on the...I mean some alternate places.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, yes. And unfortunately, he never got to see, when we installed the sculpture he was in the hospital then. So he died and he never even got to see...I think his wife, Ise, took some photographs to him on what turned out to be his deathbed. But he never did see the sculpture.
When we had...I was invited to Gropius' party to celebrate. He didn't want anything...he didn't believe in funerals. He wanted to have a party to celebrate and so I was there and after that party his daughter, step-daughter, I forget now, and a few of us went to the sculpture and we put some flowers there. Flowers we brought from the party. We put them underneath the sculpture. We don't have that documented but this is the first documentation of it. It was kind of a nice gesture we thought.

ROBERT BROWN: He meant quite a bit to you, coming to talk with him?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I think he...I don't know how much of a role...His wife said he was very fond of me and obviously he showed that kind of affection. I would trigger off something to him because when you're involved in an architectural office and you've retired...And I think it was good for him to have a young artist come and see him and show great interest in the Bauhaus and his work and stuff like that. I think part of it might be, showing the model, I think part of it was recorded on, it was a German t.v. team from Stuttgart, I believe. So there might be some footage on that. I had some footage too, some 16mm footage.

ROBERT BROWN: Of Thermopylae?

DIMITRI HADZI: The meeting in his office (where I'm) showing the model. If I can ever find the footage, I'll let you have it. I'll have to make a note of that.

ROBERT BROWN: Then you also had a commission in '62 for Lincoln Center?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh well (with) Max Abramovitz, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: How did that come about?

DIMITRI HADZI: (Through) various means.

ROBERT BROWN: Through meeting him or what?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I, at the American Academy I knew Charles Brickbauer who was an architectural Fellow. And he worked for Max after leaving the Academy. I think he met Max in Rome and he got a job. And on the various projects that Charlie would work on he'd put little photographs of my work in and Max would say, "Well, who is this guy, any way?" (laughs) So he told him it was Dimitri Hadzi, he works in Rome, you should see his work. And one day Max Abramovitz came to Rome and saw my work, and he asked me if I would be interested in doing something for Philharmonic Hall. I said, "sure!" And then he took me around the building. Well, it was just...iron work was up then. It wasn't quite finished. I thought, obviously, being a music hall I thought that it would be appropriate to do something pertaining to music. So Mozart was my favorite at the time - I was going through his quartets. So I went through them all and "the Hunt" was the one I, K 458 was my favorite at the time. And that was the point of departure for the piece. Once again (it's) a three-legged sculpture with...showing trees and plant life, animal life, bird life...It's supposed to be quite gay. It's sort of a reaction to the Auschwitz experience, coming out of it.

ROBERT BROWN: This did provide a reaction didn't it, this commission?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Absolutely.

ROBERT BROWN: How was he to work with?

DIMITRI HADZI: Max was fine.

ROBERT BROWN: Did Abramovitz let you in on the decisions quite a bit, or...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. On this particular (project) I would have preferred it to be somewhere else. But he was firm about where it should go.

ROBERT BROWN: So it's in the...where? The lobby?

DIMITRI HADZI: In the foyer, yes. So there were two of us that were commissioned, Seymour Lipton and myself. And David Rockefeller put up the money for that. And I just saw it the other day, I was up at the MacDowell colony, I ran into Mr. Schumann, the composer, Bob Schumann who was - was it Robert Schumann? Yes, I think so, who was the president of Lincoln Center and we had quite an unveiling then. My whole family was there and that's when my family realized that I was on the right track of being a sculptor (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: Oh, you mean your family from Brooklyn?

DIMITRI HADZI: (They were) always against me being a sculptor and thought I should go back to chemistry. It was almost a black tie affair. It was really wonderful and made the front page of the Herald-Tribune and I was on t.v. (laughs). And I made my speech. Maybe I should tell you about that speech.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, why don't you?

DIMITRI HADZI: It's rather amusing. Well remembered. People keep reminding me of it. They asked me to say a few words about the piece and I said, "Well it's obviously inspired by Mozart's quartet and..." But I should tell you something about the experience I had in Rome, at the foundry. I was dressed in my workclothes and I looked like one of the Italian foundrymen and I was doing the final touches on K 458, waxing it and whatnot. And all the works going out of Italy had to pass through the Fine Arts commission. They had to get, even contemporary work, had to get the lead seal of approval to get out. So I saw the car pull up to the foundry and these guys got out and three of them went inside the office and the fourth one lingered around and say...he was puzzled and he looked at it and says "what's this supposed to represent?" I said "Musica." And he went (loud Bronx cheer). " (laughter)
And I gave that (account at the opening) and then that place just broke up (laughs). You could hear, during the rest of the evening, other people telling the latecomers this story, going (Bronx cheers). So every once in a while someone reminds me of that story of the opening, the unveiling. It was very nice.

ROBERT BROWN: So was this important? Did this lead to other things, too?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I think so.

ROBERT BROWN: It's kind of a lyrical piece.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, very lyrical. I don't really (think) that any immediate pieces came out (of it). But certainly all these pieces help in sales. Of course, I haven't had work with Max until this O-I, I'm involved with Max again on

this Owens-Illinois piece in Toledo. But that wasn't through his doing, it was mostly through (the) Sasaki Landscape office. But he's very happy with what I'm doing. We've remained quite good friends through the years.

ROBERT BROWN: This bout you had in your show at M.I.T., we've talked a bit (about) the Thermopylae at Government Center, which was '66-'68. Also about that time, I think you were beginning your doors for St. Paul's Anglican Church in Rome. I don't think they were unveiled until '76, but you were working on them then.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Many years. Fourteen, I think. But that had its ups and downs. Obviously, a very different commission.

ROBERT BROWN: Was this your first commission for a relief sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it was the first ecclesiastical religious sculpture.

ROBERT BROWN: Continuing September 25, 1981 with the project for the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis. 1971-73. How did that come about?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I met, I can't put an exact date on it, Gunnar Birkerts in Rome at a party. And he was working for a developer in Detroit. I was putting up a sculpture for Huron Towers which was at Ann Arbor and Gunnar Birkerts was one of the young architects working with this developer. Quite a number of years went by when one day I was making a stopover at the Detroit airport. I thought I'd give Gunnar a call. And I called him up and he said that he was just thinking about me (laughs). And was I interested in doing a sculpture for the Federal office building? I was at a low point in my financial status at that period so I was very happy to get involved. And that's turned out to be a 25-foot bronze called Arcturus. It's in the front plaza of the building and it's...Also he commissioned two other sculptors for that - Charles Perry and Paul Branlin and it was interesting because he picked three sculptors (of the) same generation pretty much. Charlie Perry did a very geometric abstract piece, Paul Branlin did a figurative and I was somewhat in between with an abstract form based on nature.

ROBERT BROWN: And Birkerts had the most to do with it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. He was responsible. Of course we had to be approved by the Federal Office people but his...

ROBERT BROWN: Did you go out to see the building after you were in Detroit?

DIMITRI HADZI: I just...I was involved before the building went up so I worked from drawings mostly.

ROBERT BROWN: Were you given a large open space to work with?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It's a large sloping plaza. I think very attractive. And my sculpture was supposed to be in front of the building in this plaza and amongst trees. Originally, I forgot what there were, some, other trees were planted, but later on they decided to put these huge steel doughnuts which would act as seats and protect the trees so, they became, they're oversized, I think, and they became very prominent. They really distract very much from the sculpture.

ROBERT BROWN: Oh. Because you'd selected this, this has got a theme of sorts, the Arcturus?

DIMITRI HADZI: What?

ROBERT BROWN: This is the theme, the symbol.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, this is for high art and aspiration. (It's) one of my favorite stars.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. And to be amid trees. But not to compete with steel seating.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly. And also the building is so monumental and powerful I had to get away from the building and I couldn't...There would have to have been...obviously the funds were very limited and I knew the sculpture couldn't be too large because of financial reasons. But also I think Gunnar wanted that facade, which is really important, to be relatively clean of anything in front.

ROBERT BROWN: But you were able to do pretty much anything you wanted to do within those limits.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Sure.

ROBERT BROWN: What did you try to do in this Arcturus, the star Arcturus?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, more of a feeling of the high reaching...Also the other thing is that it's...It has...totemic in nature. And of course, the American Indian there is quite a strong force. I don't know if they're Chippewas, I think Chippewa.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And I had that in mind also. However, as you probably mentioned earlier, how, subconsciously this works. A few years ago someone sent me a postcard from Corinth, I believe it was, or Olympia. The whole top theme there, with the forms are very reminiscent of one of those dragon, griffins. So you never know where some of these shapes come from.

ROBERT BROWN: Like one of those guardian figures at Olympia?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, right. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: But is that usually after you look back, though, that you realize that things have kind of welled up subconsciously?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly, yes. So I've recently seen it after a lapse of a number of years and I was very happy to see that it really holds up as a sculpture of forms. I was very pleased with the scale. Very displeased with the rings, those steel rings and also I think the tree need some pruning at this point.

ROBERT BROWN: What color is it now, by now?

DIMITRI HADZI: It's black. It's held its patina very well. They take very good care of it.

ROBERT BROWN: You leave instructions on maintenance?

DIMITRI HADZI: Usually to wash it down and wax it twice a year.

ROBERT BROWN: And you prefer most of your pieces to be the original color. Not to gradually acquire a patina?

DIMITRI HADZI: I prefer them, say, black. They're going to be black or...

ROBERT BROWN: Why do you think you don't like bronze patina? Why do you prefer...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Is it the green one you're talking about?

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, the green.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I think, that with the forms I have, I think the black helps tighten the form. I think that once you start getting...I can see it when I, the vast difference from the bronze coming from the foundry. After I work on it, filing and polishing and chasing, etc., it's got this golden bronze color, which is quite beautiful in itself. The form has a tendency to expand, no matter how crisp the forms are, it looks larger. And as soon as I start darkening it, particularly after the waxing, everything becomes much crisper and it gets this taut feeling about it.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: So that's why patinas for me are very important and they should be maintained.

ROBERT BROWN: And the greenish-bronze patina?

DIMITRI HADZI: I've never used it, just on small indoor pieces.

ROBERT BROWN: But it too might tend to dissipate a bit, the greenish (?) quality?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And the black, the wax causes a darkening?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Which pretty well stays?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Provided that you wash it down and wax it.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. So this was a piece, then, that was very important because it was at a time when it was

good to have a big commission?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I guess maybe the Pop Art movement was taking its toll on me. My sales dropped and...

ROBERT BROWN: You were still based in Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was still in Rome and I did it in Rome. I'm trying to think of how many models went into that. One, two...so the final was the fourth phase actually. I didn't do a...The model I have out in the hallway here is the model preceding the final. So it's about, less than half, closer to one-third in scale.

ROBERT BROWN: Were these models, were (they) sent over here to be looked at? Or were these just personal, working models?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, for the presentation, I sent the, what was that, I guess maybe a half, sort of a 12 inch presentation model.

ROBERT BROWN: Of what? Of more or less the finished version?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. They wanted to get an idea, to put it into their model of the building.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you recall, in those various models you went through, in Rome, what was involving the changes you made?

DIMITRI HADZI: I don't quite follow (you). What changes?

ROBERT BROWN: What kind of changes were, came about in the finished...?

DIMITRI HADZI: From the small to the final?

ROBERT BROWN: Well, yes, or from the first idea you had to the final?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, basically the, formally very little. I mean it was going to be a totemic figure and the only thing that, I guess the first model is sort of squattier and it got more and more refined and more reaching for the sky. But everyone was very pleased. There was a, there's a color slide showing the installation. There were some terrifying moments because the sculpture has two sort of 6 inch pipes welded inside the sculpture. And by correspondence, "footprints," we call them, sent there and they installed the females. They were in concrete, extending above the surface about four or five feet. And of course the males, the two male pieces that were in the sculpture, they had to be lowered into the female. And of course, one, if it's just slightly off, it can go halfway down and then it would get stuck. So that's what...everyone was sweating that out, but it went just down beautifully. So I thought that both sides of the ocean did a magnificent job of lining up the tubing. But you can imagine...Well it's happened to me in Dallas where we got stuck halfway, on another job (laughs). But I was at the controls. That was the problem.

ROBERT BROWN: Who was, was Birkerts, did you work closely with him throughout the project?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well, Birkerts...I went to Minneapolis on several occasions to look over the site and to talk it over with the architects. It's another sculpture that was not on solid ground. Underneath was this garage or whatever. So it was on a slab and so (they had) engineering problems with the weight and how to distribute it and whatnot. And of course Birkerts also came to Rome a few times. As a matter of fact he was there when...Perry and I had lunch with him, and then we took him to the foundry and he watched the pouring of one of the pieces. So it was all pretty exciting.

ROBERT BROWN: In your experience, was he, for an architect, does he take extraordinary interest in the artwork?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I think he's...yes. I think that he would like to incorporate more art in his buildings if he had the opportunity or the money.

ROBERT BROWN: Well had he discussed a bit what he had in mind in terms of artwork or what did he...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. He...and since he had in mind picking the three of us. So it was three different styles and he had picked three, and...and it, shortly it was determined that I would do a tall piece in front. So he had an idea of the kind of size, format, etc. etc. He was very good to work with. Not very difficult.

ROBERT BROWN: Then Perry was a colleague in Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: That's right. And Paul Branlin, is from St. Paul, and we were both, we met him in 1957, we both

had Guggenheims together and...

ROBERT BROWN: He'd come to Italy at that point?

DIMITRI HADZI: He came to Italy, right.

ROBERT BROWN: Where was his? Was his some distance from yours?

DIMITRI HADZI: His is, Perry's is underneath the building. I'm in front of the building and Paul is at the back of the building.

ROBERT BROWN: They couldn't be too close to each other, at least yours and Branlin's?

DIMITRI HADZI: No.

ROBERT BROWN: What was your feeling about this one, the combination of ...?

DIMITRI HADZI: I thought it was (a) quite interesting idea.

ROBERT BROWN: The combination of abstract and figurative?

DIMITRI HADZI: I haven't seen it. Oh, you mean that particular sculpture or, I thought you meant the three?

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: I thought it was an interesting idea. I was rather surprised because Paul was always very, he still is very figurative, very Rodin-oriented and to see him using these abstract forms is rather interesting. And then, of course, I'll always remember Paul because we both tried for the renewal of the Guggenheim and he got it and I didn't (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: That was the time when they were still in the figural camp, by and large, weren't they?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: But that was in the late '50's or so.

DIMITRI HADZI: That was, it was '57 when I got the Guggenheim.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And that was a breaking point in my, that was the grant that really made the big difference.

ROBERT BROWN: (It) allowed you to work more on your own?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, and I could sense that I'd gotten some recognition and all those things help.

ROBERT BROWN: That coincided with your first shows, your first important shows?

DIMITRI HADZI: That's right.

ROBERT BROWN: In Rome and then over here. But this, all in all, this Minneapolis project, you feel worked very well?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes.

ROBERT BROWN: I want to talk, somewhat later, about the drawing and the models and so forth. We'll go into greater detail about that if that's possible.

DIMITRI HADZI: Sure.

ROBERT BROWN: Maybe we could look next, or talk next, you were, in '73-74, you were still in Rome, but you were designated Artist in Residence at the American Academy.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, I think we can talk maybe later on about that. Maybe we should go through some of the projects.

ROBERT BROWN: Well, let's do, then we'll come back, fine.

DIMITRI HADZI: O.K.

ROBERT BROWN: Well, the next important one's in Oregon.

DIMITRI HADZI: Eugene. Well, that's also (an) extremely important commission for me because that's...we didn't talk about this before?

ROBERT BROWN: No, we did not.

DIMITRI HADZI: No? Nothing. I guess I was at the Academy at that time that I heard about it. Well, anyway, I was...originally, there were supposed to be ten artists invited to an international sculpture conference - a symposium, in Eugene. But they were only able to raise enough money for six sculptors. And so this came out of the blue and that also couldn't have been at a better time in my career. (laughs) It was organized by Jan Zack, who was a sculptor in, it was at the University of Oregon at the time.

ROBERT BROWN: The University got this, did this?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It involved the University and the communities and the State. So...and it was a great idea because the sculpture that was to be done in six weeks was to be left with the City or the State. So in the long run, everyone benefitted very well from this. And the sculptors were particularly well-paid. I think it was $20,000.

ROBERT BROWN: O.K. We're looking at photographs now (of) the development of this piece. And you're working in stone. This is something quite new.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Now what was fascinating about this invitation which came out of the blue... I was beginning, at the time, to think I was completely forgotten.

ROBERT BROWN: You weren't getting shows over here much?

DIMITRI HADZI: I wasn't getting shows and I wasn't selling very much. So I was delighted. And I thought this...we were given complete freedom and we were to have students in the workshop to help us. And I always remember this as being important because it was a first in many areas. I'd never worked in public, for example. I never had students working for me. I never (taught). I never worked in stone. Well, I'd worked in stone, but nothing ever on this scale. When I went visiting there, what I wanted to do was to get away from bronze. I became a mass of bronze and my original...when I went to Europe on a Fulbright, was to study stone. I think I mentioned earlier, then I dropped stone and went to bronze.

ROBERT BROWN: You were working with those artisans.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Exactly.

ROBERT BROWN: You thought you were becoming maybe too facile in bronze?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I was just ready for a change. And of course my interest in geology was growing by this time. I grew more interested in geology and earth forms.

ROBERT BROWN: Where do you think that stemmed from?

DIMITRI HADZI: I don't know. During World War II I used to send these huge boxes back to my mother and she would open them up and find these rocks! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: You told me how you went around Italy tracing, in the mountains and tracing...

DIMITRI HADZI: All that, and I belonged to several mineral clubs in Italy and now I belong to the Boston Mineral Club and go on field trips. So, anyway, I've been very interested in geology for a long time and I took this course at Dartmouth when I was in residence there, and I went at 8:00 in the morning, every morning for one hour. So that helped really clarify alot of things. And since then, I'm a real bug on geology.
So, anyway, this was really interesting, working in stone, and I went in real cold because the local stone I think is 200,000 square miles of basalt. I mean it's a big volcanic area and there's some areas that are several miles thick and it's a stone which is volcanic extrusive stone and it's not used...It's not what is called a dimensional stone. It's not used for building. But you can use it for cobbles and stuff like that. But it's usually used for rip rap. They grind it up (for) ballast and for piers and riverfront and stuff like that.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. But it didn't, doesn't lend itself to cutting and sawing?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not really. Of course, as you know, some great sculptures have been made by many ancients, Egyptians and in that area. And that always hung in the back of my mind. One of the students who was one of my helpers, he played around with it and another, someone else played around a bit with the basalt, and I saw

the great possibilities, of course...Now I realize, but I didn't know at the time, until just a year or two ago, that Noguchi has been working with it for some time. So he hasn't been an influence on me as materials...as far as basalt, anyway, quite independent...

(END OF SIDE 6)
(Sides seven and eight of eight.)

DIMITRI HADZI: So the initial, so the other first was that I was going to go, start creating from the quarry. I know we meant to talk later about my working methods but normally I work from many drawings. I go through the drawings and if I like, if something looks intriguing then I like to make a little wax model, then a larger wax model and if I still like them I cast them in bronze to make them more permanent. Then eventually, I may go for the big scale. So this way I went, I decided that I wouldn?t make any drawings and I'd just go out to the quarries and spend time there looking and studying the stones and just daydreaming -- trying to think of what to do. My back up of course was, if worse come to worse, I could just dump them all in the park and just sign it. (laughs) I'm too honest to do that, but I'd always have some kind of safety valve.

ROBERT BROWN: Was it pretty daunting when you got to the quarry?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well there were two quarries I worked with and that was, and that was interesting because the one quarry had columnar basalt. That?s where the basalt crystallizes in hexagonal or polygonal shapes.

ROBERT BROWN: Sure, like the Devil?s Causeway?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly. And all over Oregon and Washington State you see alot of the columnar coming out of the fields. So the one quarry had this columnar basalt and the other quarry was more of a massive basalt. They just blasted it out and ground it up. So I spent time in both quarries, just looking at the shapes and I looked for unflawed blocks which I'd mark with a big triangle for Dimitri. And then had those picked up with a crane and dumped in Alton Park which was where the three of us sculptors were going to work. Hugh Townley, who was going to do a concrete piece, so the forms and whatnot were done there, and I can?t think of his name right at the moment, it'll come back to me later ...

ROBERT BROWN: Alright.

DIMITRI HADZI: He was going to do a wood piece and I was going to do the stone piece. The public was going to watch us working and to participate, if necessary. And there, I forget now, I don't know how many tons of stuff was dumped in this park and everyone thought it was crazy. Actually I didn?t know what I was going to do at this point, but at least I made the selection. But while they were dumping the stuff there, this massive basalt, pieces came out in an old flatbed truck, I did select and make two compositions there.

ROBERT BROWN: In the park?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: You mean you had to dump them in a certain way?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly. Move (them) around so that they looked like dolmens or whatnot. But they are ... So actually when I finished there were really three sculptures that I finished out there. And I, I don't know if I have good photographs of those other pieces. So anyway, there was a big difference in how we worked. Hugh Townsley was to, is it alright if I talk about this?

ROBERT BROWN: Oh yes, sure, please do.

DIMITRI HADZI: Because it's not documented too well and I don't think ... the more documentation we get the better. Hugh Townsley was to, with his crew, and students were pretty free to move around, or pick their artists and work with them. But they could always feel very free to do what they want and we had sort of meetings several times a week or every day at the beginning so we'd all know and I knew what everyone was doing. And we'd visit different sites. So Hugh was building the moulds, wooden moulds, and they were to pour the concrete right there and the sculpture was to be set in the park. There's a long story (that goes) with that but anyway, it did end up in the park. And then the other sculptor, whose name escapes me, he already had the wood ordered to size and everything cut so all he did was make the construction there and did some cutting and joining. Stuff like that. John Chamberlain was doing something in aluminum foil, but a thick foil and I think he had probably the most fun. We were the only two sculptors in the group who came unprepared on purpose. This was going to be a new approach, how to go about it. He just sort of built these huge, baked potato forms which he would kick and then get inside and punch and then sometimes he would drive his car into it and then he'd polychrome. So he had the most fun. And then there was Beazley who put a steel construction together and his things were already pre-ordered and cut. So he and his assistants just put this thing together.

ROBERT BROWN: He too hadn't stepped away and done something new?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. He had a plan, already, from day one, they know which way they were going.

ROBERT BROWN: The same with Townley?

DIMITRI HADZI: The same with Townley.

ROBERT BROWN: And the man who worked in wood ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Wood, and then Tony Rosenthal. He also, his steel. That also. So we were the only two who wanted to create on the spot. Which was kind of (a) shaky kind of thing, especially when you had only six weeks and I'd never done that before. So I thought that the best thing to do was to start the students carving and grinding on this. We had an air compressor at our disposal, we had a crane at our disposal. And so I had them carving surfaces and polishing surfaces so at least they'd get familiar with the material and so they'd help me, so I carved and polished (in order to) help me get to know the stone, what it would look like finished. And I took advantage of , like many stone sculptors now, I like to contrast the polished surface with the rough quarry face, let's say, or sometimes very highly oxidized so that the orange and yellow was very strong. The iron content of the basalt. So that added richness to the embellishment of the sculptures. So little by little I was getting a better idea and I was going there after, at night, and just sitting amongst these rocks in the moonlight, trying to figure out what to do with them. And the first two to three weeks people really, I had a very dedicated group and they worked really hard -- it was very hard work with that air compressor. Especially when they'd never worked with one. There were big air hammers ... (laughs) I'd had hardly any experience myself. We were all learning on the job.

ROBERT BROWN: It?s like a chiseling -- a power chisel?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Hammering out with air compressed. And about the third week the thing started shaping up. Everyone started to realize that there was something going on there, you know. Of course, I couldn't give them any kind of answers, I didn't know what to ... So I got this idea of pouring this sort of concrete pad with alot of peg holes in it. I don't know if you can see it in the photographs, but anyway ... But that way, I could move these pieces around, with pins and vary the composition. So as you can see, most of the work was done lying on the ground, the pieces and then ...

ROBERT BROWN: Well these are big chunky pieces.

DIMITRI HADZI: Chunky pieces, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And you also had columnar pieces.

DIMITRI HADZI: Columnar pieces there, right. So you can see on some of the surfaces, like polished mirrors and then added another, you see these facets there. So they catch the light so exactly. And this big one, this is a twenty-ton block, the mirror of Achilles, right there. It took three weeks to carve that and polish it. And here's one of those free form pieces which was carved and polished. So you can see there's a big variety and the first thing that comes to your mind is Stonehenge. Of course, it looks quite different. I was very aware of the texture, the color, and how they contrast with the polished surfaces.

ROBERT BROWN: And the others are ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Some pieces, this was a completely carved piece. That was the only one that was completely carved and it stood out like a jewel amongst all these rough-hewn pieces.

ROBERT BROWN: And it was carved and polished?

DIMITRI HADZI: Carved and polished, yes. And it was fun because, in a sense, because the people would come from the community and bring their lunches and watch us work. Little by little their curiosity was aroused. So we hand them ...

ROBERT BROWN: A buffer?

DIMITRI HADZI: What we call the bricks, the carborundum bricks and a bucket of water and a pair of rubber gloves and they'd just start grinding down these stones and they would eventually end up polishing them. And you could see them later on bringing their kids or friends to show them how? I did this!? And that was quite good.

ROBERT BROWN: What control were you having over all this because you had, what? A number of students working all the time? They obviously had to do alot of labor to do this in six weeks.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Well I had very dedicated people there. And we had, we were working there at night, too. We set up lights and we had the air hammer going until 10, 11, 12 at night. So we gave them alot of respect because they really worked.

ROBERT BROWN: How often would you intervene? You said they worked three weeks on this one face of this great twenty ton block.

DIMITRI HADZI: Almost everyone worked at some point at that, but after a while, let?s say for about a week. And then I turned it over to two guys who really liked that kind of challenge and two guys worked on that for the rest of the time. And then ... altogether I think there were something like 25 people who worked on this.

ROBERT BROWN: But at some point, then would you come over and say that's it, that's enough?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, exactly.

ROBERT BROWN: And that?s what you were doing with respect to everything here?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, right.

ROBERT BROWN: So that, in a way, was the way you were designing it or developing ... ?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Some parts I never touched. I just gave complete responsibility to someone, to make it, so they could really say, I did that part.?

ROBERT BROWN: But you would then say, "that's the way it is.? "

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I was the controlling force.

ROBERT BROWN: But there were no drawings, no mockups, nothing?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. The only drawings I made were for my notebook of ... on graph paper, of the sizes, so I could remember the shapes away from the site, but nothing about the positioning or anything like that. And at the end of the project we had a big party and we had some Greek food. There was roasted Greek food and music and drinks and the party went on until dawn. (laughs) And it was wonderful because (we) were dancing through these rocks and these columns and it was interesting to see the moon going across this and then finally the sun coming. It was very mystic the whole thing. It was wonderful.
And it was interesting to get the people's reactions. Because there was one section where ... too narrow, there was a column which I knew was going to split in transportation. So I purposely took that and sure enough, eventually it did crack and I just pushed them aside, apart rather, and it sort of served as a kind of entrance into this group and you'd find people just going in and kind of resting in there. It was some kind of a chamber and they felt something there, something mystical ... Well, it's the West Coast, you know. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: It did something for you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I felt that there was something very tranquil about being between those two shapes. That always intrigued me also in my other sculptures where I worked with those narrow forms like with Scylla and Carybdis. And as also in this Owens-Illinois right now. There's these huge slabs and it's narrow. And I think that it?s consciously or subconsciously that one feels energy between these two plates like two condenser plates, you know. You don't see the action in there, but it's there.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. Those things are very important, then.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, I'm sure they are.

DIMITRI HADZI: And I think here you can see some of the color differences. See the basalt puts on a quite a beautiful velvety black. Those areas that are grey, those semi circles are bush hammered. So. But that's the color of the stone. It's hammered.

ROBERT BROWN: When it's hammered, it sort of produces little tiny fractures or something?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly.

ROBERT BROWN: And it looks greyish.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: What about the ... ?

DIMITRI HADZI: That's the natural, uh ...

ROBERT BROWN: Oxidation?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oxidation, right.

ROBERT BROWN: And then the, the sawmarks are on there ...

DIMITRI HADZI: No those, those marks are just natural crystallization. They crystallized in that form.

ROBERT BROWN: In layers sort of ...

DIMITRI HADZI: In layers, yes. Aside from being, from crystallizing and cooling in this polygonal shape, the hexagonal shape would be the perfect ...

ROBERT BROWN: Basalt column.

DIMITRI HADZI: Column, yes. That would mean that the drying, the cooling would be equal from all sides, and just perfect. But it's quite rare to find. Sometimes you find seven sides, five sides. But also those levels are quite interesting because those are also weak fractures and that would help us in working because that way we were able to break off sections, too.

ROBERT BROWN: Now as we see them here they were on grass. But was this, below this, is that pegboard arrangement?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes the concrete, right. Now, yes, now this was the first commission I ever had where the sculpture was finished before the building. And, which was good because they were able to reinforce, you know I told you about that 20 ton block, they were able to put a massive concrete column underneath that area. That's for the Lane County house ... what was it?

ROBERT BROWN: Building or something?

DIMITRI HADZI: County Building, yes. Where the county offices are. And it's actually one floor above the street level. So it's kind of interesting to see these massive rocks. They were transported. I should say. They were. When the building was ready they were taken from the park and put, I had to reset them up on this platform up there, on this deck.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you do any adjustments?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I took one piece out, I made final adjustments, yes. And that was fun, because I was able to tighten up the composition a bit. But alot of people missed it from Alton Baker Park. Because the joggers would go through every day and people would picnic. It really looked good out there. It was sort of like a miniature Stonehenge.

ROBERT BROWN: Well the building wasn't up so how could you visualize, and yet you had to keep in mind the building?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I knew the, I had the plans of the building and I knew the space that was required and so it didn't take much trouble spotting it in the building, outside the building.

ROBERT BROWN: And how could you compare the effect in the park with the effect of the building?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well for one thing, because it was enclosed, the building sides etc., etc., it looked much more monumental, much larger than it did out in the park. Of course the space was enclosed. And the only question I have now is that they've planted flowers all around it. So they've landscaped it and I would have preferred I think just to have gravel or something like that.

ROBERT BROWN: The forms would be rather startling to themselves.

DIMITRI HADZI: It's just a little too pretty I think.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. Well this was a major change for you, but was there a sort of a breakthrough that followed from this?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well.

ROBERT BROWN: You had worked in stone of course.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well in more than one way. It just took that fear of stone away. I mean everyone ... big blocks and I'd never handled big blocks before. So I am much more at ease with that now. Of course when it came to doing this Federal Office Building in Portland, Ohio, in Oregon, the same state, I used the same material. I used a columnar basalt, and so I had much greater ease. I also used some of the helpers from the ... Eugene.

ROBERT BROWN: Was that a project that sort of came out of the one in Eugene?

DIMITRI HADZI: It was, sort of simultaneous ... I don't know, I don't remember the details of how that happened. But it didn't. I think the Portland, I was considered before the Eugene thing. It was just by chance that everything happened at about the same time. But then the Portland thing came through after that. And in a way it was good because I think probably originally for the Federal Office Building I probably considered, was thinking of a bronze sculpture there. So I think it was more meaningful to have the local material.

ROBERT BROWN: OK, so this one, the Federal Reserve Bank in Portland, the River ... it is an arch, ok. It's one great form by itself, then isn't it? Two supports.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well yes. Basically it's three with a keystone in there.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And this is, as you can see, compared to the Eugene project, this is much more architectural in the sense that I really had to make very clean joints, and it had to be balanced and fit. And there were many problems with that also, because of ... getting the proper size stone, I had to buy my own compressor, and I rented a warehouse. I was able to get some of my earlier help, two or three from the Eugene project. And I brought two of the Harvard students with me out there to work on it. And that took us two months to do, which is also a short time, also working almost around the clock.

ROBERT BROWN: With most of the time spent in the grinding.

DIMITRI HADZI: Alot of chip... yes. But an awful lot of air hammer work and hand work. We worked with three pound hammers. And so, if you ever had to work with a three pound hammer, high above your head, or at shoulder level you just take one bang and then you rest your arm. (laughs) Because the air compressor just couldn't take off that much material so we had to do it by hand. There was a great deal of hand work.

ROBERT BROWN: What were you, what was it that you were attempting to do here? Did you work pretty closely with an architect or somebody? You were given a pretty free hand?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I worked with Tom Hoohaugh who was an architect for the Skidmore, Owings and Merrill building. And I would have preferred to have the sculpture in the front of the building, but he went and designed a special place in the back of the building because he felt that the sculpture would interfere with the architecture in the front.

ROBERT BROWN: Oh.

DIMITRI HADZI: And of course when he saw, we were already started on it. And I made him a cardboard maquette, full sized, to see where the fit, you know? And I thought well I'd take it up front to see what it would look like. And I know that it was too late already, because we had already made this special place in the back of the building. And when we set up it looked really sensational. And I think that poor Hoohaugh realized that it was a mistake not to have it up front because it was twelve feet high, but it was really monumental.

ROBERT BROWN: And it soared.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And as it is in the back, do you actually look down, as you are in this photograph?

DIMITRI HADZI: It?s very compressed. It's a good place to have lunch around, you know? It's really. That was unfortunate. That was my second commission I had with the General Services Administration. The first one being with Gropius for the Kennedy Federal Office Building. And ...

ROBERT BROWN: But they weren't the problem. The problem was with the architect not wanting your piece in the front.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, he just thought it would interfere with the façade.

ROBERT BROWN: But actually it would have sort of echoed the, it was a high rise building wasn't it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It also would have been on a main street where it would have gotten much more, alot of people don't know where it is now.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. What was your idea there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, here I also wanted to use local stone and also some local theme. so I went up the Columbia River and I spent three or four days looking at the basalt formations and doing some rock hunting, and just generally thinking. That's where I got the title from, from the river, it's called the River Legend from some Indian myth which happened on the Columbia River. It was a bridge which had existed that was destroyed and I was sort of recreating it. And I thought, well an arch is one of the strongest architectural forms. And of course it required great precision and engineering on this. And we did most of the engineering, but we had it checked out. We didn't have to have it checked out, but I had it checked out because to have all that material, with safety factors and all that figured out, so that when the government engineers came around, we just beat them to the punch. (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. You'd already done all of that.

DIMITRI HADZI: One of the great problems was how were we going to get these ... you see there were one two three four, basically five big pieces with a big keystone block in the middle. How do you get those precise planes in the ... basalt is very hard to carve. That is one of the reasons, because you can't, it's very hard to manipulate some of the shapes. And we'd have the saws, a wire saw or a big diamond saw to cut the planes. If we had any access. See, Oregon is a lumber, an agricultural state and it was very hard to get the equipment or to send the pieces to say a big stone fabricator to cut at least those faces for us. So I came upon the idea of doing it by hand, but not by chipping, by using a circular hand saw with a water attachment and (we would) use diamond blades. And that got a little spooky because I got a little scared with the electricity and water. And I designed a, what they called the flying machine, a frame arrangement where you put the diamond saw and you would just go back and forth and cut level, straight cuts and then you would just chip those cuts away and you would get quite a level, a very level surface. And I had one of my students execute it, you know, make this frame and it worked very well. Some of those surfaces were just sliced across there, sort of one inch apart or a half inch apart ...

ROBERT BROWN: And the water source was independent from the electricity, I mean you kept the ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, you mean the hose, yes. And then of course we wore rubber boots and rubber gloves. That was my biggest fear. I was just terrified that someone might get electrocuted, you know. It was time consuming because it took quite a bit of time and energy to cut these, you'd have to go back and forth with the saw until, it was adjustable, until you?d reach the proper level. Then move on to the next, adjust the machine, then you would go on to the next.

ROBERT BROWN: Is this a band saw? Or a regular band saw?

DIMITRI HADZI: It?s a circular band saw, a regular skilled carpenter's saw, but an industrial grade with a little attachment for a hose, with a hose for keeping your blade cool and getting rid of dust.

ROBERT BROWN: Dust, yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And that way we were able to cut very precise faces in the joints and they were beautiful. They were epoxyed and steel pins, and epoxy under pressure. And of course the other, we had the same problem with mounting, and here we had this whole thing set up and I didn't mention it but we carved this thing in Eugene in this warehouse. Then we moved it up to Portland, set it up there and did the finishing. In that way we eliminated any kind of ... if we finished it in Eugene and then shipped it and it got chipped or what, it would have been ... So we decided (to send it) about 95 per cent finished, we'd ship it up, set it up, and then do all the finishing. That was fun because once again the community came around and was interested in what we were doing.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. How did this work, when the community came around, as they had in Eugene, you told of how you got some of them to work. (laughs)

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, they were very curious because what intrigued them when they saw the rough stone, watching the other people work, you know, the other students and they saw the remarkable finish ... Even here in the studio you are immediately attracted to a stone polished surface. And they started feeling the stone and they got curious, and I said, "well you can do it too, you know." (laughs) "No problem, we would be happy to furnish the materials." And they were more than happy to, so we got free labor and they learned something. Another thing which happened was that I became quite friendly with Hugh Townley who was working next door to me so to speak. He seemed to admire what I was doing and my relationship with the students and later on he

was on the committee for selecting the person to take this Harvard job. And he put in a very strong recommendation for me. As a matter of fact he called me when I was in Rome and asked me if I was interested in the job. That's how, you see one thing leads to another. It's always nice when a colleague values you and your work. And the same thing happened, how I got into the Gruenebaum Gallery, it was Ed Jobey , a painter, who also does sculpture now, who I met in Rome and he recommended me to the gallery and so I got in.

ROBERT BROWN: You like that because these are people with, who really value your work and can really be true about it in their assessment.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh sure.

ROBERT BROWN: What about as a teacher now, you had, at least at Eugene, you said earlier, you had become a teacher because you had these assistants ...

DIMITRI HADZI: And I had to teach them techniques and of course we would get into bull sessions and whatnot. I've always been a, kind of a loner, with the exception that in Rome I had an assistant. But he was Greek so we spoke mostly Greek and Italian, but ...

ROBERT BROWN: But what did you have to learn. Were you probably self-conscious about the fact that at Eugene at least you were supposed to teach them, or did it seem to come kind of naturally?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well it came naturally, but it was difficult because suddenly you are confronted with fifteen people you work with. And you're trying to get to know each one and trying to explain what it's about ... And this, they're either in awe of you or suspicious of you, and all these things (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: You couldn't simply say, 'do this, do that'?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, I could. Once they decided to work with me, they did anything that I told them and they were paying for it, also.

ROBERT BROWN: That's right. They had free choice, they could have drifted off to work with others ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes it was a workshop, so ...

ROBERT BROWN: It worked out well, did it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Extremely well. Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: They really felt they'd had a big part of it.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. And, oh it was a very rich experience for everyone. And one of the things we also had to do, was that each artist had to give a lecture to the community. In the city hall every week there was one lecture. That was my first public (talk) ...

ROBERT BROWN: Oh was it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, it scared the hell out of me, I was really terrified.

ROBERT BROWN: What did you choose to talk about?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh we were supposed to talk about our own work. So that the people from Eugene and wherever they came from would have a better idea of what we were doing. Not only that, but that was how my colleagues got to know something about me, because some of them had never heard of me before and they realized that I had quite a background. So I was looked on quite differently after the talk (laughs). So as nervous as I was ...

ROBERT BROWN: So you got to know Townley there, but there were other contacts indirectly, people in general, many more sculptors got to know you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Who got to know you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, I go to these conferences, sculpture conferences, and all these people are always reintroducing themselves to me. After working with so many people you forget them, and they refresh my mind. And they all say what a great experience that was. I got, it certainly helped me with the Portland job, I had three people, four people actually, came and helped me on that.

ROBERT BROWN: And that was just the time when, weren't people beginning in America to begin to select

various types of sculpture, they were breaking away from a predominant style. It seemed to me before that in the sixties into the mid-seventies, almost every year there was a new fashion you might say. That the collectors would ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well it's awful hard for me to ... because I wasn't ...

ROBERT BROWN: You weren't right there.

DIMITRI HADZI: I wasn't here. I mean I made two or three trips a year to the States, but I couldn't quite follow it that closely, you know' More than anything else, I thought it was a period of great confusion. And it certainly seemed to me that a great deal of certainly architectural sculpture was a sort of welded steel, steel plates and whatnot, so ... and in a sense, that's one of the reasons that I thought I'd try stone, to get down to a material that would enhance and be, just like the O-I building where the building is glass, a curtain wall glass building, quite handsome. But the granite, the rough-hewn surfaces, and the hand-worked surfaces I mean it contrasts beautifully with the glass and the mechanical aspect of it.

ROBERT BROWN: And that works well, does it, to have this kind of evidence of manmade ... ?

DIMITRI HADZI: I like it. Yes, I think it's often quite attractive. If you get a steel building and you have a steel sculpture in front of it, not that I'm, I'm not saying that it doesn't work because I think some Tony Smiths and Calders work beautifully with it, but ...

ROBERT BROWN: What about minimal kind of, the school of sculpture, using steel plates and all ... ?

DIMITRI HADZI: I'm at this point quite bored with minimal and somewhat, I find them, most of them, I think some Tony Smith pieces I like, but for the most part I find them fairly sterile and not that interesting. That's what, the thing is that I think a sculpture should get richer with time, you find and discover more things and I feel that with alot of minimal stuff you walk around them once or twice and you've had the experience (laughs). And it's a minimal experience, too! (laughs) So that's not the way I would ...

END OF SIDE SEVEN:

SIDE EIGHT:

DIMITRI HADZI: (continued) With my own work, I go down to see the Thermopylae down at the Boston City Hall, and I still keep discovering things in it. Not that I like alot of them, but it's still, I do find things. There are changes.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you think that's because, even though this Eugene project was sort of the first time you went in without drawings or models, nevertheless in any of your work, a good deal of the procedure for you has been sort of unconscious, sort of just getting into the work.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And thus when you step back and years later you go look at something you're conscious, suddenly of something that was part of the process originally.

DIMITRI HADZI: I'm discovering. Yes, I just, I think we did discuss the JFK, the Thermopylae ...

ROBERT BROWN: To a degree, yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: I suddenly discovered all kinds of, where the imagery might have come from. Why the tripod, and why the gesture and the protective element and the aggressive element. These are all ... I wasn't too conscious of that when I was studying the drawings and the models. That makes it exciting for me because it's ...

ROBERT BROWN: Sure, sure.

DIMITRI HADZI: I mean after all, I've had, in my lifetime, lots of experience, I've seen an awful lot in my time, and all that stuff's been stashed away in that big bank up there and little by little it's coming out. And I think that's the exciting part of being an artist. And not completely understanding what you do right at the moment.

ROBERT BROWN: Well, back for a moment to the sculpture working with architecture, particularly against modern, or rather prefabricated, not prefabricated, but fabricated architecture, almost sterile. Do you feel that your work that has evidence of being manmade but natural materials as well, sort of humanized ...

DIMITRI HADZI: There's also, there's a minimum amount of geometry involved.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: Some of the forms are suggestive of organic forms, some are mountain forms, cliffs, all sorts of, or plant life, but they're not geometric.

ROBERT BROWN: No.

DIMITRI HADZI: They may have some facets on there, which are crisp and whatnot.

ROBERT BROWN: But there's evidence, particularly in some of these stone pieces we've been discussing, of very carefully worked out, a stability in relation, of like the arch form or just balance and the like. Which is not as though it were done in a machine shop but rather a sort of man resting ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, well the other thing is, the part of intuition ... it's a hard thing to articulate about because ... When I was working on the arch for Portland, I just knew that thing was stable. I just knew. And when we pulled all the blocks away and whatnot and the supporting jig which one of my students built, the thing stood up. And the engineer all he did was check and give us the documents and ... As a matter of fact, we thought it needed fewer pins and he recalculated and said, 'you're right.' Of course we were concerned about the pins because we had to drill them. And we were drilling them with one of those very powerful vibrating and noisy drills, we thought we could minimize the holes. So we cut twelve holes down to six and stuff like that. And then also, concerning the Owens-Illinois piece, the Propylaea, now that worked very strongly from intuition. I could just kind of feel that it was going to ... And what was rather dramatic about that piece was that as far as I know no one has seen granite cantilevered out in space like that. It's twelve feet out. The engineer said it's alright. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: But that's, but your piece has the evidence of a man, a person having worked these things out.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly, plus taking advantage of the quarry faces, the way the stuff is taken out of the quarry, so it's a combination of all these surfaces. As a matter of fact, I was, the whole point of why I got the job was because of the landscape architects presented four models, concrete models, for the fountain of Owens-Illinois. And the chairman of the Board, Mr. Dodd, rejected them because they were too architectural. He had plenty of architecture . So I was called in to play around with these fountains, the ones the architects, the Sasaki office did. And I played around, made them more sculptural and whatnot, but in the process I was encouraged to make, to play with them myself. So we made the presentation and he still didn't like them. When I set up my things, he said, 'that's it.'

ROBERT BROWN: The stone things.

DIMITRI HADZI: The stone piece. And that's how it came, it was made out of four pieces of stone. And he said, 'That's what I want. I want something that shows nature, the hand of man, something to contrast with the building.' We were on the same frequency, see.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, was he, was that exceptional among these corporate clients?

DIMITRI HADZI: I think he was a very exceptional man, yes. He knows what he wants and he's a ... He's a conservative man, but I really admired him for just responding so strongly to a very abstract concept. Instead of a huge discus thrower or something ... So he's been very supportive of this project. Of course the whole office is very excited about this now, so ...

ROBERT BROWN: Well, we'll talk more about that ... I won't ...

DIMITRI HADZI: To get back to Hugh Townley, I was working in Rome, at my usual two or three in the morning when the phone rang. I was curious (to know) who would call me and it was a call from Harvard and it was Hugh Townley. I was rather astonished and I guess he didn't figure out the time difference and he was lucky to catch me at three because that was when I was working quite well. And he asked me if I were interested in a teaching position at Harvard, which was a tenured slot. And I was just so stunned, I said, 'Hugh, why don't you call me tomorrow night and I'll be here, you can give me the details, I just can't absorb this, because I've never taught before.' So he called a second time, the next day and I got to know a little bit more. And he was encouraging me to take it. I said, why'd you recommend me? He said he'd watched me in Eugene, how I was with the students, and he thought I would be the ideal person for the job. So I had him call a third time. And by that time I really had time to think and I told him that I was coming over anyway in the spring and maybe I could be interviewed then and I could also get an idea of what the job was like. And I was told that it involved a studio, a sculptor in residence. I would be on trial for a year, and I could see if I liked it and if I was successful. So that was what happened, I came over for the year and I felt that a year wasn't enough. So I asked for a second year of trial. There were moments when I really thought I would really quit because it was very difficult. But at the end of the second year, I decided that I liked the job, I thought I could handle it. And that's how I got it.

ROBERT BROWN: When you came in here, was that about (19)75 or so?

DIMITRI HADZI: '75, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Had there been a predecessor? Was there ...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, there was a predecessor except there was no department then. So, in other words, what was happening here was that, when I came, it was becoming a visual and environmental department, and they were opening three slots, tenured slots. And one was a studio professor. You know, a studio professor of sculpture, painting, drawing, and printmaking. And one in environmental design and one in photography and filmmaking. So that meant that Harvard was making a serious commitment to the arts in Visual and Environmental Studies. The man who had the studio here before was Mirko Baldsevella who I knew in Rome. And he was here for about six years I guess. But he was sort of, he wasn't the director. I think Professor Sekler was the director, but he was in charge of the studios and whatnot. But there were mostly, I suppose most of the students were, perhaps, going into architecture. So it was sort of design laboratories and that type of thing. In fact at that time they didn't, the reason that they created this slot in searching out the artist and in creating the department was that they wanted to teach art, not design, or not only design. I mean they weren't even permitted to have models or to talk about art, or fine art. It was all very design oriented, sort of Bauhaus. I'm not against Bauhaus at all, but, I think it should have been.

ROBERT BROWN: There wasn't much room for personal expression or something?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, well you can, there's personal expression in design, but that's kind of limited, I feel. So I believe the, and have used and I use the figure in the teaching because I think that it's a very valid, let's call it, instrument. And I think alot can be done. My students have learned a great deal by working with the figure.

ROBERT BROWN: So you began with a model.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I, myself, hadn't worked with a figure for so many years. Well, occasionally, I'd have a model, but I always thought it was a good discipline, like most artists. And you can certainly find lots of forms and whatnot. Well the first year was very difficult for me.

ROBERT BROWN: What was it, figuring out how to draw the students out, or ... ?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, well I taught Visual, VES 100, or something like that and it involved a bit of everything. And some parts of it were quite successful and some parts were really terrible.

ROBERT BROWN: This was a curriculum laid down to you, someone else's?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, I don't know if anyone taught that course before. We had complete freedom to do, teach what you wanted, really. And anyway, that course was dropped later, and substituted by something else and I just had Fundamentals. I taught Fundamentals and Intermediate Sculpture. And last year and this year, I'm teaching also Printmaking. I dropped one of the Fundamentals courses to teach Printmaking, which we all thought was a very strong ... That was a strong area that we had no one teaching, and, my experience and interest in graphics, I volunteered to take up that slot.

ROBERT BROWN: You had done a good deal of printmaking?

DIMITRI HADZI: I'd done two years, yes. It had been very erratic, of course. But I had been making prints for twenty years, twenty-five years.

ROBERT BROWN: The first year or so, part of your anxiety was that you were floundering, you were trying to figure out ...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it was intimidating. All these bright kids and I haven't lived in America. I was visiting two or three times a year, but that's not living here, so it's quite different.

ROBERT BROWN: What was the shock of that?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, finding an apartment, and it's a very academic environment. I missed the spaghetti houses and the trattorias. It was exciting obviously on one point, I just loved going into old bookshops, I was very thrilled, excited. All those feelings. It gave me an opportunity to really, well the most important thing was that I really had to think out some of these nebulous ideas that I had in my head, floating around. Which was a kind of easy thing to do, but you were forced to articulate ideas, and stimulate the students, and bring ideas out of them. Anyway, the second year got better, and you can make lots of mistakes. You realize that they, I was told, but I didn't realize until I started teaching, how little they really know. One assumes they know, for example they've heard of Picasso or Rembrandt, but if they're eighteen or sixteen, they may not have, you know. So it's a

real education for me and I think I've grown a great deal in the teaching. And it's helped my work. And it's, and in one way, almost the most important thing, is that, I believe in paying back debts. Alot of people have helped me and it's my opportunity to pass on what I know.

ROBERT BROWN: And are some of those students going on with it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, some, I have to, you know you really get quite involved with some of them, and you just love it because it's so different. And I don't like them to think that it's just a fun course because I try to make it as difficult as possible. But we've had a few, let's say, defections from other departments (laughs), and I do, I don't encourage it because it can be very, obviously very seductive, working, drawing and carving, modeling and stuff like that. I try to make them aware of the realistic parts of being an artist. It's not a very easy profession, even though it's alot easier now than it used to be, in many ways. On the other hand, it's more difficult too, because there's so many people in the arts now. And there's few positions.

ROBERT BROWN: So you had pretty full backing from the university from the beginning?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well to my immediate, my senior faculty. They, that has to be unanimous. They watched my performance, there were various interviews. And then there's an ad hoc committee and they, also letters are sent out. About twenty-five letters, and some are lists of, I don't know how many artists names are, but you're supposed to list who would be the top choice for this job. (laughs) And then others, other letters where you're named as, you're being considered type of thing, how would you rate him for the following and all this, for this job at Harvard. So there are all these things and so it's quite exciting, too.

ROBERT BROWN: But that was a very tense time too wasn't it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, because at this time I had really gotten to like Harvard, and I was starting to feel quite comfortable and my work was going very well. I realized that by being in Rome that I was being forgotten. Because as you know, at the Archives of American Art, that the last few years there has been a great deal of I think real chauvinism involved with promoting American art. And it's very hard to see European art now. This has its advantages and disadvantages but I'm sure, it seems to me like if it weren't for the Guggenheim Museum in New York we wouldn't have any opportunity to see European art, unless we go abroad. For the Biennales and stuff like that. So I was, not being on the scene, I was quite forgotten. So I was excited to get into the Gruenebaum Gallery where I had my first show on the East Coast. Now, I was showing on the West Coast all the time, but ... You know I had three or four shows in California.

ROBERT BROWN: At Felix Landau?

DIMITRI HADZI: Originally at Felix Landau. He gave me my first break there. It's the Jody Sculley Gallery now. Adam Mekler.

ROBERT BROWN: You were better known out there perhaps than out here?

DIMITRI HADZI: In a way, yes. It's a small kind of community in a way. It's not the big rat race on the East Coast, with big heavy weight galleries and whatnot.

ROBERT BROWN: How did you come to the attention of Gruenebaum?

DIMITRI HADZI: I mentioned earlier that Ed Jobey was in Rome and I met him there a few times and then, one day, I was working at the studio, here at the Carpenter Center. I received a telephone call from Mr. Albert Landrey who was with the gallery and he asked me if I was interested in showing. Well, by this time I was interested, but on the other hand, since I hadn't shown in so long, I wasn't going to jump at anything. Here I was making a living, and I had to take my time and to be selective about the gallery. So I told him that and so that was fine. So he came up and looked at the work and we discussed it and ... I felt that it was a serious gallery. I just wasn't going to go in with anyone. And particularly, when Ed Jobey mentioned, then I realized some of the artists he was handling ... there was like he had Nakian, Edward Nakian was being considered. And it sounded real serious, so I decided to go with him.

(continued, side two).

ROBERT BROWN: You just mentioned doing some painting. Have you always...have you been painting from way back? You've got a work here from when you studied briefly with a Ralston Crawford.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, actually at Cooper Union, during the four years when I went there at night, we had painting twice a week and sculpture one night a week. So I had more painting. And one year I went to, was going to the Brooklyn Museum (Art School) during the day, and then Cooper Union at night. And then I had a fellowship on summer at the Brooklyn Museum to study with Ralston Crawford, that's when I did this kind of severe abstraction

(gestures toward painting on the wall) and that's based on a watercolor which I did on the Guanas Canal area, warehouse. But the...So getting a Fulbright to Greece for sculpture I just kind of, in a way, abandoned painting.

ROBERT BROWN: Were your teachers good? Was Crawford, had he been a good teacher?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, but he was just for the summer. I had very good teachers. I had, at Cooper Union, I studied with Robert Gwalthmey, well, mostly drawing. And then I had Morris Cantor, who was very good, excellent as was Byron Thomas?

ROBERT BROWN: He was a good teacher, too?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, very good. And Mark Zucanno, excellent. Very good, very stimulating. And I think they put a special emphasis on night students, because they knew that we worked during the day and we were...As a matter of fact Morris Cantor, I was working at the time as a bus boy and waiter and I'd come in exhausted some evenings and I'd be working with my shoes off (laughs) 'cause my feet were blistery. And he'd come by, he shuffled along and he tapped me on the shoulder and say, "why don't you go home and rest? You're doing fine." (laughs) And actually I tried for a Fulbright to Greece (originally) in painting, and it was only Milton Hebald, who I was asking for a letter of recommendation. He looked at the application and said, "why are you trying for painting? You'll never get a Fulbright to Greece for painting, because who goes to Greece to paint?" He said, "you're a good sculptor, why don't you try for sculpture?" So I crossed out painting and put sculpture! (laughs) But anyway, the thing is, I...I know that certainly my teachers were impressed with my color sense and I got "A" all the time in painting. I was very good in painting, and then at the Brooklyn Museum, I studied with Manfried Schwarz. He was very encouraging, also.

ROBERT BROWN: (Was he) a good teacher?

DIMITRI HADZI: He was an excellent teacher. There were mostly housewives in his class. So it was refreshing for him to have someone really serious like myself.

ROBERT BROWN: So Schwarz was able to work with you? I mean he didn't get distracted by the Sunday painters?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh no, no. Oh no, not at all. He was a very good teacher, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: What was he like? Did you get to know him ever?

DIMITRI HADZI: Manfried? Oh yes. He came and visited me, he took a trip to Rome many years later and now I regret that I don't own some of his works because at one time they were quite reasonable. His approach was that he'd set up a still life, which everyone would paint. And of course, the thing is, that almost everyone's painting looked the same, because he'd go around and he'd fill in the paintings pretty much. (laughs) And I worked differently, obviously, so...And he encouraged that. And we got to see each other socially after the course, after classes and what not. And I was very saddened when he died. Then he had a show in New York, recently, about two, three, four years ago in...I forget the name of the gallery. But it was good to see his work there. But anyway, I've always worked on and off with watercolors and occasionally I do a painting or two. I've done some paintings, a couple of paintings, of constellations for example, and some jungle scenes. But you know, it's very spotty. In Rome I would do an occasional painting and then, about, sort of with retirement approaching -- liberation, I thought I would begin painting seriously again. So I started with these canvases and...

ROBERT BROWN: Well these are much looser, more abstracted than those precisionist...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, that was, the big influence on my painting as a student was the Cubists. That's why I loved seeing the Braque Cubist, the Braque/Picasso Exhibition. It's all meaningful to me. My work was very much influenced by the Cubists. And...But then it was nice, I like the work that Ralston Crawford was doing and so obviously I was very influenced by it. When I was at the Brooklyn Museum, it was an astonishing...Well, I had friends who were going there. I had a friend, a girlfriend there, actually. And there was Max Beckmann, Rufino Tamayo, John Ferrin, it was really unbelievable, the heavyweights they had there. And Augustus Peck, who was a painter, was running the school. It's interesting that as I think back now, I got to know Tamayo somewhat and I met Beckmann once, but I was so against, hated Beckmann's work and I liked Tamayo's, but I resented all the students' copying that style and of course, now, as I look back, I think that they were doing the right thing. They'd sort of copy their master, but eventually they would work out of it, you see?

ROBERT BROWN: Did they both have reputations as being good teachers?

DIMITRI HADZI: All but Max Beckmann. All he said was "ja" and "da" and his wife did all the translating. But I think that the students who (were) working with him...They were mostly G.I.'s and they were all veterans.. They

were more interested in his work and the strength of his work. He was showing at the Kurt Waltham Gallery at the time and it's hard to believe it but now I own twenty-six or twenty-seven prints of Beckmann's. I love the work. I've been around Germany with Peter Selz collecting -- well, he was collecting -- I was just helping him around Germany collecting Beckmanns for that big show that they had at the M.O.M.A. when Peter Selz was curator there. So I mean, and we've been involved...As a matter of fact, I spend more time looking at paintings around the museums than I do with sculpture. I just love color and it is nice...

ROBERT BROWN: What you're getting at now, you mentioned liberation?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I'm feeling very free and I, I don't know which way it's going to...But I want to really work, I'm very interested in color, you know. I love Matisse. And I'm hoping I'll be discovering some forms, some new forms coming out. I was encouraged by Gil Franklin. Do you know Gilbert Franklin?

ROBERT BROWN: A sculptor at the Rhode Island School of Design?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. He's a good friend of mine. We spoke to him or saw him recently. He saw the paintings at the Carpenter Center show and he, it was very flattering, he said that he thought that my colors were very personal and lively and youthful and also the forms, he couldn't attach it to anybody so that's nice. But I'm having mostly fun with it. I mean, after sculpture, it's pretty fun. It's going to be difficult when I reach the point when I can't resolve problems with it and it gets really serious but now, I'm just playing.

ROBERT BROWN: In general, you're glad to be retired?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, yes indeed! Now I realize what a stressful job teaching is.

ROBERT BROWN: Are you glad you went into that though?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, without a doubt! Without a doubt. I think it's one of the richest experiences, the most difficult, and I must say it was really quite bold on my part to take a gamble like that because, having never taught before, and New England, too, with very bright kids. And not having any ideas how you approach it...You see alot of the people who teach, I think, come, they don't have master's...they have bachelor's degrees, master's degrees in painting or sculpture and they've gone through a whole ritual of, you know, they know what critiques are about. But this was...I only really went to Cooper Union at night, and somewhat to the Brookly Museum, so you don't really get into the art school thing the way daytime people...And they pick up this language which I don't have, I just, I came on as a real professional, no fancy stuff. But I learned alot and I think I paid my dues and alot of people helped me and I was able to do it.

ROBERT BROWN: How do you think you were selected? I mean, if, you hadn't any teaching experience, they wanted somebody who was...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, my reputation and I was invited to the Carpenter Center a couple of times and I turned it down for visiting sculptor you know, like for a semester and I just couldn't swing it at the time because of the commitments. So they knew who I was and they had this show at M.I.T., way back -- you know, (that) big retrospective. Well, it wasn't big, but (they had a) retrospective when they installed the Helmet piece there in the sixties, I think it was. So I had shows at the Alpha (Gallery). But I'd been known in this area pretty well. And I'm trying to remember who was on the committee, there were several: John Rosenfield, and who was that painter, I'm very fond of?

ROBERT BROWN: Albert Alkalon?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. Albert wasn't on that. This was an old woman painter. She was...

ROBERT BROWN: Maud Morgan?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes! Good old Maud, yes. I didn't know who she was. Anyway the first couple of days of interviews...about the third day rolls around, I thought, well, it might be interesting. The hardest part, I think, well, I find the responsibilities pretty awesome, I mean as far as, well, say the Senior Faculty, you know, hiring people and policy and stuff like that. And we had a very small department. So that made it very difficult, I think. And I had to learn a great deal about teaching but I got some...There were moments, usually the beginning of the terms were quite difficult, organizing it and all the students. But, and then you, developing through the semester, during the last couple weeks, I'm walking like I'm on air, I'm so excited with what they're doing. So it's very gratifying.

ROBERT BROWN: Was your style of teaching mainly to work one to one?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. One to one.

ROBERT BROWN: There wasn't much lecturing and demonstrations?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh there were...Yes, there were lectures, demonstrations. And also each student had to give a paper on an artist. You know, it could have been contemporary or it could have been Donatello, or the old masters.

ROBERT BROWN: What were you looking for? Understanding of how that artist worked or what he or she had achieved?

DIMITRI HADZI: In what sense? In the lectures or the...?

ROBERT BROWN: In the papers.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh they weren't papers. They were actually slide presentations. And they gave a little talk, and then we criticized them. So it was another way of fitting different periods, extreme periods from Smithson to, we'd go to, let's say, Donatello or Michelangelo, or...(We'd) hear from different periods. So it was kind of, very kind of exciting, covering space...

ROBERT BROWN: So would they describe, would they get information on these artists, was that what you wanted?

DIMITRI HADZI: They had to research, yes, they had to get slides and read the books, and stuff like that. I would say that some of the students found that very interesting and exciting. I found it very good.

ROBERT BROWN: And in your lectures what would you talk about?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, alot of it was technical, of course. And I would try to show times how the work was related with architecture, for example. We'd talk about monumentality and that sort of thing. Normally, in the beginning we would work from the figure, very realistically, with drawing and modelling. And then (we'd) work up toward the end, where we'd work on a partial figure project where they'd, by that time they'd had alot of experience working with the model, well, alot of experience for undergraduates for one semester. But it was very intense, very intense. And they would, they were given complete freedom to do carving out of plaster, one time it was wood, plaster, a section of the body. They could manipulate the arms, the head, anything they would want to do with the body they could play with. So it could be very realistic, or it could be very abstract. And that was very revealing. And then you give them of course examples of how the masters have done it, Henry Moore and...And how people like Donatello and Michelangelo have distorted the figure. If some of these figures stood up they would be completely out of scale, or how the, Michelangelo's David is really, I mean the proportions are really whacky. Enormous hands, the tiny waist, huge head, you know...Those are freedoms artists take, but it works, you know? The other project that I found extremely successful was to, weekly drawing sessions, or projects. They would go, starting out getting the history of sculpture by going to the museums and drawing the early up to the contemporary. So some of the favorites, my favorites have been drawing at the Fogg, the Romanesque capitals. They've got extraordinary capitals. I mean they have very abstract leaves from trees or plants and also wonderful figure groups, you know (of) biblical scenes. And then there's a wonderful Roman sarcophagus, very complicated, battle of the Amazons, and I like that. It's very rich and that's, they dreaded that, they didn't dread it, but it took at least four hours to draw it. And the Egyptian, at the M.F.A. the Egyptian collection...I mean it was, so that was very rich...

ROBERT BROWN: So what did that accomplish?

DIMITRI HADZI: What you accomplish, was what all ART HISTORIANS should do (laughs) is that they should take some studio courses and draw, for example. When you draw, if you see that, I can't remember the name of it, the Pharoah, that wonderful sculpture of the King and Queen at the M.F.A. I mean you think you see it, you know, when you walk around, but when you start drawing that...That's when you really see the relationships, you know, how one plane shifts onto the next and what not. And it's, that's about the only, really, one of the great ways of getting to know about what sculpture's about. By just drawing it, being really exposed to it.

ROBERT BROWN: Then, would the next step for them be conceptual? (To) draw and conceive what they might want to do in sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Exactly, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: It would be valuable for them to have this as a preliminary exercise.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Their conceptual drawing, if they start with small...And I told them to start with doodles, to do anything, you know. And little by little guide them, and when they started getting some interesting forms based on the figure. Then I would have them make plasticene models, three-dimensional models from the

drawings. And if they seemed quite good or possible, then I'd have them make a huge, almost life sized or sized drawings with charcoal on wrapping paper. So that was wonderful because they were going through all these different drawing experiences you know? From copying, or whatever, copying, creative conceptual drawing, working from the figure, for one semester that's alot you know? So it was very intense. It was very good, I thought.

ROBERT BROWN: Did quite a few, stuck with, in a manner of speaking?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well some of them, they all have, I get these letters,..."I'm trying to get a job, I'm trying to get into these various programs..." I think my biggest success though, was sort of with people in the sciences. I had this geologist, this wonderful female ex-student of mine who's very successful in geology. She's tried, and always thinks about the courses and wants to do some sculpture, and maybe has done some. And then I have this biochemist who's on the west coast. And he's set up his own, he works in a lab, and he has people under him and what not. And he, he's got himself a, he's sharing a studio and he's starting to do some work. So there's people, I haven't had any stars come out yet, but you know. I don't know what's going to come...I'm not, I'm really not...I wasn't interested in turning out sculptors in the first place. I was really interested in, I'm more interested in working almost with people in the other disciplines, like the sciences, and anthropologists and people in literature, anything...mathematicians, and...Because sometimes, in one shot what they get out of the course, a studio course. And I had someone in printmaking who did wonderful things. And some in sculpture. And it's one semester out of their four years at Harvard, and it just opens their eyes up. And every one of them said, "god I should have done this when I first came to Harvard, instead of in my last year!" I said, "it's just as well, you might have gone into art." (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: What did you think it, what had you hoped it would give them?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well mostly, besides appreciating art, but seeing how the creative mind, how an artist worked. Mostly, about, I think, to make them aware, visually aware of how to use their eyes, of how to become observant. And to appreciate works of art, and possibly to become collectors someday...and well, it's more of kind of a continuing understanding of the cultural development of sculpture, you know? I mean there was also a side that has alot of the training of the hand and the eye. And the thing that is the most important, actually, the most important, what I stress in every course...why there's not, whether it's printmaking or sculpture, it's not just kind of one of those Y.M.C.A. courses where just techniques are involved, but what I really wanted to stress were the creative aspects and how that could apply in their life in other fields. And it has, I think. For example, one example is the risk-taking, gamble. Very often I would be, I couldn't resolve or the student couldn't resolve or we both couldn't resolve a certain solution to a piece of...you know, a sculpture in plasticene. So I'd just drop it, bingo! On the floor and pick it up, you know, and there's a big flat plane, already. And so all these things start happening with that, so you establish, you start. Very often you get too involved with something, and you have to do something dramatic, see? Things like that, and I think that certainly my approach to how I work in the studio has helped me with my own life. That's one multi-faceted thing. I think it can be a very rich experience. It's pooh-poohed by alot of, you know, Harvard isn't very visually oriented, you know. So I was glad I had some imput as far as having these students.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you mean that generally, the university didn't see the necessity for students to go into...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, they're so, they're not like Yale, they're so sort of reading, book-oriented. I think, I mean, and I hate to make generalities, but I think we could have gotten more support. And they are very suspicious when the hand is used. You're getting close to the plumber division, you see? (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Oh.

DIMITRI HADZI: Of course I'm exaggerating. But they could have done more. It's one of those things where maybe the profits don't show immediately, but I think they're long-lasting. And time and again, I get these letters from students saying, "god what things I learned in your course!" And not pertaining just to sculpture, but to the whole thinking process, you know. "And I didn't realize at the time." And that's great.

ROBERT BROWN: Well you mentioned risk-taking as one part of that process, what were some of the others, if you want to generalize?

DIMITRI HADZI: Ah, let's see...Well, one thing I tried to impress upon them was that I'm not interested in very quick solutions. That, not to, to challenge what they're doing all the time, to be self-critical, you know. If they're happy with something, well if something good there's (also) got to be something wrong with it. If I'm happy with this and we dropped it, let's start, just leave it and start another one, do you see? And I told them time and again. You may eventually lose six of these models, you'll probably come back to the first one, but at least you've gone through the whole process and proved that what you did originally was good. Because...Do you know what I mean? You've tried all these other possibilities. Well that could go on and on...

ROBERT BROWN: And that was certainly something alien to their usual experiences which had been intellectually refined things?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: In fact you, throughout, did not really look for refinement or completeness did you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not at all, no. We didn't have time for that. Not that I tried to discourage it, but I'm more interested in...What can you do that, obviously it takes artists to arrive at their own personal signet, but once you try to arrive at something that's...The thing that's exciting for the artist who's teaching, if he's good I think, is to get something out of those students (that) they never thought they could possibly do, or myself. I see what they do at the beginning, right? So when you see one and you want to say "oh, god, I want to give up, this one's impossible!" You know. But you keep hammering on some of these. And I particularly was interested in the ones who were really the uncreative, or looked particularly uncreative or sluggish. I mean Harvard, like all schools, has these very slick, you know, these kids who were brought up with great facility, had natural facility, they had some training before they came to Harvard and I was very critical with them. I made it very hard for them because they thought that because of their ability to draw that they could slide through the course. But (with) the other ones, it was more like getting into their personalities and what was positive that they could do. The main thing I found was that encouragement, I mean you just had to tell them, and that was what was good about Cooper Union, and those people I talked about, everyone was very encouraging. Even if you did something lousy, they could always find something positive to say...And I used to walk out of that class sometimes at Cooper Union and I would compare my work to Michelangelo and Picasso, wow! You know, psychologically it's just very uplifting. And I try to get that into (my) teaching, too. And it was very exciting.

ROBERT BROWN: Did the ones who were slick present certain other kinds of problems?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. The ones who were slick, well some of them, well they thought...It's, I mean one of them was a really fantastic draftsman, unbelievable. He drew alot better than I can, certainly. And, but you had, to try to, not, you know tell them, you know that they were very gifted, they could knock, you know they could just copy these things here in the museum and do a terrific job. But, let's try to, instead of being so slick, let's say, why don't you just do this work with a cruder instrument or, something, or try to do the story here, made something...Each student has a different way, and you have to approach every student on a very personal and one to one basis, because they're all different, you know. And so that was a different challenge, working with those gifted children or students rather, and there was resistance of course with some of them, but some of them were wide open. They did remarkable things. No one ever told them they were hot shots, but no one ever told them they could do better or differently.

ROBERT BROWN: ...(----)you were pretty pleased, you in general got gratifying results?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh alot of those results I got were fantastic. Yes. They were very...There were some periods when, you know, I only had, I think out of all those classes, maybe I had one class maybe which I was unhappy with, you know. And you're unhappy when you have to be really pushing, you know, too hard. But my selection system, the reason I think that my classes were successful was that I interviewed every student and quite often for, let's say twelve to fifteen or sixteen spots, there would be maybe, thirty, anywhere from thirty to fifty or sixty students, maybe about forty. It would depend. And from those I'd shave it down, so I'd have to interview some two or three times. And then, I think that's why my grades were always a little higher. And I was always criticized for that, but I mean, I went through a selection period. Because I wanted to make sure I'd be getting those people who would really work you know, and interesting. And I wasn't picking them for what experience they had before. I just wanted to get a certain sense that they were really dying to take this course, you know, and stuff like that. And it showed up in the work, I thought.

ROBERT BROWN: That was great for you then, you had a pre-selected, you'd selected them?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, I mean I wasn't taking first-come, first-served.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you thrive very well within the structure of the University?

DIMITRI HADZI: I think I did. Probably coming from the outside and not being involved with academia was kind of difficult. It took quite a while to get involved with the administrative job. And then I was acting chairman, acting director and all the usual jobs. But I thought it was awesome this loading on interviewing people for jobs. The committee thing is kind of terrible I think, but I suppose that is the only way you can do it. So sometimes you're extremely successful and sometimes you're not. Again, you have to take chances.

ROBERT BROWN: What about the Carpenter Center, the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, itself? What was it like and how do you think it can be improved? What should its role be?

DH Well I think that they should have more instructors. More people teaching. That's been one of the problems. I think it would have been nice if there had been two or three people teaching sculpture, or two, well, there's two people teaching painting, but I think there could have been a few more people. We've turned away alot of people you know? They talk about (the fact that) there's no space, well they could...I mean Cooper Union had three sessions of painting. It would mean an amount of organizing where you stack the stuff and whatnot, the painting, but I thought it was a matter of just not having enough people teaching.

ROBERT BROWN: So were the options quite limited to the students?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, well alot of students were turned away. And I thought it was an opportunity to make an impact on the College.

ROBERT BROWN: As it is, it's a long ways from being an art school within a larger school?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well it's an art school, but it's not a professional school. And it should be that way, I think...I happen to think...and I'm pretty, I'm fairly critical. I think that the training at Carpenter Center, with its ups and downs, and they have lots of ups and downs at Yale and all those other places so I don't listen to that garbage about, criticisms about Carpenter Center. I think it's, I think the teachers there have been very dedicated. The strength of the Carpenter Center I think is that there are alot of drawing courses. We all emphasise drawing. And by and large I think we have very good teachers, and varied teachers. And I think we'd (have) been certainly more interesting and more fun, if there were...I wasn't the only, if there were a couple more people in the studio arts. And I think the other thing I think, at Carpenter Center most of the people in film and photography should be taking more studio courses. There's a tendency, I call them the moles because they're down underground, and I think they should come up and see what the world's about, you know?

ROBERT BROWN: So I see they could just concentrate on (film and photography)?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, yes, I suppose, but they have a tendency to not take these courses. The ones who have taken the courses, I think, have done the better work because they're more visually trained.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: And I think that the color photography guys, I think that every one of them should take some painting courses. For many reasons, for color, composition, creative thinking.

ROBERT BROWN: Why have things gotten so segregated?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, who knows? I certainly should know, but I don't (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: There simply aren't enough slots?

DIMITRI HADZI: They've got more people teaching film and photography. And of course, that's the biggest interest, see? There are more people going into that. Everyone wants to be, I mean they're overloaded in photography. I mean I think it's...

ROBERT BROWN: And so administrative priorities go to where the most students are?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And there are more grants for that. There are grants for photography and film, and stuff like that.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. Well you've talked of how your work has benefited from teaching.

DIMITRI HADZI: Very much.

ROBERT BROWN: How about, otherwise, being within the university for fifteen years, how about intellectually or, and in other ways, how would you compare it to your life before?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, intellectually much more stimulating. Alot of my colleagues, of course, are very stimulating and interesting. And I've sat in on alot of courses and listened to poetry readings and concerts. It's a wonderful environment, of course, the libraries. I mean, one of the problems with libraries is you go out to find a book in the stacks and you end up finding everything else there.

ROBERT BROWN: That's right. That's one thing the computer (garbled, is supposed to fix, if it ever does it?)

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh it was wonderful at Harvard. I mean there have been difficult times, like in all places, but I found the students extremely stimulating. I can't help...Well, the main thing is that...Here I work in Rome for twenty-five years and I have alot of ideas in my head and I haven't really written down too many things. Like I'd

like to do now. And you're certainly confronted with, if you have to give a talk to the students on sculpture or printmaking, and you realize you have to give some structure to all these ideas and crystalize them so that you can deliver them. And that was tough, but it was good discipline.

ROBERT BROWN: But it was something of a benefit to have the faculty, to have other faculty members off of whom you could bounce ideas?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: I know that you said that in Rome, previously that you hadn't had the intellectual intensity and stimulus that you had here?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I had, but it was different. But, I hung around mostly with other artists, but also, I used to, I knew alot of, I knew writers, I knew composers, I...alot of art historians, archaeologists, particularly at the American Academy in Rome. And so this was a very lively and stimulating, I was constantly going to lectures and what not...But, this is a real academia, it's another...

ROBERT BROWN: But you also, over the years, at least when you were in Europe, you had the people you sought out, sculptors. Where you have spoken particularly of Henry Moore?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I knew Henry Moore from the early days. I met him in Greece when I was on a Fulbright, originally. But then...

ROBERT BROWN: He was down there at that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. I was a Fulbright in Greece and Henry Moore had a retrospective there. An exhibition. And I was invited, being a Fulbrighter and Henry Moore was just wonderful because he kept coming back to me. I don't know if it was because I spoke English or because I was a young sculptor or hoping to be a sculptor. So he would break away from the group and come talk to me. So I was very flattered. The next time I met him was at the American Academy, he came and saw my work. Then I visited him at Monks Chadham, and little by little got to know him pretty well. We met in New York a few times...we went to his exhibition in Paris together, I can't think of the name now, sculptures...And I've been through, as I said, I've been to Monks Chadham a few times...

ROBERT BROWN: Would you consider him one of your teachers?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, yes. He established what a modern artist is, in many ways. And also how he worked, with the drawings, the whole procedure of drawing, working from drawings and making maquettes. Working from nature...

ROBERT BROWN: You said he established what a modern artist is in many ways, what would you mean by that, a modern artist?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I had, had no idea what a sculptor really, I mean...Well the thing is it all started when I got out of the Army and I went to the Museum of Modern Art. This was 1946, and I was just starting to play around with art. And I gave up chemistry at that time and there was this big exhibition, and there were all of these quotations of Henry Moore's around the walls and all his work there. So, first of all when I looked at the stuff, I thought, god what a pile of junk this is! And then I said, well, it's the Museum of Modern Art and there must be something to this. (laughs) So I wasn't working at the time. I was looking for a job. And I went, I guess two or three times a week, just looking at the stuff. And little by little the quotations had more meaning and the work was more and more interesting. So that was the beginning. Then I bought whatever I...And then Kurt Vallentine (sp.?) handled his work and I used to go to the gallery there and I would buy whatever books. I was saving alot of money to buy one of those volumes by Herbert Read on Henry Moore. That was like a bible. Then I got to know him up in Camareri (sp.) in Tuscany through the Fischers who were, he was a German publisher. He published Thomas Mann and all these people. They're very close friends. That's where I met, I got to see Henry Moore and Marino Marini more intimately up there.

ROBERT BROWN: Marino Marini was someone you would have seen?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. We would go to these dinner parties and (If I could have I'd have taped it?) And Henry Moore had us for dinner at one of the trattorias on the beach at Cajamayore. It was the last night of the season and there were fireworks. I was trailing Henry Moore with my tape recorder, I could hear him saying, "Oooh! Aaah!" (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: What was he like? Was he very direct and down to earth with you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well he was just wonderful with younger artists. He was very encouraging always. And he was curious (about what) you were doing, and stuff like that.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you think that he had alot to do with your interest in encouraging, you've mentioned this several times.

DIMITRI HADZI: I think so.

ROBERT BROWN: He had alot to do with the way you taught?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, yes. I think I'd like to pass that on. He was very helpful to me. I saw Henry Moore for the last time in a wheelchair in Monks Chadham and I went. Bernard Meadows took me out, I don't know if you know that English sculptor, who's looking over the Foundation now and so we went and saw Henry. And that was the last time that I saw him. But it was arranged that night, in fact that day that I could stay at this place in Porta di Marni. You know that Henry Moore has a place there and I visited him, taped Henry, taped Henry there a couple of times, I think. And so there I was in that air in Porta di Marni this time and I stayed in his house, slept in his bed for about three nights. It was really thrilling, I just couldn't believe...Here I was in the master's house, you know. So, it was exciting.

(continued, side three).

ROBERT BROWN: Do you think you contributed in your discussions with Henry Moore or Marino Marini? Do you think that you in some ways affected them? Were you a very bold person at that point?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. I don't think I...I was more essentially an admirer, but as I said, they made me feel like an equal in a way. But the thing is, there was kind of a game between Marino Marini and Henry Moore (laughs). They admired each other but...they conversed in French because Henry didn't speak any Italian, or very little anyhow. One of the big differences, Henry was very open and friendly and helpful to young artists. Marino Marini, in a kind of Italian style, was much more closed and not so open with their (sic) generosity. I mean they're nice people and all that, but you know they're not really...I mean, I'd been to his studio, Marino Marini's studio a few times in Milano and Carrara/Ferrara, Pietrasanta. Very different. He was an artist I was very much, I wouldn't say, I think I was influenced but (I was) more inspired too, I think. These two artists, I mean, right now, which I find upsetting because of this interest in what's new and fashionable and hype and all that, you know there have really been alot of putdowns on people like Henry Moore. I mean, admittedly, maybe some of them, the recent or late Moores weren't up to his best work. But it seems to me that they're forgetting what that man...I mean he almost made modern sculpture possible. Not only for the public, but for young artists. And we can't forget that. I mean he just really opened the way. Even from the cartoon point...and the New Yorker was always full of cartoons with sculptures with the holes in them and people peeking through and all kind of...but you know that's at the beginning, you know and I'm sorry to keep wandering around but I just thought of...one night I was in my studio in Rome and I happened to turn on a t.v. to hear the news and they just announced that Marino Marini just died. So I was really stunned. So I called up my friends, the Fischers at Casa Maiore. We were very close and they knew about it. So I found out there was going to be a funeral the next day. It was in August. So I called the station. I didn't have a car at the time. And I was able to, the next morning I got an early train and I got there to Pistoria where he was born. And Marino Marini's wife, Marina, was quite stunned to see me except she didn't know how I found out about it and stuff like that. But there were very few people there because it was August and most of the Italians are away (then). Fete d'Agosto and stuff like that. And also, of course, they bury the bodies right away so the coffin's exposed for about an hour, maybe two hours maximum. And I saw Marino then and, God, I was really devasted because I hadn't seen Marini now for a couple years by that time and he was all shriveled up, his hands were all, you know...And he had this disease which was crippling. The last time I'd seen him he was a real robust man. I know he was having alot of problems with arthritis andthat was why he was doing alot of etching because he was able to do something less manual, you know, or physical. So it was really upsetting to see him in that state. But I think he's a completely underrated painter. I think he was a completely underrated painter. I think he was a very wonderful painter and probably the top twentieth-century portraitist. It's amazing, of course my man Noguchi was a great portrait man, too.

ROBERT BROWN: Was Noguchi someone you ever were around or went to see?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I knew him. I knew Noguchi quite well. In fact, to the point where I was invited, as an artist, I was invited to his memorial service at the (Noguchi) Museum. And then I was asked to give one at the American Academy of Arts and Letters so I had to write two different ones. But I, originally I met him as a student of Milton Hebald's when he took his class over to the, Isamu's early studio in Greenwich Village. And he was very generous and kind. He dismantled one of those kouros figures, all made of slabs, you know, and put it together for us. And I was always very fond of those things. And I guess the next time I saw him was in Rome when, I was living in Rome and he was a resident artist (clarify - was he at the American Academy?) and I was able to help him have some of those bronze, balsa wood sculptures cast into bronze. And so we became quite friendly. I saw him quite a bit. And, as a matter of fact, to the point where I was invited to stay in his Samurai House in Chikoko in Japan. I met his stone carver and light maker.

ROBERT BROWN: How do you consider him as a sculptor?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I think he's, I think he's an extraordinary sculptor. I think he's wonderful with materials and the shapes and one of the criticisms I know is that he tends to be a little on the design-y side and that may be true...But what he's done with stone is very inventive I think and very poetic and I'm sorry I haven't taken notes of various talks we've had because...He used to tease me. He has this humor that's about teasing people and I mentioned in my talk at the Museum, the service, that I met him at Pietrasanta and he was with this young lady. And this young lady asked him, "what does Dimitri do?" And he said, "oh, he's a good sculptor, but a brilliant photographer." (laughs) He was always pulling something like that, you know. I think he was, he was very fond of me. But he was very, when I became adopted at the Institute of Arts and Letters, he was there and he really, really was very happy to see the works I had there, the stone pieces and what I mean, coming from him that was a great honor, you know? So...

ROBERT BROWN: You had a, pursued a pretty serious lifestyle when you were in Rome all those years, didn't you? I mean you went, you were alot with people, you went to see them, you documented quite alot, too.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, I was. I always had this sense of documenting. (laughs) I had some film, I took alot of pictures of fellow artists. And I guess someday I should record, I will now that I'm retired, I'll start writing all this stuff. But I, I went, used to, I knew quite a few, well, at the American Academy of course many artists passed, writers and what not, passed through...Composers and I got to know many of them, you know. I met Stravinsky there. Kirchner, Leon Kirchner, Tony Hecht, I mean you know, ad infinitum. Tons of the people there. But also in, on the Italian scene, there were alot of Italian artists that I knew. I used to go to their openings and I think I was quite valued in European and...

ROBERT BROWN: Rome was, then, to a degree, an international city. It was international?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, right. Just everybody was coming through Rome then.

ROBERT BROWN: But on the other hand, conventionally, the outlook is that it is all slipping not to Rome, but from Rome, but from Paris to New York. And you'd spoken earlier about (how) eventually in Rome you felt you needed to get to New York or here.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I came to the States quite a bit, you know. I mean I always traveled. I think I was practically the only artist, the only American artist in Rome who probably did as much travelling. I mean I used to, I didn't just come to the States, but I would, I would go to things like Documenta, you know, in Kassel. I'd been to Kassel twice, I've been to Arnheim, I've been to Sonsbeck Park in Antwerp, you know, Middleheim Park. I've been, go to both Biennales. Of course the really exciting one (was) when I was one of the four artists in the Venice Biennale. I don't know if I mentioned that before. It was Louise Nevelson and myself representing, doing the sculpture for the U.S. That must have been '60 or some odd...I forget what year that was. And...But it was really exciting. I mean big shows. The Museum of Modern Art in Rome was getting really active. I saw some of the best installations by Giovanni Carandente. I mean he opened my eyes to Pollack and Rothko because they were not crowded (like) where you see them in some American museums. The old one, like the Museum of Modern Art. I mean he had a real sense of the use of space. And he had this old building that he lowered the ceiling on and I made, my real conversion was there. Because I could really see them and study them. They had wonderful shows there.

ROBERT BROWN: Your conversion to what? To abstraction?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, to abstract expressionism. Yes. I was in New York when it was sort of happening. But you know I couldn't quite make it out. Well, obviously, I was struggling enough with Henry Moore and a few other people! (laughs) And (I was) working during the day alot.

ROBERT BROWN: Well, you lived pretty much by your commissions and exhibition sales?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Strictly, yes. Well what happened was...I started selling in Rome at the Galleria Schneider and then...Then I got a Guggenheim. But before the Guggenheim, Andrew Ritchie from the Museum of Modern Art invited me to the New Talent (Exhibition) in New York. And that kind of...And through that I was able to get in with Stephen Radich. And, let me see...who are we talking about now?

ROBERT BROWN: You mentioned the New Talent Show.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And that was extremely successful, there were three young artists there, shown in that, in the penthouse. And then I got a Guggenheim, shortly after that and...

ROBERT BROWN: In '57.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And that kind of really, by that time, I had been selling quite a bit in Rome. I had some shows at Schneider and was selling out of the studio and had some commissions.

ROBERT BROWN: Who was buying? Was it an international audience?

DIMITRI HADZI: ...Mostly Americans. Mostly Americans coming through. Mostly Americans, there were some Italians, some ---------?, some Germans...

ROBERT BROWN: So, being in Rome for so long, you weren't faced so much with the New York scene or the increasingly sort of self-congratulatory posture of New York?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And that's probably, probably in the long run, why I'm, if I'm to use the word suffered a bit, in success, or whatever you want to call it, or, would be that I was away too long, you know. And that's why, there's a price to pay, but on the other hand...

ROBERT BROWN: There's a freedom?

DIMITRI HADZI: I got away from that. Yes. (There's) not only the freedom, but the thing is to be exposed, living amongst all those great works. I mean, not only in Italy, but I mean I'm going to Germany, I'm going to Greece every year, I'm going to England and not only with antiquity or the past, but I was also looking at contemporary things, I was keeping up with contemporary art. I mean I bought Tapies' prints and Chilidies' way back you know? Ten or twenty years ago, I was interested in what was going on...

ROBERT BROWN: Was it the exposure to the past, particularly that wasn't, you couldn't...There was nothing comparable in this country?

DIMITRI HADZI: No way, no way.

ROBERT BROWN: Going to the Metropolitan Museum wouldn't have been a substitute.

DIMITRI HADZI: No substitute, no.

ROBERT BROWN: And then, during that time, you had a family didn't you? Or you were going to be married, most of the time that you were there?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, I was married in 1953 to my, my wife was Martha Leeb. She was an art historian/archaeologist. She was working for a degree at Yale, from Yale. And she was also excavating on Samothrace for a few seasons. When I met her she was a Fulbright. And then, the following year, she was a Fellow at the American Academy and I was the first husband to be brought up there. So it kind of started the whole thing for the women's groups (laughs) to bring the husbands up. And it was there that I had, Lawrence Roberts was the director and he was fantastic, I thought. It was what I consider the golden age of the Academy. I mean he had Henry Moore, Marini, Stravinsky, everybody there. And not being a Fellow, I was given whatever studio space that might have been around, so I'd been moved around...I must have had about five studios at the Academy, finally they (moved me) down to the basement. That's what made me realize that I'd better find something. I can't be moving around all the time. So I found something in Trastevere and I had that for a year or two and then I found out about the studio and I rented that and eventually I was able to buy it. And then, once you have a toehold, you stay there. Of course, then, and with the success I was having with the Schneider Gallery, he was selling...I was selling out of the studio, I was selling in the States.

ROBERT BROWN: Was Schneider a...?

DIMITRI HADZI: An American.

ROBERT BROWN: Oh he was an American.

DIMITRI HADZI: He was an American. He was an American, at Columbia, he was in Romance Languages. He came over on a Fulbright with his family and he stayed on. He was doing translations for films and what not. And then he stayed on and opened a gallery.

ROBERT BROWN: (At the American Academy) in Rome, (you) mentioned Lawrence...

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh Lawrence, yes. And Isabel. They did more to turn a sort of rough stock into a polished...They had such a style of entertaining and everyone came out of that knowing more about the gentility of living (laughs). They had great style.

ROBERT BROWN: Which gradually became a field of work.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, absolutely, yes. But my first encounter with Lawrence was...I was on the G.I. Bill downtown in Rome at Studio Hena. She was the widow of a painter and she had a school for the G.I. Bill. And I think (that) one day she invited Lawrence to give a critique to the students, or look at their work. And I was working on a Roman cat or something and so he said some nice things about it. And I thought, that was nice, meeting the Director of the Academy. I thought I'd never see him again. And then it was just years later that through the courtship of my wife and living up there that, through the years the bond became quite strong. He was always upset (because) he would hope that I would get the grant there for the sculptor. It was kind of terrible to see lesser gifted artists getting that grant.

ROBERT BROWN: The jury was...pretty often, pretty conservative?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, they were pretty much dominated by Paul Manship. And, which I, I really must say I kind of hated him. And he had a real power grip on that board, or whatever it was, jury. But anyway, the thing is that I admired Manship's work and I still do, his early work. I think he was a really fascinating sculptor for the time he was working...Sure he wasn't avant-garde or anything, but he was really a sculptor and he did some very interesting things. And...I hope his ghost is hearing all this! (laughs). But anyway...

ROBERT BROWN: Did you ever actually meet him?

DIMITRI HADZI: Manship? No. I've seen him, I think, I might have met him at the Academy. I mean they were coming and going all the time.

ROBERT BROWN: And there was nothing that Lawrence Roberts could do?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, it was out of his control. And as a matter of fact, they never really, I don't think -- speaking off the cuff. I don't think they were very happy with Lawrence there. I don't know why, but, anyway...The Academy was very interesting because Carl Millus was there as Resident Artist. I met Carl Millus there and through the...I visited Carl Millus. (telephone interruption)

ROBERT BROWN: Carl Millus?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I visited him a number of years. And no one could get into his studio pretty much.

ROBERT BROWN: This was there?

DIMITRI HADZI: In Rome.

ROBERT BROWN: This was in Rome.

DIMITRI HADZI: Rome. Tex Schiewicz was his assistant. He was a Texan who did alot of his work. We became very good friends. One day we went up to Sweden. We, my wife and I even went to (see) Millus. He was very flattered that we'd made that visit and what not. And then he died about a year later or something like that. But a fascinating story is that apparently Lawrence ahd a luncheon for Millus and some of the artists. I wasn't invited, but Arthur Osver, I don't know if you know him, a painter. (He lives in) the Midwest, in Saint Louis. A very good painter, a very good friend of mine. So Carl invited him to the studio, one of those rare visits and he... And so Millus was working on the fountain for the Metropolitan (Museum of Art). You know those running figures? Which they've taken out, which I think is...

ROBERT BROWN: In the cafe area?

DIMITRI HADZI: They were just wonderful, I thought. And I don't know what they did with them, but, anyway, as Arthur, Arthur was looking around and he noticed something different aobut one of the figures and he said, "Carl, how is it that that one figure there holding that column there has pubic hair where the others don't?" And of course he always did kind of witty sculpture, Carl Millus. So Carl said, "well, that represents architecture. That's the boldest of the arts." (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Was he someone you could talk much with?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. Not very much. No. He was, he pretty much had a closed studio there. And we would...I think Tex would let us in sometimes when Carl Millus was out of town. But, what else...There was a great time during those few years, I met Anthony Hecht, Dick, Richard Wilbur, Ralph Ellison, I mean it was just unbelievable. And great art historians, Jansen, Krautheimer, all these people were just there.

ROBERT BROWN: There wa ample chance for extended conversation?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. You could sit next to them at the dinner table, at cocktails. There were constant cocktail parties. The amount of liquor we consumed at the Academy was unbelievable. We'd start out at someone's

studio, like Blaustein's studio with a couple of martinis and then you'd go to dinner and drink alot of wine andthen you'd end up in someone else's studio for a cognac. This was almost every night. The capacity for drinking was almost rot gut that we had there.

ROBERT BROWN: But you think the genius behind the scenes of alot of this was Lawrence Roberts.

DIMITRI HADZI: Lawrence had alot to do with it. He was, I remember Al Blaustein, he was a New York painter, he went to Cooper Union. He was a real New Yorker. He asked Lawrence, "well, I'm here, now what'll I do? I mean what am I expected to do?" Lawrence simply told him, "well, you won the Fellowship, you do what you want to do. If you're here to paint, you paint. But do what you want." He was very free aobut it. And very...You had to ask him to come in. He wasn't one of those guys who'd insist on coming to see what you were doing. He treated one as a mature person, and artist. He had enormous respect for the artist. And he was always flattered if you invited him to the studio. He was very cordial.

ROBERT BROWN: You knew the people who came after him?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Almost every one of them. There was Frank Brown, I can't remember the name(s) of the other ones now.

ROBERT BROWN: There was Kimball.

DIMITRI HADZI: Kimball, Dick Kimball was funny, yes. He was kind of a, more of an authoritarian figure. As a matter of fact, if you had a model and kept the door of the studio open...This was really kind of stupid. I mean there was a real, almost a riot over that, because you know, the mature artist...(laughs) "This is not an art school, after all..." And...They all served one purpose or (another) and of course Henry Millon became the director, who was a Fellow, I remember when he first came to the Academy. He really did alot to put it back on its feet because he was, you know, he was a book man, a Navy man and (it) needed alot of discipline. And he really tightened the ship alot. It was really floundering around financially and what not.

ROBERT BROWN: And Bob Hayes?

DIMITRI HADZI: Bob Hayes was wonderful at first and then, I think, things went bad, I don't know (perhaps it was) the times, the Viet Nam War and what not, during his administration the students put black cloths over their paintings and sculptures. It was kind of a sad ending. Because he was very enthusiastic because I'd always loved Bob, he was great. He gave me a break pretty early in the game when he bought a sculpture of mine. He was a very enthusiastic supporter...I don't know, things just didn't work out too well. He had personal problems, I guess, too. But the Viet Nam War and the protest marches and I don't know...

ROBERT BROWN: But you were perfectly happy to come over here then, when you came to Harvard?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I was, I had made up my mind that it was time to change. It was an opportunity. It was scary, but, you know, I thought...

ROBERT BROWN: It's part of that risk-taking...

DIMITRI HADZI: I was practically And I think it's a real rejuvenation to work with young people. It's very important and I think if it wasn't for Harvard I certainly wouldn't have gotten these commissions. That people all like to think it was a big money type of thing. For me, there was some money, sure, there's no doubt about that, but (for) almost every piece I did on commission, there was something extremely challenging, you know? I mean the sites were extraordinary or, I was very lucky to have been selected for very choice sites. So...I never thought of doing this Propylaea for Owens-Illinois, that type of thing, you know, or the Copley Place fountain or...

ROBERT BROWN: You said, if it wasn't for Harvard?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I wouldn't be here and I wouldn't have the opportunities, and I wouldn't, you know...Living abroad, when I was living in Rome I did...

ROBERT BROWN: Lincoln Center.

DIMITRI HADZI: I did Lincoln Center, I did Government Center, the J.F.K. (office building), I did Arcturus in the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis. And then I also did, was involved in, Eugene, Oregon, the Symposium. So I did, you know, quite alot of projects, back before...

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. But nothing like after, once you were living here.

DIMITRI HADZI: (incomprehensible) And also, word got around that Hadzi's in town.

ROBERT BROWN: What do you think your routine, what's evolving now (in) your routine now that you're retired from teaching?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I'm trying to get the studio organized and I've fourteen years of work to bring here. And I have these useful and wonderful lads, James Russell the Irish hammer thrower from Harvard and Iman Rausch from, ex-Columbia University, and six months, he worked six months in Pietrasanta and (I mean Carrara) of carving. And they helped me move and they helped me set up the studio here and it's, I'm dividing it up into, I'm having my print shop, the wax shop section and the bronze and stone there and this new addition, the atelier is for painting and showing the work. It's clean there, you know and my contemplating. This chamber of thinking, you know? I'm trying to ease out on the big jobs and I'm trying to concentrate on more...I want to get more into, do more with the stone, the smaller scale and I want to get more into other materials too...found objects or something, you know, try different materials...and wood, particularly wood. Oh, I did this commission in San Francisco (that) I forgot to mention. Which was commissioned by Portman that was a selection, not a competition. I was selected anyway.

ROBERT BROWN: John Portman, do you mean the hotel...?

DIMITRI HADZI: The hotel, and, as soon as I heard that I was ready to turn it down, because you know, I didn't want to do anything for the hotels there. Of course, they have some good people, I must admit. But this was going to be, not, it was going to be, he selected, I think, three or four sculptors who were going to do pieces for the city. I mean, obviously, the city must have done him a favor of some sort, and he wanted to return it by, I assume, donating these pieces and making the street...I forget the name, Commerce Street or something like that, so it's a little small street off Sanson Street. He wanted a piece about nine feet high in bronze and it had nothing to do with the hotel, you see, it was just going to be a piece given to the city. And everything was fine except that there was a deadline on when the sculpture had to be put up. And you had to sign the contract, of course the countdown had started, see. And they took, well the thing is I signed, they didn't sign it and I was losing time. So I was not only losing money on this thing, but also, I lost my position on the casting lineup at Paul King Foundry.

ROBERT BROWN: In Rhode Island, yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. So as soon as I was able, when it was finished, he couldn't handle it, so I had to cast it on the West Coast which was much more expensive. But see, but the positive thing, see that was Hadzi with his positive thinking (laughs). The positive thing is that because my time was compressed finally toward the end I had abandoned my usual way working...Originally I was going to do it in wood. Laminated wood and then use those for sand casting. See that would have been my model, my master. So I bought the wood and everything, the planks. That had to be abandoned. And my next thought was to use plaster, my old technique with rasping, you know to build up...but there wasn't too much time for that either. So what I did, I instead of making the armature, I used found objects. Old casts. I used a mixture of things, like casts and plaster, pieces from wood, from plastic sheets, bubble wrap, anything I could find, cups...you know. And I made this kind of a collage. A three dimensional collage. It was very challenging, but alot of fun. And I worked with Rausch and Russell on it day and night practically. And it was very exciting, but also it was very challenging, because to get one odd texture to work next to another one, you know. The thing really evolved, particularly when we got into bronze, it was patinaed black, the whole thing piled up together after that. So because of that condensation of time, I had to force myself to go to a new area, which I used to practice on, to tell my students to do (laughs). Use that plaster and throw it together, and you know... And I did it myself and it worked beautifully. It's a lively piece. It's based on, they wanted a variation on the Hunt at Lincoln Center. And I was very dubious about doing an earlier piece, but (then I thought) well, it might be interesting to do something, you know, twenty years later, or more. And it's quite different. I mean basically, it's three columns going up, but it's very rich and playful.

ROBERT BROWN: The textures.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Very interesting.

ROBERT BROWN: With the textures and forms...You're happy with that?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh very happy.

ROBERT BROWN: And this was something you finished as you were retiring or right afterwards?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh I'd already retired. Let me think and try to figure this out. I think I'd retired already. Or maybe I was (teaching) part time, anyway.

ROBERT BROWN: Well maybe this is something you say you want to basically stay away from, these complicated contracts with big commissions?

DIMITRI HADZI: I wouldn't, if I could stay within what I call, I say amongst these small commissions, you know, small, like ten feet tall. Everyone says ah, that sounds big to me, but I'm talking about, I consider those small. You know, nine foot commissions, I mean, they're manageable. Besides when they're real big, that gets to be a problem. Now I want to do more exploring with my forms and what not. I feel right now that there's a real renaissance happening with me. I think that with the printmaking, the monotypes, the stone sculptures...I think they're all going to be funneling into something, I don't know. I want to work with lead and pewter and all sorts of materials.

ROBERT BROWN: And your pressure will just be self-imposed?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: And then, well, you will show them?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I'm having, I'm going to be having now, already I've lined up, I have a show coming up in Los Angeles, and one in Washington, D.C. and then one in Palo Alto. That's three shows for this year. So I'm pretty busy.

ROBERT BROWN: Is there any point in your having a steady dealer?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely. That's important. You have to have a dealer.

ROBERT BROWN: Well you were last in the Kouros Gallery in New York. Is that one that you will be showing further at?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I suppose. I just had a show there recently. And it went alright. But it could have been better. So I don't know what the future is. But I definitely think it's important to have dealers.

ROBERT BROWN: But it'll probably settle, you'll settle into one perhaps?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well, I think I'd like to keep it the way it is. I like to have a West Coast dealer and one in New York, and I think, I, I'm out of Alpha Gallery now, so I'm with Levinson, Levinson-Kane is going to be handling my work so...Because I really haven't had real exposure here in Boston. I mean I've shown at Carpenter Center, but at Alpha, I mean I only had one show there. And...I think in many ways, as soon as they hear my name, they associate it right away with big sculpture, and I don't want, it's alright, but...

ROBERT BROWN: Well how do you...what do you think of Boston as a place to show?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, after being in L.A. recently and San Francisco and Palo Alto, I mean, ahem, they're parsimonious here in New England. (laughs) And I think the art scene is a hell of alot better than it used to be. In the New York Times (they reported) that so many galleries were going out of business or closing up, but on the other hand, there are too many artists here, for one thing. And schools that keep turning them out. They can't, I don't think they can expect these grants and what...to support them, I mean. When I grew up as an artist, everyone had a part time job. You either made frames or (you were) a waiter or something. That was expected. That was the way you'd do it. I mean if you're lucky you'll make it some where. And...But when you arrive on the West Coast, you realize that there seems to be alot more money. There might be alot of money here. But they're not afraid to use the money for art. They're...and I know the East Coast is very critical, or puts down the West Coast artists and collectors, but there's alot of serious, big movement going on on the West Coast now and I think there's some real serious collecting too. But they're much more adventurous, certainly. And, obviously they have more space for showing, you know, they've got big houses with open lawns, and something like that. But I think New Englanders could open up their purse a little bit, and be a little more generous with you know, collecting and what not.

ROBERT BROWN: How important is it, or will it be to have a New York outlet?

DIMITRI HADZI: It's always really important to have a New York gallery. I mean I don't know, I don't think, I don't think the West Coast will ever take over. Stranger things have happened, I mean the Berlin Wall came down. So, as the Italians say, "Tutto e possible!" And certainly, Richard Grey, I think is one of the big forces in putting Chicago on the map with the (Navy) Pier Show. Did you hear about that? I mean, they come from all over the world for that. That's really one of the best international shows. And there's alot of movement in the Midwest too. The dealers here, I feel they have to depend on outside artists, or also some of the blue chip artists, names like that. I don't think they can, the ones who try to survive just on local artists, I don't think they (can, they) have trouble, you know?

ROBERT BROWN: So here in Boston, although there are a great many artists, (incomprehensible) very few of those are purchased?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. But there have been some real survivors here, some galleries that really have been surviving. Certainly one, the Clark gallery out in Lexington, or...?

ROBERT BROWN: Lincoln.

DIMITRI HADZI: Lincoln. That's been here for a long time now. She handles young artists, local artists. She does very well, and everyone thought that was a crazy place to have a gallery, but that's where the bucks are too. You can't have good art without the bucks. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Right. Does that ever bother you, that, for good art you have to have people who...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Bother me in what sense?

ROBERT BROWN: Do you wish you could sell, that your art could be available to an intelligent but poor community?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, sure. I think it would be nice if...I was thinking actually, in a footnote, I was thinking maybe, somehow or another, I should let maybe the prints, the monotypes, something like that, reach you know. I know most of my friends can't afford my work. It's kind of expensive and I might do something, either large editions or something so that they can afford them you know?

ROBERT BROWN: But you're now, you strike me as at a point where you have many options and you're happy that you do.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, yes. I'm a big liberated man, now. I'm just looking forward to working on the garden this spring and I'm working on a sculpture garden outside. And, but I'd like to get really started in, involved with, I wish that I would be collected more in the Boston area. And I guess that's mostly my fault. I mean I've showed at the Carpenter Center or the Fogg, but I don't think that counts so much, you need real hard-driving dealers.

ROBERT BROWN: Well these years as a teacher, after all, have taken you away, happily, it turns out, but I mean...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, that was part of the trade off. I mean, you know, I spent alot of hours, there were moments during my thesis period, when for two to three weeks I wouldn't get anywhere near my work. On the other hand, I had the whole summer off, mit pay! (laughs) That's not too bad.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. (laughs) Now you've got...

DIMITRI HADZI: Now, and I understood, let me tell you one thing about teaching. I used to, in a way, envy some of my friends who taught. I said, "gee, you've got the whole summer with pay!" Of course, now I know why they have the summer off. I mean, when, comes May, you're really absolutely drained, really drained. And it takes a whole month to recover and well.

ROBERT BROWN: But now you're completely recovered.

DIMITRI HADZI: I'm recovered (laughs)

(Side four is blank.)

ROBERT BROWN: And the developer liked it when he saw the slides. What was it that you gave them or showed them?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well he was interested in the fact that it had to be a fountain and he liked the way that I used water. This was after seeing Johnson Wax and particularly the Toledo, the Owens-Illinois job.

ROBERT BROWN: After he'd seen it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, he saw the slides. He saw the slides and he liked the way I used water and so, to get back to (Copley Place)...it took me a couple of weeks to make up my mind about accepting the job -- I wasn't quite sure...

ROBERT BROWN: You thought it might be a compromise?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well it was commercial. I thought it might be too commercial.

ROBERT BROWN: Did that have bad associations?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I seriously thought about it. That's why I was trying to think about the positive aspects of it:

they were serious, they wanted to put the best shops in there, they had good architects, the space looked fascinating to me and I wanted to approach it from Milanesi or Galleria -- Not a mall but a galleria which was quite different, more elegant and so that was starting to work on my mind and I thought well, what if Bernini or Michelangelo were around -- would they accept it or not? So I said, well, why not? Trade channels you know? And the space... So I decided to take the job.

ROBERT BROWN: And you thought they'd, they'd be cheek by jowl with, even though they were elegant shops, there'd be signs nearby...?

DIMITRI HADZI: So the other thing I thought of was that this could give me an opportunity to show that it is possible to do fine art in a commercial place. So of course, I think I was right, it came out the way I wanted it to.

ROBERT BROWN: You had a challenging space, a well of space?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh absolutely, I'd never worked at that scale and also...but the limitations were just staggering. That's what interested me, because I think alot of architects and interior designers don't like it all that much. But they're wrong, of course. First of all it's built right over the freeway...

ROBERT BROWN: You mean over the highway underneath?

DIMITRI HADZI: Absolutely, yes. So that's one thing. So I had to work with this weight restriction which was a consideration and also the fountain was supposed to be behind the elevator shaft so I could only come out a maximum of four feet. An enormous limitation. Then...

ROBERT BROWN: Or you would have imperilled the structure -- it might have fallen. So it wasn't to be freestanding?

DIMITRI HADZI: No.

ROBERT BROWN: And you knew this from the beginning?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, I knew that, but the thing is, it would have been nice if it could come out ten feet, it would give me great liberty, but even then, the worse part I think was that the lower part of the fountain was already fixed in the design by the...

ROBERT BROWN: By the architects?

DIMITRI HADZI: By The Architects' Collaborative, yes. I couldn't change the shape of that and that gave me enormous restrictions because it doesn't come out very far. You have water coming down from sixty feet. So how do I get it there without splashing? And also, I would liked to have changed the shapes of those..., because they're not exactly my shapes. So I had those enormous restrictions and in spite of all that I think it came out terrifically. But that's one of the reasons why I had to make compartments, you know. So the water coming down in snakes instead of one huge thing coming down.

ROBERT BROWN: It would splash too much?

DIMITRI HADZI: And dramatized as much as possible. I still think -- I go there quite often and I'm very impressed with the boldness of the concept, in looking back...this has nothing to do with my ego or anything, but I think its a very strong statement, very challenging and it ties, I think, it really ties that place, that whole space (together) beautifully. I'm extremely happy with it.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you think it ties together partly by the water that links your sculpture...or the...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not so much, but even dry, I mean its designed so that it relates to the different floors, it relates to the height, it...I spent a great deal of time on that, a long time on the design and there's alot of things I'd like to change about the water because...but that was out of my hands...I couldn't...

ROBERT BROWN: Simply because it might splash?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, but alot of that could have been avoided I think...

ROBERT BROWN: Can it be altered now, could they change the basin at the bottom of it?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, we can't change that but we could change some of the pumps and what not. It would help. Its working at about eighty percent efficiency the way I see it, it's fine now but its lost some of the ...and also the other thing is that they play around with it alot, they move the rocks around and they change the...

ROBERT BROWN: In the pool?

DIMITRI HADZI: In the pool, yes. And the water jets don't go the way I want them and the light shows, the light's supposed to be hidden. So...it's problematic. But the overall concept is very effective and enormously successful. I think people just love it and I've seen some great things. I've seen Japanese people in front of it (claps) doing these Shinto things in front of it. And I saw some graduation photographs and all that...weddings...So I mean, I think it's a terrific thing, a poor man's Niagara Falls.

ROBERT BROWN: But it's a real focal point, because that is the hub of the galleria.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It's exciting to go and just to see people's reactions. They just don't expect it, I mean they'll walk up and all of a sudden they'll go, "wow!"

ROBERT BROWN: So it accords very well with its surroundings, but you feel that it stands on its own too?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. But it really relates, but subconsciously, I guess, the color works so well there with the way they use the wood and everything else.

ROBERT BROWN: The wood there is generally a blond, bleached wood (isn't it)?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, its more like a rosewood.

ROBERT BROWN: And the dominant colors in the fountain are ruddy?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well they're Indian Red, which is a maroon red and then, travertine. It was done and people really liked and responded to it. So I find it interesting. Everyone likes water. But I thought it would be interesting for them to look at the stone treatment. So I put that orange in (there). Once again, I had different treatments of smooth, polished -- different textures. So I think it's extremely rich in surface and color and I think people really respond to that.

ROBERT BROWN: I do, too. And it's certainly one of the most complex environments you've worked on -- probably the most.

DIMITRI HADZI: Absolutely, yes. What's interesting also is that it's basically kind of a simple statement -- it's like two doors, gates opening. I mean it's sort of complex, but the vision's quite simple, a concept like two opening gates. As a matter of fact, if you look at that closely, you'll seeone of the -- I don't know if you want to call them gates or not -- but it goes beyond the wall there and it sticks out. And the engineers thought I'd made a mistake. But I wanted it to protrude to give a feeling of opening.

ROBERT BROWN: So they're coming apart from each other, the two halves?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well they do come, but one was behind because...The surface of the wall moves in front of that. So it looks like it's coming out, it sticks out. But the old thought when we put up the steel frame, we saw it coming out beyond the wall. So we'd wonder what's happening, what's the statement? (illegible) The mannerist architects, you know?

ROBERT BROWN: One of your ideas was to give an idea of opening.

DIMITRI HADZI: Absolutely, welcoming gates.

ROBERT BROWN: If you'd had a free-standing opportunity there what might you have done, something more like a propylaea?

DIMITRI HADZI: I would have done something in the center which was maybe too obvious but to do something very effectively in the center. As a matter of fact I did make some drawings, some ideas for something you'd see along the long axis. But what's good about the way it is now is that it comes as a complete surprise, you're not expecting that.

ROBERT BROWN: That's why you have the surprise. That's why they have further surprises because they can't size it up at a distance, until they have suddenly (before them) the great size of it.

DIMITRI HADZI: The other thing that's missing...You have to spend time with it of course to appreciate that sculpture. Those gates, you have to see it at every level. It's most effective at the first level -- you walk around that slowly and you get the illusion that the gates are moving because they have this very curious curve -- not only in profile but the other way also. But it's very strange how things move. So you really have to experience that by walking...from upstairs. And then when you're up on top looking down, it's spectacular, I think. What's good about it is that if you're up on the balcony you can get right next to the stone too -- there's an extra tactile

value there.

ROBERT BROWN: From particularly the upper level, it's really a hub, like the hub of a wheel or something. It's focusing.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: The use of water helps to heighten that effect.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly, right.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you, had you worked much with water? You did at Johnson (Wax) and at Toledo, Owens-Illinois.

DIMITRI HADZI: I did at Columbus, Ohio. That was one of the early fountains.

ROBERT BROWN: You mentioned several roles for water. Like in the last case, at Copley Place, it knits things together. At Toledo it creates a feeling of turbulence. At Johnson Wax it radiates...

DIMITRI HADZI: Very gentle, you almost have to step in it to discover the water.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you see one of its functions as knitting things together?

DIMITRI HADZI: The water?

ROBERT BROWN: The water, yes. What do you see as its (function), and where did you come by these ideas? You've been in Italy for many years, you've seen fountains and water stairs.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, yes. For some twenty years. That's one of the main reasons I've been watching (these fountains). They all have different personalities. Some you want to be very visible and others you want (to be) very subtle. But the other thing that is very effective and they were quite concerned (at Copley) about it was the sound. And the sound is perfect there. But they were concerned with the people working there if you have this water coming down all day, it could be maddening. But the sound is just right. Very subtle. You hear it, but it doesn't interfere with anything. And of course, at Toledo the water there is really more of...a more spectacular use. It's outdoors and I think perhaps also there it's because Ohio is quite flat and you want to get some kind of activity going.

ROBERT BROWN: So it makes much more of a noise?

DIMITRI HADZI: But visually it's very effective too, because, as I said earlier, you visualize two very solid slabs of granite and then you have this water shooting between there, constantly moving. It's a nice kind of sandwich.

ROBERT BROWN: There's a great deal of splashing?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: This Copley Place project's had some fallout and some imitators hasn't it? Haven't there been some others with things like that? The only one I can think of is Trump Tower.

DIMITRI HADZI: Have there? Oh that was probably done either before or at the same time. But I think it's quite dull.

ROBERT BROWN: It has great size, that's about all, and water.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: The other project I want to go over now is this project for the subway station in Harvard Square in Cambridge, Massachussetts. That went on for quite a time. It began around 1979. Was this in a competition held by the Metropolitan Transit Authority?

DIMITRI HADZI: The MBTA you mean.

ROBERT BROWN: The Massachussetts Bay Transit Authority.

DIMITRI HADZI: And also the Cambridge Arts Council.

ROBERT BROWN: They were the local jury?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. The presentation was in front of, I forget how many finalists there were, but the presentation was in front of about twelve to fifteen people representing various areas including the community. So it was real communal sculpture, or sculpture to be. And it was very early in the game, so I didn't make an actual presentation of a finished work but I just wanted to show them the various directions (in which) I might be going. And based on that I...

ROBERT BROWN: Was this an open competition?

DIMITRI HADZI: As far as I know.

ROBERT BROWN: What was the project, the terms of the commission, what did they want, do you recall?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it was to be in Harvard Square and it had to be outside because they already had ideas for downstairs. And I picked the site where it was going to go. I think they probably, this was early in the game, they probably thought the sculpture would probably be where the amphitheatre is -- you know in Harvard Square, this is like a step-down thing, closer to Holyoke.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. Leading toward the subway entrance is an amphitheatre.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And my idea and concept was to have it right at the tip of the peninsula, welcoming people coming into the square. And I think it was a very smart move. I think it was the right place, it relates to Harvard. And you can see it from a distance as you come in.

ROBERT BROWN: Particularly as you come in from the Common side.

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly, yes. And I thought it would be much more...So that came as a surprise to them that I would put it (there). But I thought it was a very logical place to put it.

ROBERT BROWN: The place they originally had in mind would have been the approach from the east on Mass(achussetts) Avenue.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: There, not unlike the galleria, the confusion, the multiplicity of things at Copley Place, there too at Harvard Square you have a tremendous cacaphony of colors and sizes and signs and the like to think about. I mean, it's not exactly a quiet island of space is it?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. But the thing that I...the important thing was scale, particularly, of course the finances were limited, very limited at the time. But I couldn't think of that at the moment. I had to think of the scale and I had to think of the color and of the material and since I was getting to be quite good in stone, I thought it would be more effective to have something there in stone than, say, in bronze or in stainless steel or something like that. It should be more traditional. It should relate to the architecture and the feeling there.

ROBERT BROWN: Which is primarily masonry.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And also on Lehman Hall there are these pilaster-columns -- pedimental. So that was one of the key points of getting the verticality and the horizontal. Post and lintel, again. Still, there was a repeat there.

ROBERT BROWN: The scale you had in mind was to relate to this?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, originally I thought about sixteen feet. And I went out there many times, when the old kiosk was there, taking measurements and relating them with the lamppost. And then I realized that sixteen feet was just a little too small and then also it would be too low in the sense that people could jump up on it with a shove. Somebody could get up on the crossbeam. So we went up to twenty-one or twenty-five feet.

ROBERT BROWN: Also if it had been scaled to the kiosk or the lamppost it would have gotten lost...

DIMITRI HADZI: Diminished, yes. It would've been lost. There's too much activity going on there.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. Uplifted, elevated. Jacked it up some.

DIMITRI HADZI: And I think the scale is just right, now.

ROBERT BROWN: And the colors you had in mind were, what were they?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, there's the brick and then there's the tan limestone that you see around. And I like the comments you hear now. People feel like it's always been there and it blends into ...You see it but it blends in, it

would be quite different with a stainless steel sculpture. It would be jumping out all the time.

ROBERT BROWN: You didn't want it to do that?

DIMITRI HADZI: No I don't want it to jump out, no. On the other hand, I didn't want it to blend in like the other sculpture, the brick one, by -- what's her name, (she) who did the brick sculpture in Harvard Square? Genderson?

ROBERT BROWN: I saw it the other...

DIMITRI HADZI: It's all in brick. And it blends in, there's too much brick around there.

ROBERT BROWN: That's right. And it looks as though it's a highway engineer's embellishment of a traffic island.

DIMITRI HADZI: It was rather unfortunate because she wasn't around to correct (that). But that's the reason I wanted to use blacks and different colors.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. But they're all colors that relate in some way or another to the metal, to the stone, to the brick, to the roadway itself, and yet they stand out from it.

DIMITRI HADZI: They do, right.

ROBERT BROWN: Now you presented the idea, won the competition for this sculpture outdoors on the island in 1979, I guess.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Then what did you go on (to do), what was the next step? You presented a small model I assume. Is that what you had?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well it was a long story. Mostly the drawings and half-scale models in cardboard and the architect would come and go because this thing was way in the future. Because if you recall, there was so much going on with the building of that station down there. There was constant excavation, that was discussed. So it was very slow, evolved development. And also there was a period when they thought they wanted to make a fountain there. They wanted to make a fountain. I spent a great deal of time making fountain studies for that, but that never came through because there was no money for that.

ROBERT BROWN: These people were the fifteen on the committee, the Arts Council?

DIMITRI HADZI: Twelve, yes. Well there were architects, a few called in from the outside, art specialists -- museum people and like that -- people from Cambridge.

ROBERT BROWN: Were these people difficult to deal with?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, once they decided who the winner was, then I had to work with the architects and the Arts Council and the MBTA.

ROBERT BROWN: A little more complex patrons than you had on these corporate jobs.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh, indeed. Yes. Civic jobs are difficult. Early in the game I thought conceptually what I...how would (I) see the sculpture, as -- I called it Omphalos. Because the Omphalos in Delphi was the center of the universe and I strongly felt that Harvard Square was the central navel of the educational universe. And not necessarily just Harvard, but Tufts, Boston College, a high density of academic institutions -- (it) is just staggering. So I thought that was kind of an interesting idea. And I still believe in it. There's very few places in the world where there's anything like that. So I think that was probably accepted with raised eyebrows, the title, Omphalos. But you get used to it after a while. And it had to be vertical so it would be seen and it was competing with the pilasters of Lehman Hall.

ROBERT BROWN: The Lehman Hall pilasters are pretty prominent?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, they're prominent and also they're symbolic of the classical tradition and scholarship. There's all kinds of references to that thing. That was one. The other reference I had was the banding of the sculpture. Having lived in Italy for so long, and having been to all the great educational centers of Italy, like Padua, Bologna, Verona, (in) all these big cities like Florence, (there is) alot of banding in the architecture. This banding. So I thought consciously/subconsciously: Introduce that banding. Kind of a subliminal moment.

ROBERT BROWN: This and the title itself refer to the great classical civilization behind the establishment of

academic institutions here?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly, yes. And then, also, there are many, many references. The whole thing being this vertical thrust, a very positive kind of thing, of high aspirations and all that. The beam itself, its shape came out of the symbol that the London Underground uses. They have a circle with a bar running through it (laughs). So that's where this variation of this symbol ties in with the MBTA (laughs).

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. You at least have a circle with a "T" in it.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. So all these things were by the way. Also Harvard's a kind of crossroads. There's a kind of shield there with banding which also reminds me of the banding on the end of academic robes protecting against ignorance (laughs). There are all kinds of things you can think of.

ROBERT BROWN: So once you had a model worked up you then took it to this committee.

DIMITRI HADZI: No. The committee more or less came by and became different groups. First the architects would come in and then...they seemed to have accepted the concept early in the game. And then it was pretty much up to me (to keep) going on and then I did half-scale models, three or four of them, then I did the full scale, two full scale models.

ROBERT BROWN: In cardboard?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, in cardboard.

ROBERT BROWN: And then you went out one day and you erected the cardboard model, didn't you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Were you there? When the wind was blowing? (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: No. I wasn't there but I remember just when you were about to do that.

DIMITRI HADZI: The wind always came up when we took the big models out.

ROBERT BROWN: And did some of your jury come by at that time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well the woman from the MBTA came and the architects would periodically check up.

ROBERT BROWN: What were their comments?

DIMITRI HADZI: I think they were quite favorable.

ROBERT BROWN: It took some six years.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well there were all sorts of financial problems, which we probably won't go into, I'll write about them sometime.

ROBERT BROWN: You mean they didn't quite have the wherewithal. They had to go to the outside, the government itself didn't give funds.

DIMITRI HADZI: There were very few funds to begin with and I knew that. But I knew that the space was very important and they had to have a very important sculpture there. It was impossible for them because they (only had) forty-two thousand dollars. It was completely impossible, maybe they spread their money out too thin, I don't know. So I took it upon myself, and thought I would eventually have five years, four or five years ago, I thought that I could raise the money and I got, was able to raise some...but it was taken away, so it was very comples.

ROBERT BROWN: But you knew from the beginning that you had four or five years to...That was while the subway was being built, was being rebuilt underneath.

DIMITRI HADZI: There were alot of disappointments. I was hoping the Harvard business community would help, which they did not.

ROBERT BROWN: Were they doubtful of it or not at all supportive?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. I just think that they're cheap. (laughs) And it's of acute benefit to them, that was the thing. I'm just very disappointed in them.

ROBERT BROWN: And Harvard itself?

DIMITRI HADZI: Harvard came through and helped a bit, though not as much as I had thought they would. And I think mostly because it wasn't a fountain, I suspect, I don't know.

ROBERT BROWN: You think that they like the more conventional things...?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. I think there was money for a fountain but I think that got turned away somewhere else. But anyway it turned out to be a financial disaster for me and I'm glad that it's up and it's in the past. It's another sculpture that I think is enormously successful and I like it very much. And people respond to it. There's always people who say, "what is it?" But you have to expect that. But I think it adds a great deal to the square.

ROBERT BROWN: It's got alot of company out there hasn't it? That must have been something you had to have considered throughout. The kiosk and the subway entrance and then the newstand, which is an elaborate wrought iron thing.

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, then they had the information booth -- those weren't in the original plan, the information booth wasn't there and the...

ROBERT BROWN: And there are various utility poles.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. It's pretty damn busy. At least my end is pretty, that end is quite free. It's probably just as well on the peninsula there, facing the Johnston Gate.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. So you are by and large pretty happy with its form and with its aesthetic elements.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. And they took down one of the lampposts. It was too closed in before with the lamppost.

ROBERT BROWN: Have you got other things like this in process, are you continuing with other public commissions?

DIMITRI HADZI: After that...Oh no more public commissions!...oh yes. There's one more before I forget it. The Appleton one.

ROBERT BROWN: What is that? That's something that's begun?

DIMITRI HADZI: That's another thing that's been going on for five years. It's also a problem of raising money.

ROBERT BROWN: This is a city commission? For Appleton...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Appleton, Wisconsin. And it's, wasn't the city itself, but it's a private group of some businessmen who got together and thought they would like to enhance the city with a big public sculpture. And they had a very serious competition which I was very fortunate to win, once again. But I think it was badly, I think there were extremely good intentions but they just weren't very professional in going about the whole thing and they had not very much experience. And I think they expected to raise the money pretty rapidly and they are still raising money now. And it's the fifth or sixth year and hopefully we're going to finish it in December. It's a sculpture of a local stone. A dolomite, which is a limestone with a very high magnesium content. Quite beautiful stone.

ROBERT BROWN: It would have browns...?

DIMITRI HADZI: Grey, it's tannish. In grades from green to tan. I like to work with the tan ones.

ROBERT BROWN: That's a good deal softer stone than these others...primarily of granite or travertines.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, softer than granite or basalt, but it's still stone! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Are you planning...there will be some wear though. Can you push it or crush it so you can cut down on the wear that's going to occur?

DIMITRI HADZI: What wear is this?

ROBERT BROWN: The wear on the dolomite, the weathering.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh the weathering. I think it has very good weathering properties. It's one type of stone that hardens on exposure. It's used alot, it's like Indiana limestone. That holds up very well.

ROBERT BROWN: What's the shape of the Appleton work?

EH: The Appleton's also been inspired by the rivers and their various dams, because obviously they have some

of the great...Paper's the big industry there. And it's formed from art forms. It's sort of an entrance and a gate thing. Sort of a gate or an entrance to the city. One of the entrances. And I think it's about thirty-two feet long and seventeen feet high.

ROBERT BROWN: It's going to be a slab going across with supports?

DIMITRI HADZI: It's...hard to explain.

ROBERT BROWN: It's not quite like the Toledo project?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh no. It's quite different. Yes...It's very architectural in a sense. But you have to see the photographs. It's quite abstract. It's also going to have a range of textures from rich to...

ROBERT BROWN: Is it on the edge of the city? Is it a focal point of the city?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, one of them. And you come over the bridge. As you approach the city you come over this bridge and the sculpture will be there to greet you.

ROBERT BROWN: So it is an approach, a long approach.

DIMITRI HADZI: An approach into the city. And it's a triangular plot. Roughly triangular because it's a little lopsided. And it had to be of a certain scale so you could see it, but it's also designed so you can see it while you're driving. It's big enough so that you won't miss it right away.

ROBERT BROWN: I don't know the town itself, Appleton, but I would think you have less congestion and chaos than you have say in the galleria in Copley Place or at Harvard Square.

DIMITRI HADZI: That's right.

ROBERT BROWN: It's a less turbulent city, so do you take that into account, the fact that people will have time to either slow down or pause?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Not only that, but I think that what will happen as it goes up is I think that people from the neighboring buildings and the new building will probably be spending alot of time in the triangular spot -- whether for lunches or stuff like that. It's a good spot. And Appleton is really developing since I first went there. I wish they'd raised the money...but...

ROBERT BROWN: With your sculpture in public places, you take into account a great deal the nature of the physical environment, of the neighborhood it's going to have, the stores, or subway, or whatever. Do you think this is generally true by now of public sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Do you mean taking into account...

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, of all these factors in public sculpture in the United States?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh you have to, yes. I think in public sculpture you should take all those physical factors into effect...But also, the main thing is that, because of the controversy going on with public sculpture, I think you should take into consideration, place yourself into the role of someone that might be living with that sculpture and you realize that it might be part of antagonism, something they can't stand, and things like that...But I think it should be something which is liveable. Something that will grow and enhance one's experience with it. So I think there's a place for violent sculpture and stuff like that but not necessarily public art.

ROBERT BROWN: You mentioned a controversy about public sculpture. What particular aspect do you mean?

DIMITRI HADZI: The sculpture of Serra's in New York.

ROBERT BROWN: You mean outside a federal office building?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. People can't really participate in a sculpture like that. I like for people to participate -- sit in it, walk through it, or...and feel comfortable with it, you know?

ROBERT BROWN: Was that a case where the work was created of the whole cloth without taking too much account of the space or the buildings around it, or the use of the immediate area?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I think it looks very effective from all the photographs which are reproduced. (They) are always effectively shot from upstairs. If you're down there --Who needs another wall? It's like the Berlin Wall or this wall. I like transparency. All my sculpture has apertures and transparency.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes, but taking that into account, let's not just single that one out, but in the earlier generations, I can think of others that seem as if they were created just for a passing glance and not too much beyond the size of the site...

DIMITRI HADZI: That's right, sometimes they were focal points, certainly in Rome some of the obelisks serves as focal points.

ROBERT BROWN: Oh sure, but I meant...look, for example, you told me that when you came back from Italy in the late sixties, you were even then interested in public sculpture. You'd been doing it. What did you feel the situation was, what did you see in New York, what did you feel about it? A certain amount had already gone up around the Seagram Building and the Midland Grace Building.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh. Well, of course I was also involved with the Chase Manhattan project also, which went to Dubuffet.

ROBERT BROWN: Well there was an example. What did you think of that, the Dubuffet?

DIMITRI HADZI: I liked the Dubuffet even though I lost to him. I think the spirit's right. It's a light sculpture and it's a participatory kind of walk through it and it's a happy sculpture. And people work in those offices all day and when they come out it would be nice if they could see something pleasant. And Noguchi's pool there is terrific. You look down at the pool there and there's a wonderful arrangement of rocks. And I like the Midland Bank thing. Is it Midland, with the cube? That's one of the most successful public sculptures I think.

ROBERT BROWN: These in a sense are more isolated from their immediate environment, to me, maybe it's quieter there because these are great shafts of buildings in large open spaces, than has been the case with your commissions. Yours are to a degree more nestled among a more complex environment aren't they? And perhaps it isn't true of Owens-Illinois. But you've got a competing, or potentially competing, fairly immediate environment or space in the buildings.

DIMITRI HADZI: With Harvard Square. Yes.

ROBERT BROWN: That would be the classic, sure, or certainly the indoor ones -- Johnson Wax or particularly at Copley Place in Boston. Do you plan to continue, do you think, with public sculpture?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, yes. I'm doing, in fact I just won this competition for Pine Manor. And this year I just put up a sculpture for Carleton College, which was another competition.

ROBERT BROWN: It's in Minnesota?

DIMITRI HADZI: In Minnesota, outside of Minneapolis, perfect school. And really an exciting project to work...The students are so great there. And that went really quite well, I thought. That was multi-colored stone again. And also a kind of an arch. And now I'm working on Pine Manor College out in Chestnut Hill.

ROBERT BROWN: Near Boston?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. That was a small competition. I was invited.

ROBERT BROWN: And for them you're doing a propylaea kind of idea?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, it's the other way, it's like a v-shaped...And in some ways it has some of the forms of Harvard Square, because it has beams on the tope.

ROBERT BROWN: You've been exhibiting all along these years too, obviously you don't exhibit the full scale public pieces...but...

DIMITRI HADZI: No, no. We use the maquettes, the models...

ROBERT BROWN: At Gruenebaum, at the exhibits there, your first stone show was in seventy-eight there.

DIMITRI HADZI: That's right.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes And you show the models for these outdoor pieces, but also you continue with bronze and these aren't always maquettes are they?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, no, they're not. No they're just ideas for, especially new ideas...and alot of stone pieces are unique, obviously because you can only do one. But the bronzes are basically edition pieces, of seven. And now I'm looking forward to a show in, I'm having an exhibit with Richard Grey in Chicago (for some fifteen years?

illegible) and he invited meto show in the fall of next year.

ROBERT BROWN: And for that you'll show what, do you think?

DIMITRI HADZI: Probably I suspect it'll be a mixed show. Bronze and stone.

ROBERT BROWN: The bronzes, are they studies for the most part or are they in themselves, how would you characterize them?

DIMITRI HADZI: They're ideas I'm working with from my sketchbooks. And if I see the potential of a large scale, having a sense of monumentality, then I would go up to a larger scale you see. Otherwise they would stay small. But lately, also besides that, I don't know if I mentioned it earlier, I've been doing alot of printmaking. I was on sabbatical last year. And I spent a great deal of time making prints. I took a course, at my age! Flying down to New York once a week to study with Redy , an Indian, who was Bill Hader's assistant, and worked in Paris. And Redy specialized in color. So I thought, not that I, I really would like black and white prints, but I thought that I'd better since I teach printmaking...that I should learn something, a bit more about color printing. So I went down there for six classes. It was very fruitful.

ROBERT BROWN: But, apart from the technique that you would have learned from Redy, you were full of your own ideas. As you look at your prints are they translations at all from some of your sculptural thinking, two-dimensional?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, I got into printmaking, I always worked with prints. But originally, it was many years ago, I didn't like to sell my drawings and so I thought what I'd do was to make prints and then we could have an edition, and that led to working directly onto the plate and it was like a sketchbook. Some artists, they make copies, they make the sculpture or whatever, and then they make prints after it. But these are all ideas for the sculpture, and now I'm...

(side 3 of 4/side 4 is blank)

ROBERT BROWN: So the primary thing in your printmaking, then, is not to relate it to some of your sculptural ideas, but you are now, at least, a year or so into it, thinking of prints for their own sake.

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, right.

ROBERT BROWN: Are you particularly fascinated by the techniques, technical process? Or what is it that particularly interests you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. But not as much as alot of printmakers out there. I'm interested in finding the right technique, the proper technique for the form of expression I'm seeking -- which is rather nebulous now. I'm in a very experimental state right now. I'm working with larger plates, I'm working with and experimenting with aquatints and I'm experimenting with woodcuts.

ROBERT BROWN: How does, what role does your printmaking play in your overall work. I mean in terms of your trying to get some things out, your expression?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well I probably spend more time than I should at it, I think! (laughs) I don't know whether it's an escape mechanism or what but...I just like to spend...As a matter of fact I would like to take...Like I had this sabbatical and I spent alot of time doing this and there's so many ideas I've developed already which I would like to further explore. The other thing I do in printmaking, I have been doing that for the past three or four years -- what I call the "Playing Card" series. They're small plates which I carry around and also give to my friends. (They're) very quick for making up or putting down ideas. And I guess I must have a couple hundred plates already.

ROBERT BROWN: (Do you use) a little etching needle?

DIMITRI HADZI: Exactly. And I just...Like in Japan, I took some plates with me in Japan, when I was in Siphnos, Greece, you know. And I hand them to my artist friends. I want to potentially make a portfolio of all my friends who've made an etching for this series. So I think it's a wonderful way of putting down ideas, but they're really piling up now! (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: Do you find that -- they've piled up now, but you've always done alot of sketching. Do you find that that's the way things evolve?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Alot of things evolve...yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Do you move, I mean can you move from one to five hundred and (by) the five hundreth,

you've gotten to or are nearer the idea that you want. Or is it not quite so consistent as that.

DIMITRI HADZI: Not that consistent, no.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you refer back to, let's say, plate number two or six, or something way back?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well that's a thing which, I'm glad you brought that up because, normally in the art scene, as they say, they're always interested in the latest thing you're putting out, you know. Here is what so-and-so is doing in 1985, 1986. Where(as), I have these ideas that I keep going back to. I mean, I was just going through my drawings and my prints now to make some wax studies for future bronzes. Now some of these ideas which I find very good now, were done in '80 -- that's six years ago. And I don't care, I mean...

ROBERT BROWN: Sure.

DIMITRI HADZI: But, yes. Other people may care, but I mean, I'm going to...What I do now may be the title of the sculpture, will be dated by the conceptual time not the finished time?

ROBERT BROWN: Some of these will have had six or seven year gestation periods?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. Absolutely, absolutely. Sometimes these are too fresh, these ideas, it takes a number of years to really see it. That's why maybe every couple of months, when I go through the sketchbooks, I go "Bang! Why didn't I notice that before? That's a terrific idea!"

ROBERT BROWN: This must be true of an awful lot of people.

DIMITRI HADZI: I'm sure, yes. But some people don't...I think alot of them just, they're not interested in earlier work. They jjust want their latest work to be their most important work. They think the latest thing they do is the best.

ROBERT BROWN: So they put it in deep storage, so to speak?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. That's why I stick to themes like Pillars of Hercules, that's been going on, what, fifteen years, that theme, and I'm not giving it up.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: I think what was interesting about the Fogg (Art Museum) show, that theme, Pillars of Hercules, went way back. You know, the different variations on the theme, in different materials.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes. That was 1984, that show?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Did we do a thing there?

ROBERT BROWN: Not during the show, we met there.

DIMITRI HADZI: It would've been nice to have walked around I guess, to...

ROBERT BROWN: It would have very graphically given a feeling of how you work and rework a theme.

DIMITRI HADZI: That's not so popular these days, I guess thematic...

ROBERT BROWN: You find it isn't? You find that people like to see a whole, and exceedingly wholly new...

DIMITRI HADZI: A new thing, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Is this true in the...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well of course (we) generalize, it's hard to generalize...

ROBERT BROWN: Well, we talked about the public material and we've now just been talking about exhibitions. From those exhibitions, where does most material seem to go? Are private collectors the primary purchasers, or is some also in public collections?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, mostly public. No. I mean mostly private collections. I seem not to be a very fashionable sculptor. In the sense that very few museums have purchased my work in the last few years. It seems to be mostly private, private people. I'm not fashionable.

ROBERT BROWN: As you've mentioned in the past, the late collector on a huge scale was Joseph Hirschhorn.

When did he become aware of your work?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh it was way back. I guess it must have been the late fifties, early sixties. Yes, with the exhibition at the Radich Gallery. That's where he first saw it. At Stephen Radich, that was about '60, '59, something like that.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you ever meet with him or...

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh many times.

ROBERT BROWN: You ate with him?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. And he'd always tell me how talented I was. But we were, the time I got to really know him was in Venice. We met at the airport. And of course the Italians had a strike, way back then (laughs). So we spent a few hours together at the airport.

ROBERT BROWN: Sitting together?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. And we got very personal, talked about very personal problems and stuff like that and it was during that time he said (he) was going to...and his purpose in going to Rome was to visit Manzu? And he said, "if I was interested in going..." So I said, "Well, sure, I'm a great admirer of Manzu's. I have a few books of prints of his which I'd love to have him autograph."

ROBERT BROWN: But you had not met him yet?

DIMITRI HADZI: No. I'd never met him. He's very difficult to get to, Manzu. He's not like Marini.

ROBERT BROWN: Oh.

DIMITRI HADZI: And so Hirschhorn said, "I'll make a deal with you. If you drive me out there, I'll see that you come with me and have lunch out there." So I said, "o.k." So we drove out and I took my books with me. Books of Manzu, two or three volumes. And (we) went there, and of course, Manzu (was) very suspicious -- I was introduced as a sculptor. It was very awkward. He's a very private guy. But I showed I was a great admirer, I brought these books which he signed to me. He was very flattered by that. So it all went very smoothly, very nicely. And we had lunch and he took us around the studios (where) he was working on some projects. He seemed very relaxed at this point and then I noticed, I knew that he'd just finished a series of aquatints. And some American group had sent over a press and the printers to do these. Imagine!

ROBERT BROWN: Some Americans?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, some American publisher. I can't remember the name now. So I said "what happened to the plates?" Because I'm interested. I used to go the Casa della Grafica? in Rome and look at the original plates. You know, you could see the original Piranesis and every one, all the old (greats) like that. And so I said, "what do you do with the plates?" So he pulled me over to the corner and there was this pile of...It looked like a coppersmith's shop. Raising? copper cups and plates. They were all smashed in the middle so no one could possibly make any copies from them. And Manzu is a very extraordinary man but he's also very, a kind of simple peasant mentality. He doesn't trust...probably rightly so, he doesn't trust anybody. So he didn't want people to make copies. He was fearing that it was possible that someone from New York would probably pull them out and then, you know like the _____? Piranesis and stuff like that. So he smashed them all up. And I looked at them and I thought, "Oh my God!"

ROBERT BROWN: But he came to know you or to trust you at least?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well he trusted me enough to tell me that. But I never saw him again. I might have spoken to his friend...

ROBERT BROWN: But you'd gone out with Hirschhorn. What was he like? You must have seen him other times.

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I knew him. I used to call him Uncle Joe and I met him quite a few times in Europe and one time I had a cocktail party for him and I very unselfishly invited all my sculptor friends, (thinking) hopefully, that he'd buy something. And he did buy some things from some of the sculptors.

ROBERT BROWN: Was he fairly direct?

DIMITRI HADZI: Very direct and wanted bargains.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes I've heard that he always...

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Bought by the numbers. As a matter of fact, when he bought two of my sculptures, I had them at Radich Gallery at the time, and he came back, I mean Radich, and he said, "Oh I've got very good news for you. Hirschhorn wants to buy two of your sculptures, the Helmet and the -----?" And I say, "is that so?" And he said, "the only trouble is that he wants a special price." So I looked at the price and I said, "impossible, Hirschhorn or not!" So he came around to what I wanted. First of all they were reasonably priced. Because it was my first show in New York, and I wanted to get the work out.

ROBERT BROWN: And he wanted to go even below those? Was he...this kind of mean-spiritedness in conversation?

DIMITRI HADZI: He wasn't mean, no. He wasn't mean. He was one of those big back-slapping types. He was very friendly, you know. But he wanted great bargains. He would buy en masse. He'd come in and buy, from me it was only two sculptures, but at other shows, he'd buy five or six pieces, something like that. He had a wonderful wife. I liked her very much.

ROBERT BROWN: Who are some of the other collectors who stick in your mind? I think you have mentioned...

DIMITRI HADZI: Well, Gordon Bunshaft.

ROBERT BROWN: The architect with Skidmore, Owings and Merrill?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, Bunshaft.

ROBERT BROWN: Was he someone you got to know a bit?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, he, I got to know him by, in Rome. I called him up once. I knew he was in town. I heard he came and saw a show with some of my pieces in the Palazzo Venezia as a matter of fact. Americans in Rome, or something like that, and he responded to the work I had there. And then when I went to New York about a year or two later, a friend of mine, Helen Seiferheld, had a huge apartment and she let me have an exhibition in it and we sent out invitations. Not having a gallery, this was a friend of mine.

ROBERT BROWN: And this was about when?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh it would be '58 or something like that, '59. We sent out cards to all my friends through my wife.? And I sent one to Bunshaft. So Bunshaft called and Bunshaft said, "Have you got that piece, those two pieces I liked so much in Rome last year?" And I said, "yes, you mean the Helmet and the Scudi." I said, "yes, they're here." And he said, "can you bring them right over?" (laughs) The bank was on Park Avenue and...

ROBERT BROWN: (Do you mean) his office?

DIMITRI HADZI: No, no. This was the Chase Manhattan. He and Dorothy Miller were setting up the interiors. So my wife and I grabbed these two pieces, and got into a cab, and carried them. We put them on a desk, and they stayed there. They bought both of them. (laughs) So that was the beginning of the Bunshaft affair. He's gotten very fond of me somehow or another. He's a tough man, you know. A tough guy.

ROBERT BROWN: A hardliner?

DIMITRI HADZI: He knows what he likes, and he's got catholic tastes. A great collection.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes.

DIMITRI HADZI: I was always fond of him somehow, and he always liked me very much. And he bought other pieces, from the Grey Gallery. Then he had a big piece he bought from the same show from which Hirschhorn bought the Scudi. And he had that out in his yard and it was reproduced in Time Magazine, and in color, which was exciting. And then he asked me to make models for, to make sketches for the Chase Manhattan Plaza. And that was, wow, that was...I never got it, but I was very disappointed obviously, but I was very flattered to be...I mean here I was, an unknown sculptor...

ROBERT BROWN: This is when you were still in Rome?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. That's right. And there I was competing with Noguchi, and he was very disappointed that he didn't get it? and there was Henry Moore, Calder, Giacometti, and then finally, Dubuffet. So that was fantastic company. (laughs) And I was unhappy, of course, that Dubuffet got it, but I think that it was a very good solution. And in all honesty I think it works much better than anything I would have put there. I think it was the right thing and Gordon was right. I think Giacometti would have been wrong. Have you seen any of those long Giacometti figures? Have you seen those little ----? Chase Manhattan Plaza. He never worked that big, and I don't think they would have worked there. I think the scale was wrong.

ROBERT BROWN: Did this, that competition, and the company you were asked to keep, in the competition. Did this lead you to think you might like to come back to America more or to stay here?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not necessarily, because I had very good facilities for working and casting was extremely cheap. And that's why most of the sculptors were there. Who'd have thought to cast in America?

ROBERT BROWN: Did you, were there other collectors you were acquiring by this time?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, right. That was a period in Rome when alot of collectors were going through Rome.

ROBERT BROWN: Were there others that stand out besides Hirschhorn and Bunshaft?

DIMITRI HADZI: Those were the main ones I think, yes those were about the main collectors. At the moment, I just can't think of others, but...

ROBERT BROWN: Your placement of work in museums, is that, did that begin...

DIMITRI HADZI: What's that?

ROBERT BROWN: The placement of your work in museums, did that begin fairly early?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes. Well the thing is that, Andrew Ritchie, who was the Curator of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, then he became the director, he's dead now, but he became the director of the Yale Museum. And I was at the American Academy at the time. My wife had a fellowship and I was invited as a guest. And he heard about me, he wanted to see my work. And I showed him my work, and he said, would you be interested in New Talent, would you like to participate in a New Talent Show at the Museum of Modern Art? (laughs) I almost fainted.

ROBERT BROWN: This was back in the fifties, wasn't it?

DIMITRI HADZI: The fifties, yes. So I was in the New Talent Show. And that was one of the things that really got things rolling, in many ways.

ROBERT BROWN: Yes?

DIMITRI HADZI: Mr. Rockefeller bought one of my sculptures. --------bought one of my sculptures. And I got into the Biennale, I mean it was a completely different art world at that time. And of course they're all replaced with a different kind of curators now, the old guard, they're all died off.

ROBERT BROWN: How would you compare the two?

DIMITRI HADZI: Now I think they're very fashion oriented. They're not so individual.

ROBERT BROWN: Then you could discern different and distinct tastes?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, these people really, they had a good eye. They didn't go by what was fashionable.

ROBERT BROWN: Someone like Ritchie would have heard of your work and looked at and mulled it over?

DIMITRI HADZI: He would have looked at it. Yes. And Rene d'Harnoncourt was very important.

ROBERT BROWN: What did he do for you?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well he purchased the piece for the Museum of Modern Art for one thing. And then he got me into Americans ------in Paris. That was a very important show. I met Giacometti there for the first or second time. And then he was involved with the Venice Biennale too, which I...Louise Nevelson and I were the sculptors, I don't think I told you about that.

ROBERT BROWN: I don't think you did.

DIMITRI HADZI: There were four artists. So Louise Nevelson and myself were...

ROBERT BROWN: The sculptors.

DIMITRI HADZI: Two sculptors. And if you read Glimliches (sic) book on Louise Nevelson, I'm not mentioned.

ROBERT BROWN: Oh he doesn't mention it, I see. Arnold Glimpshire?, wasn't it.

DIMITRI HADZI: Glimpshire, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: What was that experience like? That was what, in the mid-fifties, late fifties?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes that was fifty-nine, I think it was, yes.

ROBERT BROWN: Can you describe that, the occasion?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes it was interesting because Rene d'Harnoncourt. Of course Louise Nevelson had the three rooms, two big galleries, and there was Lauren McGiver who had another room, and then Muller, who's dead.

ROBERT BROWN: Jan Muller?

DIMITRI HADZI: Jan Muller. He was dead at that time. So those were the four artists representing the U.S. So they wanted to really push Nevelson for the big prize. But of course, they were competing with Giacometti (laughs) who got the prize anyway.

ROBERT BROWN: What kind of space were you given?

DIMITRI HADZI: I was outside. I had three big pieces outside.

ROBERT BROWN: Bronzes?

DIMITRI HADZI: All bronzes, yes. And she had the two rooms and the entrance. And one room had her black sculptures, the other one had her white ones and the central one was all gold. And she set it up by herself, but Rene d'Harnoncourt was a guy who had a terrific sense of setting up shows. We all had just arrived, and (it was) late, and he came and we all had dinner together at the ----? there were a whole bunch of us. And at the end he said, he told Louise, "we'll meet in the morning and we'll do some changes on the exhibit." He almost completely reorganized the show. (laughs)

ROBERT BROWN: What did she think of that?

DIMITRI HADZI: Well he was the boss, so...Well, it mostly was the gold section. It was overpowering, you know. That's how I got to know Louise at that time.

ROBERT BROWN: Did you get along with her?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes, yes. She's terrific. I'm very fond of her. And I think her show looked wonderful. I didn't like the gold very much, but I think the white and the black things were exceptionally good.

ROBERT BROWN: Is she pretty easy to get to know, to talk to?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, she's very friendly. I still like to consider her a friend, I see her occasionally. She's a wonderful woman.

ROBERT BROWN: So that was pretty nice company, wasn't it, because you were a pretty young sculptor?

DIMITRI HADZI: Oh yes. I was young. Yes, that's right.

ROBERT BROWN: You mentioned Dorothy Miller a couple of times, have you gotten to know her quite well?

DIMITRI HADZI: Not too well, I know her. She wasn't one of my promoters, unfortunately.

ROBERT BROWN: The Biennale in that period was extremely important internationally, wasn't it?

DIMITRI HADZI: Yes, it was very serious and I think it was something. Later on it got very political and businesslike. But, if you can visualize in the Piazza S. Marco where all these tables, where the artists from all over the world were there. I mean there was Giacometti talking to somebody and Henry Moore, and the museum people and the critics. All very, kind of loose, and it was just wonderful, like a big ball in someone's, what do you call it, like a...salon, you know? It's all changed, power politics! (laughs)

END OF INTERVIEW

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