Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Hunter Kariher, 1992 May 22-23

Funding for the transcription of this interview provided by the Smithsonian Institution's Women's Committee.

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Hunter Kariher on May 22, 1992. The interview was conducted at Penland School by Jane Kessler for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose. This is a rough transcription that may include typographical errors.

Interview

JANE KESSLER: Hunter Kariher at the Penland School in Penland, North Carolina on May 22, 1992 for the Archives of American Art. This is tape 1, side 1. Hunter, when did you become the director of Penland School?

HUNTER KARIHER: I became the director at the annual auction around the middle of August, 1989.

MS. KESSLER: Okay. Weren't you assistant director under Verne Stanford prior to that?

MR. KARIHER: Prior to that in '85 I came and taught a woodworking session and came back in September as the assistant director with Verne.

MS. KESSLER: Okay, what was Verne looking for in an assistant director when he hired you?

MR. KARIHER: Well, when I was teaching there some night he asked me over for a drink, to come to his house for a drink and talk and he had sort of been fielding complaints about this and that. It was his first summer there. And I had figured out to be one of the complainers too and I wanted to talk to him on a bunch of things like that he should be doing. When we got down to the conversation he said, "well, why don't you come back as assistant director and take care of those things?" That's really how it started.

MS. KESSLER: What were some of the complaints?

MR. KARIHER: The studios not being in good shape. I had had the experience of teaching there for years before and the design of the wood studio was not a good functional studio. It wasn't designed by a woodworker and there were some basic complaints that I thought could have been dealt with.

MS. KESSLER: Did those complaints apply to all the studios or just wood or -

MR. KARIHER: Well, at that point I was only, had the monocular vision to think about the wood studio. It was a new studio that year and it had been designed and built that year and it was the first set of classes in it that summer, and so that most complaints were probably in that one. There are chronic complaints about all the studios still by different people, which are expected.

MS. KESSLER: Yeah.

MR. KARIHER: But this was sort of some major design problems that should have been dealt with beforehand.

MS. KESSLER: When were you an instructor there?

MR. KARIHER: I taught eight years before that, and I came down originally to take someone's place. Frank Cummings, a California woodworker had to cancel at the last minute. Doug Sigler under Bill Brown called me and three days later I was teaching at Penland.

MS. KESSLER: Okay, so that was - you had taught there eight years before you came for -

MR. KARIHER: Eight summer sessions, three week summer sessions.

MS. KESSLER: And what did you teach?

MR. KARIHER: Woodworking and furniture design.

MS. KESSLER: Okay, and that was under - who was the director?

MR. KARIHER: Bill Brown for the first seven and then Verne for that last year.

MS. KESSLER: Okay, and it was during, under Bill Brown too the studios still were - everything was in need of

upfitting and updating in the studios at that point too?

MR. KARIHER: Definitely. They were much simpler studios and you could do less things than they've developed into. But they were basic studios and were in pretty bad condition. No one seemed to mind. And after that first year Bill and the people that he had doing the programming with him figured out that I was very good with studio set up and equipment and making things and fixing things to make the studio work well, so they usually had me come down at the beginning of the summer for my session. And I always taught that sort of maintenance and equipment care to my students and it became part of the program. And obviously Penland benefitted because the rest of the summer it was in better shape.

MS. KESSLER: What were you doing before you took the job at Penland?

MR. KARIHER: I had my own woodworking studio for about 17 years. And after starting at Penland and working backwards I had, before I opened my studio I worked for a man named Wendell Castle, a woodworker in upstate New York.

MS. KESSLER: Wendell Castle?

MR. KARIHER: Yeah. For three years. Before that I got my MFA and my BFA from the School for American Craftsmen in Rochester Institute of Technology. Wendell was one of the teachers there for a while and when I finished my MFA I started working for him full time.

MS. KESSLER: And you were doing your own work at the same time too, though?

MR. KARIHER: A little bit, and setting up my own studio at the same time, nights and weekends. And well, to finish the backwards resume, before I went to RIT I had gone to the University of Tennessee architecture school for three years and later transferred to RIT, the School for American Craftsmen.

MS. KESSLER: What was your work like?

MR. KARIHER: Well, as a student I had decided that I should learn and get comfortable with every technique that was available and the theory at that time was RIT was the only place. The SAC School as it was called - School for American Craftsmen, S A C, SAC School; it still is called that - had a long history that had traveled around the northeast and it was the only school that taught any and offered degrees at the time in any of the crafts. And they had great technicians and a good mixture of both technique and art backgrounds. And then the studio, most of us, it was a very small school at that time; 12 students. It's about 60 in the woodworking department now. But the focus was to expose us to as much, many techniques and as many aesthetic ways of expression as possible, and we did that. And the idea was to have, not be restrained by different techniques or be stuck in a technique that you'd be forced to deal with all the time. And if you knew enough - if you had a variety of techniques and backgrounds you could pick the appropriate one to make the aesthetic statement without sacrificing because of technique. And I think that the work demonstrated that. It didn't have any great technical direction although it was extremely well crafted work, my own and the people that worked for me. The craftsmanship ended up to be sort of a mechanical thing. And the theory being only bad craftsmanship shows; good craftsmanship is never seen. If you see the craftsmanship it's probably detracting from the statement of the piece. So -

MS. KESSLER: Do you still adhere to that?

MR. KARIHER: I still think that a lot. I think that administratively and I see it in the studios. Well, and Penland's grown to 14 different studios and I have no plan to knowing the techniques in all the studios or what's good and bad. Bad technique sort of sticks out to me no matter in what media it is, and it does detract from the pieces.

MS. KESSLER: So was your work, were you making furniture or were you making objects? Did you distinguish? Was that and is that something that still influences the way you think about Penland and the classes and the teaching?

MR. KARIHER: It all ties together, I think. When I started I started by doing whatever commission work that I had and starting a small production line and also doing an awful lot of Wendell Castle's work in my own studio where he would subcontract me to make pieces for him, which increased his production and gave me some money to keep going, some steady money to keep going with. I think that the shop, my shop went through an awful lot of transitions that looking back we probably did things until we got successful at it and then quit and then started something else.

MS. KESSLER: That sounds like Penland, too. [Laughter.]

MR. KARIHER: It does. I'm not sure how far we've gotten with the success thing yet.

MS. KESSLER: [Laughter.]

MR. KARIHER: I think also being a perfectionist probably showed in the work and the methods of work and the type of work that we did.

MS. KESSLER: Your being a perfectionist?

MR. KARIHER: Yeah. For good or bad. Penland's tempered that an awful lot.

MS. KESSLER: [Laughter.] I can imagine.

MR. KARIHER: But I think the intent was to do art furniture and it's everyone's dream just to do shows and have their pieces sold for a lot of money in shows. But I had a pretty good mixture of doing both commission work, which is all different things, and show gallery work and getting fairly, quite successful at both.

MS. KESSLER: You were?

MR. KARIHER: Yeah. I worked in a rather isolated environment initially by myself and then one person helping, then two, and getting up to eight people at times working together in my studio. It ended up to be a fairly large, physically large place, about 9,000 square feet.

MS. KESSLER: Wow.

MR. KARIHER: And later, because of whatever reason, the success/failure thing or success challenged thing, I guess, we went back to some production stuff both in ACE fair type production and museum/store type production. But also fairly large stuff, some production furniture. And ultimately we ended up doing an awful lot of production work for industry, mainly Knoll International and Gunlock Furniture, doing prototype work and -

MS. KESSLER: Who were the two manufacturers?

MR. KARIHER: Knoll International, which was a, which is a very longstanding, very - a company that had an awful lot of integrity. I think it's been sold a few times in recent years and I don't know what the, what it's like now. But they had the original Barcelona chair and an awful lot of original work that they still did but with an awful lot of absolute truth to the design of the artist that [inaudible] and they had an awful lot of integrity in the pieces that we did for them. We were involved in a number of them. We were doing pieces that were in their catalog for $6,000 and $7,000 each, chairs.

MS. KESSLER: Was that hard to leave?

MR. KARIHER: Well, I know later on you're going to ask me about not doing my own work and it all ties together, yeah. People have asked me if I miss doing my own work and I used to think that they were talking about doing furniture but the reality is that I'm an administrator now and that is my own work.

MS. KESSLER: Okay.

MR. KARIHER: And either some rationalization or something about missing it or not missing it. I think of Penland an awful lot the way we used to do furniture in that furniture are pieces of furniture and the work that we used to do, that I used to do, were an awful lot of small, nicely done pieces that put together into one nice collaborative piece. And I think of Penland the same way. I think of the studios as members of one big unit and my job is to keep the big unit in line, and I don't have to deal an awful lot with the integrity of each little piece if there are good people doing it. That's the way my old business was and I think of Penland being that way now still. So there's an awful lot of similarity either through rationalization or through reality.

MS. KESSLER: No, I, that would have been my next question, how your skills as a craftsperson affected you as an administrator, and I think you just answered that. That -

MR. KARIHER: Well, there's a lot of other things that factor in, and I think of the way Penland started and the way it is today as being very close in intent or in mission in my mind and that ties directly to the craft movement all the way along, its history in this century, I think. And I think when Lucy started she was trying to start cottage industries and I still think that that's one of the things that Penland does, fostering independence in people with the direction and integrity that want to work by themselves for themselves and produce something beautiful and have it marketed. And I still think that's part of the mission of Penland School. I think there are other things that have come in and it's expressed in different ways. Certainly we are making coverlets and bookends and things like that as production items, but the theory is still there that Lucy started, I think. I think through the programs, the present programs and possible future programs, I think that that is going to be enhanced even more.

[Audio Break.]

MS. KESSLER: Do you feel it's ever a disadvantage to be a working craftsperson being the director or administrator of a craft school?

MR. KARIHER: I think that the board could probably testify to that a little bit better. I think - I probably am the, one of the best students Penland School has ever had and I think that the things that I've learned there aren't the same things that I dealt with in my own studio. The scale has changed an awful lot and it's become, some of that information is in different directions. Finances are the same. Marketing, the same problems are - the same problems face the individual craftsperson that Penland School faces all the time. And I think that my background made me address some of those things on a very small scale in a very focused way that now I'm looking at and using that background as an administrator for the school. I think the balance between aesthetic and craftsmanship and function and things like that are all the same arguments whether you're talking administratively or in the studio. And if you can probably think big enough you draw from your past experience to help you in the present. But I do think that I've learned an awful lot being an administrator but the basic, the ABCs were there from being my own boss in the studio.

MS. KESSLER: Would you go back to being a producing craftsperson?

MR. KARIHER: Possibly sometime. What I've - I've sort of bought the rhetoric of Penland School and the exposure to so many things. I'm not sure whether I'd be focused specifically in wood anymore, and probably not focused - I think I'd still do furniture but I'm not sure whether it would be wooden furniture. I think I could do things sculpturally much better than I ever did or ever thought I could, sort of being freed by the bounds of the media.

MS. KESSLER: Is that what you mean when you say the rhetoric of Penland School?

MR. KARIHER: Well, I think so. I believe that people learn an awful lot from seeing the other work that's going on and that I can learn from every one of those studios. But I've been exposed to so much of it that - in a very positive way that I think it's sort of taken me out of a single focused media. I think even techniques are the same to me. I see similarities in techniques from metal to wood to glass. And it's a great position to be in because you get that distance to get generalized knowledge of different media that seem to link together somehow, and I think I'd use that in my own studio when I left.

MS. KESSLER: And that's always been a part of Penland's teaching methodology, hasn't it?

MR. KARIHER: Definitely. That exposure and openness of all the studios to all the students and instructors has been one of the big pluses for the place. When I had opened up my own studio Wendell Castle started his own woodworking school in his hometown outside Rochester, New York, and I was both on the board and on the faculty of the school. And the - one of the biggest things that I saw with the whole operation, both philosophically and functionally, was that they were all workworkers there and the single focus was terribly limiting to the students. And we finally got them so that they could go and visit RIT, which was only 12 miles away, and be with weavers and potters and [inaudible] and painters and get exposed to other things. The theory was great if you wanted to learn woodworking. You became an incredible technician there. But you only learned from woodworkers and that's -

MS. KESSLER: From what?

MR. KARIHER: From woodworkers, and that's a very limited thing. Or from potters or whatever single media there is.

MS. KESSLER: How did you first know about Penland School? What was your first knowledge of the school?

MR. KARIHER: Well, my background at the School for American Craftsmen, it was a fairly small school and the instructors had all taught at Penland and I'd heard about it through them. It was a - sort of a strange mystery to me. I didn't come into the crafts through any kind of a long history. I was in architecture school and making furniture and a guy came through and - making furniture in the model shop mainly with welded stuff. And a guy came through and talked to me about it and sort of gave me an offhanded critique about the stuff and said he was from Rochester and had I ever heard of the School for American Craftsmen. I hadn't. And the next time I was in the area I went to visit it and transferred in. And so my background wasn't in the crafts until fairly late. My mother had been a, is still a painter. And my sister had gone to, graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art in ceramics. But I had dropped out of high school and gone in the Navy for quite a while and then worked as a mechanic and a bartender and then decided to go to architecture school. So none of those things sort of led into the historical sides of different educational facilities. But I had heard about it when I was at RIT and was interested, but I was on sort of a cram mission because I had started out so late and I was married and we had one child at the time. I wanted to get through school as quickly as I could. So I was a graduate assistant through - an assistant on a graduate assistant year-round at RIT and it didn't leave me out of a place in the summer. And

but for a serious thing was to be called and asked to fill in for somebody and I came down and found a place that way and obviously never left.

MS. KESSLER: So it happened to you what happens to most people is that once they get to Penland they're there forever?

MR. KARIHER: Yeah, somehow.

MS. KESSLER: Somehow you never get unattached.

MR. KARIHER: No.

MS. KESSLER: You are one of only four directors in Penland's 60 year history. Can you tell me what you think is the most significant contribution of the other directors and your own contribution or what you perceive as your own most significant contribution?

MR. KARIHER: Well, in general I think all of the directors have ended up - it's easier to talk about as if I was gone, I think, at this point. But I think of all the directors adaptability is - or flexibility is the key that lets Penland survive. I'm sure that's what it'll end up doing forever, surviving because of flexibility. I think Lucy had that great seed of starting up helping people, helping local people mainly, and teaching them something they could function with and earn money and survive with during the Depression. And that won its root until after the Depression and the mountains were sort of found out as a source of cheap labor for industry and the mills came in and furniture companies and what was taught at Penland and what Lucy originally intended wasn't a desirable thing to do anymore. People could earn more money easier in the factories and hand weaving started to die out again. And she changed it then to have more foreign students and veterans and things like that. And almost, in its somewhat romantically recorded history it seemed to me from conversation that the place would flourish and then almost and then flounder and then something else would come along and flourish and then flounder. I think it was in a terrible doldrum when - and Lucy knew it when she hired Bill Brown and Bill Brown came with an awful lot of spark and innovative thoughts on education and art craft. And it'll take some art historian 50 years from now to figure out the art craft resurgence of the early '60s and hippies and all that stuff. But that all happened with Bill and I have the belief that Bill helped start that movement and sort of foster the resurgence of crafts again, as Lucy did. And it started in another direction. And the old folk craft thing was being taught at other places and the steeped in tradition design work was being taught well at other places.

MS. KESSLER: Like where?

MR. KARIHER: Like John C. Campbell fairly locally and other institutions of the same sort. Arrowmount I think was still doing that sort of thing through the '60s. But Bill had come from Haystack and Cranbrook and his background was really design and sculpture. And why Lucy picked Bill Brown is beyond me, except that she must have had some other vision to see the worth of that. And I can't belittle her contribution to the resurgence of the arts and crafts again because she picked him and it happened. But Bill Brown was the argument about is it art or craft and he reveled in it. And that's what brought Penland back, because the studios moved from being vocational shops to art studios and the whole change in direction of the whole of American craft changed at the same time. And, of course, Bill brought glass and it was the first glass really being taught in a studio form in the country. All with the same thing in mind, that people could go away and do it on their own either professionally or as a serious hobby.

MS. KESSLER: Do it on their own meaning that they could produce work in their own studio?

MR. KARIHER: Somehow at some level and some scale. But they could come there and learn the skills to both put the studio together and to produce the work and learn from example from the instructors that were there. Bill brought that whole rotating instructor thing or temporary instructor thing in. During Lucy's time an awful lot of the instructors were fairly permanent. Whenever weaving was taught the same people taught it. Whenever lapidary was taught the same people taught it. And Bill sent out through the country and found people that would come for two or three weeks at a time and teach their own thing to students, but they may not come back for years, and rotating and keeping the program vital that way. I think one of the other similarities with Lucy and Bill was that respect for the individual and the intent of the individual, and I think that both Bill and Lucy had so much respect for individuals and individual expression that there was a fairly solid thread between the two of them. I think that Lucy's main intent was survival and teaching and reviving and keeping something going that ancestors had done and present people should know. Bill, I think, took a more liberal or poetic approach to the thing where individual expression was very important to him. And I think failure was, the worry about failure and not the actual failing to produce something or failing to accomplish something but trying for Bill was very important. The trying was the very successful part. Whether it was physically successful or aesthetically successful was unimportant to Bill. And I think that is still in place and it was in place through Verne Stanford and certainly through me. Of course, Lucy's background came in a fairly rigid public school background and the backgrounds of the different directors had a director influence on what they thought and how they accomplished

what they were doing. And it would be fairly logical to see that Lucy did things by rote and taught technique very well by the book because of her background. And I think Bill, coming through Cranbrook and design and sculpture school, was much more open to taking chances and the freedom of expression aspects of it.

MS. KESSLER: They both seem to be, and you seem to be, interested in the process as opposed to the object itself. Is that true?

MR. KARIHER: Well, definitely as a student and definitely if you think of the product itself as an expression. I think no matter what the product is and no matter what stage and quality it is it is an expression of the person at that time. And if it's a failure it's a misnomer because it's a success because it is an expression and it's where they are then. And if they don't like the way this line is or that bump is they've got a chance to correct it the next time or learn from it, but it is that expression. So there aren't any failures in the whole thing. I think that the success is ultimately in the mind of the maker, whether they feel as though what they wanted to say with the piece is being said or not. And I think students, fledgling craftspeople have a hard time realizing that to begin with but also because they're so stuck on learning technique. So that with beginning students it's much more important for them in their own minds to have product. I'll tell a story about my sister. In the Cleveland Institute of Art her instructor was Toshiko Takaezu. And at the end of their first semester there they had to put up their entire semester's worth of work out for critique. It sounds brutal, but Toshiko went through and never said a word and went down these tables of work. He came to my sister's work, he came to everybody's work and looked at each piece individually and held it in her hand and then threw it on the floor and broke it.

MS. KESSLER: Ouch.

MR. KARIHER: And she only save done piece of each student's work and that was the piece that she thought was the success of the semester.

MS. KESSLER: How painful.

MR. KARIHER: It was very painful, but I think it only happened the first semester with them and after that I think they threw a lot of their own stuff out before she could critique it. It was easier for them. [Laughter.]

MS. KESSLER: [Laughter.] I guess. That seems pretty harsh. That's a great story. Geez.

MR. KARIHER: Of course, what Toshiko did was not what Penland is at this point. It never was, in that those pieces are all important and they're all steps in the process and landmarks. And sort of the brutal critique is nothing that ever happened or should ever happen at Penland. There have been great, very productive critiques that I've sat in on and participated in that are encouraging things. And again, I believe in the success of the piece being in the maker's mind and not anybody else's. If you put the stuff out in a show or put it up for a jury or subjecting it to some other judgment, but that isn't where it is at Penland.

MS. KESSLER: I think that's what, that seems to me what makes people feel so free to do what they need to do at Penland and that seems to be part of its legacy.

MR. KARIHER: Well, I think that that whole push and pull of both being pressed to learn and produce and participate at Penland is also mixed with that same comfort for what could be considered a failure. And there's a friend of mine whose saying sticks in my mind about the way people fit at Penland. And she's a very large woman but she said, "at Penland I don't feel fat." And I think that that's the way it is with the work as well. I don't think that people ever feel the pressure to be compared to other things. It's based on their own growth and individual accomplishments in their own mind and there are no comparisons and it's noncompetitive, and all that leads to a better education in my mind. And I think that that's one of the successes of Penland that that comfort is there, that they can learn at their own rate and come in at their own rate and feel comfortable in the process.

MS. KESSLER: I think noncompetitive is a key word in that whole discussion in my mind.

MR. KARIHER: It's interesting, at the end of every session we have something called show and tell and it's when the students put out whatever work they want to put out and they're encouraged to put whatever they want out. In many cases they put finished pieces out, unfinished pieces, failures, things that have broken. All that is out there and it's just as important, it's just as important for them to see it but it's also important for the other instructors and students to see it as well. And some things they're more proud of than others but they should be proud of all of it because that's their statement. Whatever is on that pile or in the grass on that blanket is their statement for the last two or three weeks or eight weeks at the place.

MS. KESSLER: Can you talk a little bit about Verne Stanford's administration?

MR. KARIHER: Well, when Bill left he had an incredibly loyal following and it deeply hurt an awful lot of the crafts

community when he left Penland School. And a man named Richardson Rice, who was on the board, came in as an interim director and he ran the place for a few months while they were doing a search for a new person. They found Verne Stanford. It was before my time and I'm not sure -

[Audio Break.]

MR. KARIHER: Well, the search committee found Verne and I'm not sure of that process but they found someone that had never been to Penland before and I think that that was a very successful thing for the board to do because he came in without any preconceived ideas and without any background in the place or the people and it was part of the healing process. And I think in retrospect this may not be a nice thing to say but they couldn't have found a different, a better person for the job at the time. That he came in and churned things up and shook them around and made people think about things and ended up not being a terribly popular director because of that, because of the sort of lack of respect for the historical side and the people that were there before.

MS. KESSLER: His lack of respect?

MR. KARIHER: His lack of respect based on his lack of knowledge. But he did bring in other people that are still coming back, and that's good.

MS. KESSLER: Instructors?

MR. KARIHER: Instructors. And he also hired me, which wasn't so bad [Laughter.]

MS. KESSLER: [Laughter.] The best thing he did.

MR. KARIHER: Well. We should [inaudible] that one. Anyway -

MS. KESSLER: When you - let me go back a minute, though, to capture when you're talking about the healing process. You spoke earlier of the feelings of the craft community because of Bill's leaving, that that was a very difficult time. So that's what you're referring to when you talk about the healing process?

MR. KARIHER: The healing process, yes. Bill didn't leave on the best of terms. Bill and Jane didn't leave on the best of terms. And it should be recognized probably for every two people that supported Bill in the crafts community there was one that had been turned off by Penland as well. And when Verne came some of those good people came back as well and supported the place and Verne went a long way towards that. I think, I often think if I had been hired at that time, which I wasn't interested in it or asked to apply or anything else, I think it would have been very difficult on me. Being partially of the old boy camp with Bill Brown and also coming back to teach with Bill or with Verne for the one year, there was a nice transition for me. And then coming back as the assistant director and Verne turning over most of the operational things to me almost immediately helped an awful lot. And it was during Verne's time that a large capital campaign got started and that's still helping Penland.

MS. KESSLER: It's my understanding that Verne, one of the things that Verne changed about Penland that was difficult was that he systematized it somewhat, that he regulated it in a way that Bill Brown refused to do. Is that accurate?

MR. KARIHER: Hang on a second.

[END TAPE 1 SIDE 1]

MS. KESSLER: Side 2 of tape 1.

MR. KARIHER: I'm not sure whether it would be fair to say that Verne regulated it much. I don't think that Verne's background - I'm not sure of Verne's background. It was through different studio operations and he had worked for the state government in California and worked with other arts organizations, but I don't really know his resume very well. But he allowed me to get us on a budget and to bring in more computers and things like that. And I think that part of the things that happened between the transition with Bill and Verne were the realization that Penland was way behind on an awful lot of stuff. It should be behind on a lot of stuff in the world but some of the mechanical things should have been brought up to date. To this day we don't know really what enrollment was like during Bill Brown's time because records really weren't kept. We don't know what financial things went on during that time because records really weren't kept. And today we can't survive without it. And it makes it difficult to make comparisons as to what is full for the school enrollment wise. I can remember the entire time that I taught woodworking was, except for the final year was in the downstairs of the clay studio and I'd have 13 students and myself there. And when I first started teaching there were only six studios that operated there. And what's happened, started happening with Verne and I've kept trying to do was to bring some sort of pseudo corporate theory into it where diversifying the studios would give us a broader base for

enrollment. And really what it's done is to let us keep what we feel is a comfortable level of students, which are about 115 to 120 students there.

MS. KESSLER: Per session?

MR. KARIHER: Per session, but not overload any studio the way they were in the past. I remember the first year I was the assistant director the clay studio, three sessions had almost 30 people in it, the single clay studio did. And that maximum is down to about 18 right now, which seems comfortable for the space. So that we've done an awful lot through that diversification to keep the place functioning with the philosophical chemistry that it needs with all those studios and all those people there, that 115 to 120, but bettering the ratio between the instructor and the student and not crowding the studios too much. If you think of one instructor for 30 students, each student doesn't get much time with that instructor. If you think of one instructor for 18, they get an awful lot more time. And that's what we're doing now. It's made the place much more complex and much more difficult to run to operate 14 studios instead of six, 14 instructors, 14 studio assistants, scholarship students in each one, housing for all those instructors - but I think that it's improved the place program wise and certainly with exposures to other media, the media that have been added and the media that have been expanded - two different clay studios, one for wheel work and one sculptural work or slab work; two, actually the three metal studios now, iron studio and fine metals jewelry studio as well as a holloware studio - offer more things to more people. And also while they're there the people that are there are exposed to an awful lot more people, media and philosophies. I mean, in a three week session in the past you'd see slides six nights. In a three week session now it's almost every night of the week you see slides from different people, different instructors.

MS. KESSLER: So you feel like Verne Stanford was - served best to bridge a gap between Bill Brown and perhaps your administration, that he served a purpose there and that that was his contribution?

MR. KARIHER: Definitely, and I also felt that through - he felt that controversy was a very positive thing and it goes back to the theory about any press is good press; even bad, even criticism is good press for you. And I think that he churned an awful lot of the crafts world up and made them think of Penland's position and what it did and brought our name more to the surface in the crafts world.

MS. KESSLER: It seemed to me that Bill Brown liked to keep Penland isolated, whereas Verne Stanford tried to get it out into the world more. Do you think that's true?

MR. KARIHER: I think it is true, and I think that it's not the right word but I think Penland under Bill had become sort of a cult place that only people that knew about Penland and believed about it, believed what it did and appreciated it would come, and they tried to keep it to themselves because they didn't want it ruined by sort of outsiders. And I think it was probably necessary because of the way it started. It's in a - when Bill came the local community, the natives were very hostile to what was happening at Penland. They hadn't recognized that the world had changed. And Penland was in one of those floundering bewilderings that needed something to change it to make it survive. And Bill came along and shook it up and brought a lot of long hairs in driving micro buses and talked funny and they were from the north and all that stuff, and ate funny food, and they weren't well accepted. And I think that Bill did an awful lot to keep local people away from the place and had the intentions of keeping other people away only so that the students wouldn't be disturbed, which is a great temptation to open Penland up to tourism because it's one of the few things in the mountains that's fascinating to an awful lot of people that are visiting the area. And I think that Bill was very protective of that. They had that attitude throughout the time. When Verne opened it up an awful lot more - he did an awful lot of roadwork, traveling to different things and talking about Penland and doing different presentations for the school that brought it out more.

MS. KESSLER: Do you think it's in balance now?

MR. KARIHER: I feel comfortable the way it is, the way it is going probably this summer. I think that the need to open the place up to other people other than through publications is good and I think we've done things this summer that'll help that a long way. I have an incredible respect for the privacy of the studios, though, because they are open 24 hours a day and it's a very personal thing. And occasionally, particularly in the last year that I taught, visitors weren't controlled at all and they'd just wander through the studios with video cameras. And it was almost like a freak show where they'd come and disturb the class or a critique was going on or a technique was being taught or demonstrations or conversations were interrupted. And one of Penland's biggest pluses is its concentration because of its isolation from the outside world and it gets shattered when somebody comes in with movie camera lights and interrupting people and asking them questions. Through the years we've developed a way to handle visitors in a much more sympathetic way to both sides of the thing.

MS. KESSLER: Okay. In your administration what do you hope to change about the school?

MR. KARIHER: I think the biggest thing on my mind this week is facilities and always has been, I think. Thinking philosophically about the facilities, they aren't much different than anything else. They're a lot of old buildings

that we've done well with just to keep standing. But people do need places to sleep and people do need places to eat and clean places to bathe and some form of comfort. Bill's old line was people didn't come here to sleep, but they have to sleep someplace and Bill knew it as well. And I think in the big picture we could talk about the program and the school and we want to preserve the best of the past that we can.

MS. KESSLER: What is the -

MR. KARIHER: Both programmatically and physically with the physical plant and go ahead with other things and bring them up to date.

MS. KESSLER: Okay. What makes Penland School different from other craft schools? Why is it different from Haystack in particular, or Anderson Ranch?

MR. KARIHER: Well, I've taught at Haystack and I've taught at Penland and firsthand experience is that at Haystack their student body is much more interested in the intellectual side of art and craft than are the Penland students. Penland students are much more interested in the physical or the tactile or the techniques or the production. While both places profess that the studios are open 24 hours a day they are at both places but they're used 24 hours a day at Penland and at Haystack there's a lot of drinking coffee and talking and reading and things like that. That's very valuable and it's a different feel. And I don't think of this in a competitive way at all. I think they're two different places and they draw different types of people. And I think Penland is the physical side of it much more and I think that people get the philosophical side from the instructor in an offhand way instead of through lectures or formal sorts of presentations. Anderson Ranch I've never really been to, but I've always had the impression that it's so much smaller than both. Penland is the largest. Anderson Ranch is on a very small amount of ground and they have not the extensive studios that Penland does. And it's quite expensive to go to, so I could image the clientele or the student body is different because of that.

MS. KESSLER: So Penland is accessible that way?

MR. KARIHER: Much more accessible financially through an awful lot of programs that nobody else has, a huge scholarship program really. And the core student program and the residency program are all extremely affordable things to open it up to people.

MS. KESSLER: When you're talking about the physical aspect of working in crafts as opposed to the intellectual that's a philosophical statement in itself. Is that part of your philosophy in terms of the school?

MR. KARIHER: I think if you think of it as a school it has an awful lot to do with my own training. I think that people can come - or your background in writing, I think people have to know the words before they can put them together in some sort of a meaningful way, and the more words they know the more they can say if they have anything to say in a paragraph or in a story or in a poem. And I think that's the same thing that happens in the arts and crafts, that if they have enough words or techniques they can - and they have something to say, they can put it together in some meaningful way. And I do think that the physical side is very important, the technique side, and the presentation of it. And I think if there's anything that they could say with it will come after they've learned those things. But they have to be exposed to different ways of bringing out the aesthetic side as well, and I think Penland does that well. They don't verbalize it well but they demonstrate it well, I think, through the work and through the instructors' work and pieces and just the feel of the place. Well, I think that then philosophically the hand has been so important in Penland's past and as we talk I think about other things we said earlier. I think that Penland has some direct relationship to the Industrial Revolution. And again Lucy's time, mills coming in, taking over from hand weaving.

MS. KESSLER: Mills coming in?

MR. KARIHER: Yeah, weaving and knitting mills to the mountains. That sort of industry coming in and that sort of thought coming in, that something that could be done originally by hand is now being done with a machine is an important thing and I think that the craft movement is going to go through phases. And at this point in my woodworker's observation it seems to recur because after the Second World War there was all that production from the war and the auto industry picked up again and the economy was booming through industry. I think that was one of the things that may have led to the crafts revival in the '60s. I think that now with - I certainly don't want to sound like a Jesse Helms but there is a move for Made in America and pride in workmanship again and a lot of it is as an anti import, anti industry feel again to me. And I think that we will experience it in the craft movement yet another turn where things that are made by hand by the individual will become much more important again. And I think through the '70s, late '70s, early '80s things did take a slump for people and the interest waned again a little bit.

MS. KESSLER: In the handmade?

MR. KARIHER: In the handmade. And it's interesting because throughout the U.S. the fibers programs are not

doing well. They aren't what they once were at Penland either, but it's still surviving and it's still strong at Penland. But if I think about things going in cycles, weaving is what started Penland and flourished for a long time and kept it going. And I think if it can tie that thought about Industrial Revolution and machine made to handmade things that weaving as well as other things will come back.

MS. KESSLER: Earlier in your own career you did some work with computer designs for industry in terms of production work for the furniture industry, is that right?

MR. KARIHER: Well, the stuff that I was doing was fairly rudimentary. I had probably the first MacIntosh in any small studio ever and I think that there were only three programs for the MacIntosh for probably about four or five years, so the drawing sophistication was not great. But certainly word processing and business programs were much more easily available. They were adopted from the old IBM stuff. We did an awful lot of time studies and things like that on the computer. We did mechanical, an awful lot of mechanical drawings on the MacIntosh that normally I'd sit at a drawing board for hours doing. And of course, I look back and that was sort of like doing things with a quill pen, what's happened to the computer these days now. I'm learning a fairly sophisticated CAD program, computer aided design program, that you can plug in threes: lay down mechanical drawings and develop a three dimensional form and rotate it and light it differently and see how a piece would actually be done. I remember when I was doing work for the furniture companies that I had to attend what's called Designer Saturday, which is a big event on the East Coast and it's all the furniture companies putting out their new lines of furniture once a year. And we would make special showpiece pieces for a couple of the companies and we'd have to go and represent the companies with those pieces. There'd be pieces that would never be produced but they were like window dressing to bring people into the showroom. And Herman Miller was the only company that had computer aided design. It's a large office supply furniture, contract furniture business; huge. And I was totally impressed by it but it was impossible for the small studio to have. I think that they told me their computer was a $2 million computer and the program had been written for them. And ten years later you can buy a better program for about $200 and run it on your MacIntosh in your own studio. And computer aided design has come a long way.

MS. KESSLER: You're resistant to bringing computer aided design into the Penland curriculum, aren't you?

MR. KARIHER: I'm guarded about it because I think what we teach basically in the summer program should be things that are taught to people that they can go home and use. We do have computer programs in the summer and they're to make computers user friendly for people, to demonstrate what they can do and they can practice with the program, but that is the media that we're teaching at the time. To get into computer aided weaving means that that person has to have a computer that can do that sort of work at home, and I'm not sure that our summer program can get people like that. I think computers have become much more affordable and an awful lot of people have computers in their own homes, but the applications to the summer program are not that great to me. I don't really see a need for our students in the summer to learn that stuff for the scale of work that they're going to go home and do. I think as we get into other programs and longer programs it's vital to those programs that we teach computer work.

MS. KESSLER: But do you still distinguish using computer designs from again philosophically the hand? Do you see it as an intervention in a way that you don't want to -

MR. KARIHER: I see the computer as a tool. The ultimate piece is the goal to achieve. And I think the computer is basically something that should be used for larger scale production than one of a kind things. I think that an awful lot of the mechanical stuff - and I still use the computer for laying out an awful lot of one time things, but it's very mechanical. I think the actual act of drawing with a pen or a pencil or ink and a ruler, that sort of tactile approach to things is an art form in itself.

MS. KESSLER: And you want to maintain that at Penland?

MR. KARIHER: I want to maintain that at Penland. I don't - I think it would be foolish to think that working with a mouse or a computer pad couldn't sometime be the same thing.

MS. KESSLER: Okay. Well, let's - I know that you're thinking about a winter program for Penland which is an expanded curriculum that might involve a broader approach. Can you tell me what the winter program is?

MR. KARIHER: Well, the winter program probably could be defined as a professional program in the crafts. And the intent is to take people of varying backgrounds and then bring them up in two years to be able to become a professional of some level. The level that they leave would be based on the level that they came into the program. We could get people with MFAs or we could get people that are fairly new to the craft education side of things.

MS. KESSLER: This is a big change for Penland, though. This is a completely new program for Penland. It strives to give something different to the students from what Penland has given in the past.

MR. KARIHER: Well, Penland under Bill - Bill Brown started the concentration programs and they're essentially eight week programs for people that were juried into the classes based on their proficiency and slide presentation and intent and enthusiasm to come.

MS. KESSLER: Which is different from the voluntary program of anybody can come during the summer for summer sessions?

MR. KARIHER: Yes. Yeah. And I think what Penland was trying to do and drew at the time were people that were much more serious about becoming professionals in those old concentrations and the concentrations had sort of dried up as far as enrollment went. And when Verne came he experimented with different lengths of time and changed the focus of two and three week and four week sessions with a variety of media being taught. It definitely was not geared towards people becoming professionals or making them think about becoming professionals. We went back to it when I became the director and it seemed -

MS. KESSLER: Back to concentrations?

MR. KARIHER: Back to the eight week concentrations, two eight week concentrations. And I think the people that we've seen in the last three years are people that either are professionals and want to get, learn another technique from a specialist or people that are thinking about going into a graduate program or people that want to become professionals. The problem with all of it is some sort of a continuity of education. And the winter program would have some sort of a curriculum where people would start out and learn certain things and at the end would have some proficiency at the end of it but have an overall feel for becoming a crafts professional, and that means an awful lot of exposure to different things other than a single studio. They'd pick a concentrated studio. They'd pick glass or ceramics or metals or wood to be their main focus because that's what they wanted to be, a woodworker or a glassblower.But through the curriculum they take other media. They take drawing, they take the history of craft, they take ethics, some business courses. And to get back to the previous question about computers, I think of computers fitting in as a tool to an awful lot of those things and they should learn to use that tool as well. They definitely learn drawing and get drawing skills probably both in a studio setting with a pencil and paper but also on a computer. I'm not sure that we'd have to require them becoming proficient at the computer because again I think an awful lot of that is based on production and I'm not sure production as far as factory production or production as to high multiples of a certain item being done -

MS. KESSLER: So when this winter program in terms of time is - what's the length of study for a student that would come into the winter program?

MR. KARIHER: Well, the theory is that two years would be broken into six sections, each section being about eight weeks long. It would not change the length of the summer or the intent of the summer or the length of the classes. Essentially what we'd do would be to convert what's now fall concentration into the first chunk of time and then have a winter concentration and a spring concentration. People would probably leave for the summer and go to other media or be apprentices or work in studios in the area and then come back for their second year. So it would be those six sections of curriculum but spread over two years.

MS. KESSLER: And when they come out of that program they'll have both practical skills and aesthetic background and concentration in a particular medium and some craft history knowledge?

MR. KARIHER: Definitely.

MS. KESSLER: That it's -

MR. KARIHER: And some business background.

MS. KESSLER: And some business background. So it's a rounded craft education?

MR. KARIHER: Definitely. And I've gone, I've tried to get a good mixture of people in the summer and during our concentrations to teach that are, some have, some are practicing craftspeople but they're also teachers. They teach in the universities. But some are straight out of the studio. And I would think that we'd have that same sort of mix for the instruction for the winter program to give an awful lot of realism and reality to the students because who better could teach them to become professionals than real professionals? There are some things that are much more academically oriented like the history and like ethics and like business, and we'll draw from other instructional sources for those people.

MS. KESSLER: This is a unique program in craft schools or this is a unique program for the craft field. There's not another one that exists like it. Is that true? Is that right?

MR. KARIHER: The Oregon School of Arts and Crafts has a similar program in theory, but the crafts community that I deal with thinks of Penland and this winter program as being a unique thing. It is not a university oriented

program and it will deal with each of those sections being taught by somebody else and that's to give some variety and different viewpoints to people and also so that we can maintain the professional, teaching professionals' attitude. Different schools and universities teach professional programs but it's not done by professionals and it certainly isn't as concentrated as this. I think as far as the students go we've going to find people that are much more directed and they've already made up their mind about what they want to do. They may already have a college degree or they may not care about one or they may be changing direction in their life and becoming, wanting to become a professional in this. And there aren't any other places in the country where they could do it as easily or as well as at Penland.

MS. KESSLER: When do you propose for this program to start?

MR. KARIHER: Well, at this point I think the reality that our facility really isn't ready to do something like this well has hit me and I've been convinced we need a new glass studio and convinced that we need to do more winterizing of buildings. Each one of the studios we need to use has to be set up differently than it is during the summer and during our present concentrations because we've got to take our students further facility further educationally with techniques and information than we can now in the studios. I think our studios are beautifully equipped for what we do now but they aren't well enough equipped for the winter program. So I think an awful lot of the start up of the actual teaching is hinged on when we can get the physical part of it together. I really have a wonderful board of directors at this point and a program - the program committee that we now have has been working very well. And new committee members have come on that will be awfully helpful in this formulating of the curriculum but, and that is a huge process. I thought for a while that we could do it, sort of announce it and do it the next year, and I don't think that anymore. I think for it to be successful it has to be well thought out, and I don't mean every step and every word that's ever going to be spoken but I think both the physical plant and the curriculum have to be well thought out, and conceived and thought out and then some planning gone into it before we actually get into it. And I'd guess in a couple years.

MS. KESSLER: So, say, 1994?

MR. KARIHER: Probably 1994.

MS. KESSLER: Okay. Another question that I remembered that I wanted to talk about a little is that instructors at Penland have never been paid and that that's a really important part of Penland. Can you speak to that a little?

MR. KARIHER: Sure. I think that's wrongly stated. I think that Penland instructors have always been paid. They don't get paid in the same way the rest of the world gets paid. When I came and taught I got $10 a week and I got my gas money for my truck. In my truck I brought almost all the tools that the students needed because the school didn't have them either. And I went away thanking and begging to come back again for $10 a week. And I had come out of a studio in the middle of a big dairy farm in upstate New York and the only people I had seen or talked to on a daily basis were the people that worked with me. And the stimulation that a professional gets to come and teach is a gigantic pay and it's a gigantic piece of education for that instructor. I also felt terribly well appreciated by both the administration and the students, and respected. And I think that the - I hope that our instructors still feel that way, because I think they do. They still leave wanting to come back and thanking me for coming and really charged up about the place. Bill used to say that our instructors were our biggest contributors, and that's still the truth. We financially couldn't survive if we had to pay them what they were worth. Of course, then there's our annual auction and they send us major pieces for that thing.

MS. KESSLER: Yeah, it's -

MR. KARIHER: To be auctioned and put back into the studios.

MS. KESSLER: It's part of the there's a tremendous emotional commitment that seems to be so much a part of Penland's vitality and that seems to be what you're talking about, that whether it's instructors, board members, students, that there's an emotional commitment that's very specific to Penland.

MR. KARIHER: Definitely. I think it's somehow ingrained into the people that teach. In their brain they have an awful lot of integrity and they've figured out that giving is getting. And there aren't many craftspeople that are making an awful lot of money at what they're doing. And money is needed to survive, but it's almost secondary to the integrity of their work. And those are the people that I like to have come but they're also the people that like to come and so they realize what they're getting paid when they come and appreciate it, I think. And, of course, we appreciate them.

MS. KESSLER: Yeah. I think that's a real important part of the school and it seems to have been in place during its entire history.

MR. KARIHER: Definitely.

MS. KESSLER: And it's as alive now as it was 60 years ago.

MR. KARIHER: It is. Daily we get portfolios and requests from people to come and teach people we've never heard of, people that have been recommended. But that giving sense is still there. Everybody knows that we don't pay in the normal way. [Laughter.]

MS. KESSLER: Not in the normal way. [Laugher.]

MR. KARIHER: Yeah.

MS. KESSLER: In lots of other inexplicable ways, I guess.

MR. KARIHER: Yeah.

MS. KESSLER: How do you think, what is Penland's significance to the greater craft field both historically and in the present time? That's a big question, but

MR. KARIHER: It's a big question but if you take it by administrations it's a much easier thing, I think. This may be redundant but Lucy's main thought was to revive hand weaving and start a cottage industry so people in the mountains could survive, which was certainly significant, and it did do that. It kept people alive in the mountains and gave them some pride in their being and

MS. KESSLER: Some pride in their being?

MR. KARIHER: Some pride in their being, yeah. And - I think through Bill's time was that sort of revolutionary time with mixing of art and craft and erasing the lines or making them cloudy and respecting it and being proud of being able to do that. I think at this point Penland is doing an awful lot of what it used to do in those two respects - keeping those lines sort of mixed up through the different media and giving people an awful lot of self worth because they can learn something and they can do something and they can express themselves in some way that they can't in another way. I think programmatically and mechanically the summers at Penland serve an awful lot of focuses that are very important today and it gives people an entry level to the crafts and it gives people exposure to people that are making a living doing it and stimulating the student's mind that they could do it or there are ways that they could do it at -

[END TAPE 1 SIDE 2]

MS. KESSLER: Interview with Hunter Kariher for Penland School. You were talking about the concentration classes.

MR. KARIHER: I think the concentration classes have served well to be that middle ground for people that want to spend a longer time learning their craft. I think Penland is at a point where it could have a major significance with this winter program on the craft world and it's very important to me to have the thing starting on some sort of a solid ground.

MS. KESSLER: The winter program?

MR. KARIHER: The winter program. I think that there are an awful lot of people out there that either can't afford or don't want a university education and are examining the worth of a university education in the crafts. There are people that's perfectly suited for and there are people that aren't being touched at all. While the significance on the world will be very small if we produce 50 good students a year, it still is a major significance in that world.

MS. KESSLER: Do you think that Penland and other craft schools, the winter program, the concentration courses, help to keep craft as a field - help that field maintain its integrity?

MR. KARIHER: Well, I think that happens through the instructors. Everything happens through the instructors, their philosophies. Administratively it's our responsibility to invite the people whose philosophies we support and want to proselytize, I guess. So definitely I try to have people come that have some high level of integrity about their work and emotional drive and enthusiasm about their work and I guess pride in their work and their own, being in their own selves and what they're doing. And I think that's important for people to learn. And again, one of the best ways to learn it is to see people that are living that.

MS. KESSLER: How do you envision Penland 20 years from now?

MR. KARIHER: Well, I think the phrase "everything changes but everything stays the same" will probably be the case. I would be - I'd rather say how I'd like it to be.

MS. KESSLER: That's fine. [Laughter.] You can do that.

MR. KARIHER: I'd like the school in scale not to change at all. I think that the right number of people come and are there now for the different phases of the year that it's in and I think that scale is the proper scale for the place. I think it's almost like bad craftsmanship to have bad facilities or bad housing. When those are the only things that people can talk about, that the beds or lumpy or things like that, it's a bad reflection on the administration because it's obvious those things should have been cared for. And those are stupid things to worry about and why do we let people worry about them, why don't we just fix them. And I would hope that the physical plant is a beautiful place but unnoticed. I would hope that the studios are equipped well enough for what the instructors are teaching but not over equipped. And philosophically I don't - programmatically I don't think that the summer should change at all. I think that it does a great service to the craft world as it is now. But I would hope that -

MS. KESSLER: Meaning? Can you -

MR. KARIHER: Meaning that entry level. Meaning that recharge possibility for people. Meaning the exposure. Meaning that people can come together that think they're odd in their world away from Penland and fit well with somebody and gives them instant comfort when they get there and lets them learn mainly about themselves but also learn how to get the lump out of the pot. I would hope that Penland's winter program would have been well established and is flourishing and has a - in 20 years I would hope that their first students are coming back teaching at that point. And maybe being based on six studios, but no more than that. Maybe 75 people there altogether. The part that has always bothered me about Penland is that it is such a wonderful place philosophically as well as physically the views, the isolation, the buildings - to have them shut down and cold and closed at times is like saying it's not needed or it's not respected or - I don't know why it was never used during those periods. Penland never shuts down the residency program or the work that's done anyway, and there are always people working in around the studios even when it's closed now. But it's always been a shame that it isn't being used for educational purposes year around.

MS. KESSLER: So the winter program, to go back to that, is sort of what might help perpetuate Penland?

MR. KARIHER: I think definitely. I do see the summer and the winter being two different focuses, but I think both those focuses are extremely important to the craft world and both should be fostered.

MS. KESSLER: The residences program is still in place. Can you talk a little about that?

MR. KARIHER: Easily. It's in my foreground right now. We're about to select four new residents. Bill Brown started the residence program in a building called the Sanford Center - a big old cow barn.

MS. KESSLER: Its purpose?

MR. KARIHER: Bill's purpose was to give people the opportunity to grow aesthetically and I think technically as well, although it was much looser in those days. Their duration was sort of varied depending on a number of things, the original residents. An awful lot of them went out and taught or went out and opened their own studios and an awful lot of them live in the area around Penland today and have studios.

MS. KESSLER: They're allowed - the residents are allowed to come and work, do their own work at Penland. They get it's a support system for producing craftspeople.

MR. KARIHER: Well, it went through some different periods but I've sort of changed the direction in that we're looking for people that probably are already developed somewhat as good craftsmen and have a good foundation in their own aesthetic but need time to grow in both directions. The program is subsidized, has been subsidized by what's called operating, which at Penland is the summer studios and room, board and tuition. It's made it very inexpensive for the residents to be there. They're there now. They're accepted into the program on a two year period and they can apply for a third year. The direction has changed somewhat into where I almost demand that their intent is to go out and open up their own studio and become professional artists/craftsmen. And so that people that are applying these days are applying with that criteria in mind. And I think it's filling a niche and it pushes people out and promotes crafts quickly. And I'm very proud of the people that have come through the program, and they are doing just what it's intended to do. It's awfully rewarding to have that. They have a very realistic life at Penland but it's also - they're very aware that it's terribly well subsidized. They do pay rent and they do pay for their materials and they do maintain their own equipment. They have to buy their own equipment. They pay for their utilities. They pay for the production costs. But it's all subsidized. But they are extremely, acutely aware that it's subsidized and this is all done so that they'll learn and go out there and not go through some sort of a reality shock when they get out there and wonder about why they didn't know this stuff before, "I've never heard of that." So -

MS. KESSLER: It prepares them for their future outside.

MR. KARIHER: Yeah. Yeah, in a gentle way. And the gentleness more than anything helps the aesthetic growth, I

think. It takes an awful lot of the pressure off those people to actually have to pay for everything with their work for a couple years.

MS. KESSLER: So they can really concentrate on their thought and their production.

MR. KARIHER: Yeah, and the aesthetic growth. Yeah.

MS. KESSLER: If you were to leave Penland today and had the privilege of hand picking your successor can you describe what you would look for?

MR. KARIHER: Well, I don't mean to sound egotistical but I'd look for somebody just like I am today.

MS. KESSLER: [Laughter.] That's perfect.

MR. KARIHER: I think Penland needs a craftsman director, craftsperson director. I think that coming out of the reality of the studio, their own studio, is very important to administering Penland. Of course, I'm talking about if this person wants to keep going in the same direction I think Penland ought to go. But if it was to take that track to go in the directions I've talked about I think that that's needed. I think that you have to find, you'd have to find somebody with a tremendous amount of energy and enthusiasm and thought that the place is a piece and that it all ties together and that it's all important and all important to the integrity of the final piece, which is Penland in general. I think they have to improvise. I think they have to be frugal. I think they have to be innovative. They have to know when to say yes and when to say no and to resist growth for money's sake. And all those things are the same things a craftsman deals with in his own studio. So I think probably the most important thing is to find somebody that's had a relatively successful studio life and wants to try a change in something else.

MS. KESSLER: Thanks.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

Last updated...June 11, 2009