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Oral history interview with Harrison McIntosh, 1999 Feb. 24-Mar. 4

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Harrison McIntosh on February 24, 25, and March 3, 1999. The interview took place in Claremont, CA, and was conducted by Mary MacNaughton for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

FEBRUARY 24, 1999, Session 1, Tape 1, Side A (30-minute tape sides)

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. An interview with Harrison McIntosh, ceramic artist, on February 24, 1999, at Harrison McIntosh's home in Claremont. Padua Hills, Claremont, California. The interviewer is Mary MacNaughton, Director of the Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery and Associate Professor of Art at Scripps College. Harrison, as I said, we'll begin at the beginning. So could you please tell me the location of your birth and your birth date?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I was born in Vallejo, California, on September 11, 1914.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And could you give me the names of your parents, and spell them for me?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Let's see. My father's name was Harrison McIntosh, spelled H-a-r-r-i-s-o-n and the McIntosh, M-c-I-n-t-o-s-h. And my mother's name was Jesusita Coronado and McIntosh, of course. And her name was spelled J-e-s-u-s-i-t-a Coronado, C-o-r-o-n-a-d-o.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Thank you. Could you recall what your house was like as a child, in terms of visual images? Were there experiences you had as a child growing up that may have had an impact on your development as an artist? Were there images that you remember from childhood that struck you?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Let's see. That might depend on how far back you want to go, because in Vallejo, we lived there, I think, until I was about seven years old. And, of course, I had a brother who is a year and a half younger than I am, and his name was Robert. And we went, as far as I know, there weren't any particular art influences there, except for the fact that my father was a musician. He played the piano and, well, he pretty much learned it on his own, I think, when he was-he was born in Boston. And his other brothers and sisters were all born in Scotland. But he earned his first money by playing piano for the silent movies in Boston. Then when he brought his mother to Vallejo, because she was in poor health, and he earned his living with his piano playing. And eventually formed a dance orchestra of his own. And so, this was not, of course, classical music. But that did happen later. From there, we moved to Stockton as I say. I think I was around, perhaps around seven years old. Because I remember going to kindergarten was a first, memorable experience, being away from home. And after that, when we moved to Stockton, we were then in the elementary school and through high school. Why we went to Stockton was my father was transferred-oh, I should say, the music was something he always had all his life. But when he had two babies arrive in the family, he felt he needed something more regular income, so he got a job with Hisberry Flour Company in their office, which later on he was transferred to manage their small office in Stockton. So that's where we really grew up-in Stockton.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were there other children besides your brother and you in the family?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, just the two of us. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember as a child liking visual images? Being interested in drawing? And how old were you?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Well all this is what took place when we were in Stockton because from the time we were in elementary school, we both became interested in drawing and painting. And my brother, especially, was very good at drawing. And during this time, we had moved to a new house that was in a new tract of houses in Stockton, where there was a nice new public school. And only a couple of blocks from a very large public park. While we were in school, they started putting up a big building, a museum, in this park. And it was a local businessman had, in Stockton, had a fairly large collection of art works. And he gave money for the museum, for the city to build this museum which became both a historic and art museum. His collection comprised mostly of-what was it, Margie? Mostly nineteenth century French painting.

And-but before we saw all this, we were both fascinated with the construction of this building, seeing it go from the ground up. And I think I've always since then had a great interest in architecture in particular. And when the museum was completed, the man who was made director of the museum-by the name of Harry Noyes Pratt-I'll

never forget that because he was very instrumental in encouraging our interest in art. He sponsored, several times a year, exhibitions for school children. And by the time we had gotten to high school, we were submitting quite a lot of drawings and paintings to this and would win quite a lot of the prizes. My brother, in particular, was, as I said, was very good at drawing.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did your brother go on to be an artist?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: This is what's coming up. [Laughs.] That's why we both ended up in art really. And it all started there, really. This director of the museum-by that time, we were in high school, which-oh, there was a new Catholic high school had been built not very far. It was walking distance from our house. And my parents decided they wanted us to go to that school since my mother, of course, had been brought up as a Catholic. The whole family were. And so he-the director of the museum made a point to get us both acquainted with a local artist who was a painter. And this man really was a very dedicated artist. This was, by then, we were getting into the Depression.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was his name?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And his name was Arthur Haddock. He worked in the Santa Fe Railroad-no, Southern Pacific Railroad in the station in Stockton on a night shift, so that he could go out and paint during the day time. Well, he-all this period of time while we were in high school, we would spend a lot of time going to his house where he showed us and taught a lot of things about painting. He and his wife had a home, one of the older style homes that was typical of the Stockton valley, that had sort of a half basement. And in that basement area which was only about two or three steps below ground level, he had the whole area under the house was his working studio where he experimented with learning how to size and prepare his own canvases, stretch it, and even to the point of grinding and making his own pigments for painting. Although, he used mostly the store bought paints. But he wanted to know everything there was about painting. And he showed us all these things. And even helped us to make in his shop area there our own paint boxes and some folding easels. So we would go out with him around the countryside painting. Painting the local landscape, and along the waterfront in Stockton. And, along with that, at the museum proper, among the collection of the French art was an enormous painting by Bouguereau and that was maybe our first exposure to traditional art. And this Bouguereau must have been quite an important piece because just several years ago the City of Paris put on a major Bouguereau exhibition at the Grand Palais [Galeries Nationales de Grand Palais, Paris France.] And they wanted to borrow that painting from this little museum in Stockton. But they couldn't get it, because the owner had stipulated it should never leave that museum.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: One wonders how it came to Stockton in the first place.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, this man had gathered it. Where he got it and how he collected, I never did know that side of it. But it was all French painting of that period.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Your first interest in art was in drawing and painting rather than in ceramics?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes. Yeah. Although we-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is Marguerite McIntosh, Harrison's wife, who's also an artist and has managed his career for many years.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Maybe I should let him say something about this, because I think that that Bouguereau painting, especially that very last painting-Harrison's brother just happened to find a photograph of that painting and send it to us recently. I meant to take it out this morning. I have to look for it. But, I think that it exposed Harrison already to a sense of form. Because if you recall, Bouguereau was very famous for his very sensuous nudes, very classical in style painting but they are extremely sensuous. And Harrison really became attracted to this sense of form. In fact, the little torso that is behind you was done by Harrison after having had that experience, when he first came to Los Angeles before he had any art training. And you can recognize the-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What a beautiful sense of polish, surface too.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. And a sense of form, which he kept in his ceramics all his life. Let me get that photograph.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So the museum experience-were there books? Then did you become interested in art and look at other images in books or in other ways? Were there other experiences that had an impact on you?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think not very much at that point. That all came later really because-well, I hope I'm not

passing up something particularly interesting here. But what this led to-oh yes. This was the Bouguereau with all the nymphs, all these luscious nude figures which must have been

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, it must have been something like eight, roughly eight-eight to ten feet, something like that. It's very large.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Very similar to this-different composition but in the same spirit which is the most famous work of Bouguereau and it is on the ceiling of the foyer of the Opera, the theatre of Bordeaux [Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So you studied art with Arthur Haddock informally.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. We had-well, for a couple, several years, experience of going out painting and so forth.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How old were you at this time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, let's see. I must have been around sixteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years because I graduated from high school in 1933. In fact, now that I remember, I went out painting with him after high school for maybe roughly a year. There was also another exposure to art that took place at that time. The local newspaper was attracted to the drawings, especially the portrait studies drawings, pen and ink, or pencil drawings my brother did. So they hired him to make, for their editorial page, a weekly portrait. First of all, since the city of Stockton had just completed building a deep water port from San Francisco so that freighter vessels could come right into the San Joaquin Valley for all the produce and so forth. So they would send my brother down. Each time a ship made its first visit there, he would go on board the ship to make a drawing, portrait of the captain of the ship. Very often I went with him as well. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you sketch as well?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I did some of the things. In fact, I have one painting of the water front in the fog and so forth that I did. But it was an off-shoot of that. Really, it was the fact that the local-Stockton had volunteers symphony orchestra which the newspaper was doing their best to promote interest in. So they would have Robert make a drawing of the composer of the principle piece that they were going to be performing. They'd have these I think about once or month or so. And I remember like drawings of Saint-Säëns and various composers, the work that they would perform. And also, he did-oh, many different things. Like portraits of some of the presidents and maybe a local lawyer for some particular incident.

And anyway, in connection with the concerts, they would give him, Robert, a pair of tickets for the concert. So this is how we became introduced to classic music. We went each time to the concerts. But we also-it must have created an interest-at that time on Saturday mornings, they had a famous series from the New York Philharmonic with Walter Damrosch conducting. And it was done especially for children. And they would very often have portions of the program that would introduce you to all the sounds of all the various instruments. You know, at that time, we had just little radios that must not have had that great of sound. But it was-we both have liked classic music ever since. In fact, that's all I listen to every day when I'm working.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you work with music on most of the time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: All the time.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: All the time.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yep. As soon as they start talking, or if it's something else, then I turn off-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you like Baroque music? Bach and Haydn and Handel? Or-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Romantic?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: On up to the contemporary things. Yeah. And-well, of course, all the French Impressionists. Ravel and-right. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Debussy. Well, when was this? After high school, or after this experience which coincided with high school, is that correct?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were you taking classes in high school as well?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, this school didn't have any classes in art.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I see.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But, we did a lot of art, because of the talents or abilities we had, we were constantly asked to do projects both for the annual yearbook drawings for these things. And for all the sporting events, we would be given time out from our classes to make enormous drawings in what they called the assembly room. They had large blackboards all lining the whole walls of the room. And we would draw in colored chalk the football players and all kinds of slogans and things that would be, work up the enthusiasm and the spirit of the teams that way. So, actually, I've often thought it was kind of detrimental to our education because we were excused from a lot of classes. Of course, we enjoyed doing it. And I was never big enough to be on their football team. Neither of us partook very much in sports. But I did-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Nevertheless, it gave you a lot of practice.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, oh yes. Yeah. And along with that, they made me the photographer for sporting events. So I got acquainted with photography equipment. They would rent a great big-they call it speedgraphic camera. And so I would be on hand to take photographs of all the sporting events. And so I've had an interest in photography ever since really. So what happened, the museum director felt after we left, finished high school-he said we really had to get out of Stockton and go to where we could get more studies in art. So he had literature and a lot of information on this and found that Robert could send an application for a scholarship to Art Center School [Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA.]. We sent a group of drawings and so forth. And he received this scholarship. And for me, I ended up as a camp artist in a CCC camp. Now, as you may know, the Civilian Conservation Corps had just been started by Roosevelt around that time. But it was mainly for the sons of people who were on welfare. But since we were not on welfare-we were fortunate enough that my dad had a good position during that time-but the one paying job in the CCC camp was for a camp artist. I think you received something like $50.00 a month plus, of course, you received your board and room. And so I was first sent to Yosemite, of all places, which was a very quiet place in those days, because it was the depth of the Depression. And at this point, I should also include before we leave Stockton, all during the time we were in elementary school and on into high school, through high school, we worked. Every summer we would work taking care of people's gardens, cutting lawns and having a paper route and all these things during vacation and after school hours. And because my folks felt we should have a savings account. So, and maybe we could go to college eventually. No one in our family had ever been to college. But this was the purpose. Well, by the time we graduated from high school, the banks all over the country closed. Our bank closed and never opened again. So we never saw a nickel [laughs] of any of this savings. So, so . . . The scholarship idea was very . . . was the way to go.

And my brother moved down to Los Angeles to Art Center. And my parents were paying for his apartment, for his board and room. But this was a bit of a strain on them to do that. And my mother had always wanted to move to Los Angeles. She loved Los Angeles. She had been born and raised on a farm, and the big city was what she liked. And my father was fortunate and the company arranged for him to-transferred him to the Los Angeles office.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Did I miss something?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The reason -- the reason why Harrison's mother wanted to come to the big city is that she was raised on a farm and she hated the country. And the reason for that, is that she was raising twelve brothers and sisters, a family of fourteen. Two had died and she was the only daughter. And I had a similar experience on a smaller scale. When you have to live in the country and do all the cooking in the fireplace and wash the dishes outside, you don't like the country.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So this gives you an idea of the pattern of things that are happening.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you move to Los Angeles at the same time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I stayed in the CCC camps for, well, maybe not quite two years, I think it was. And then I moved to Los Angeles, where since Robert was acquainted at Art Center School, I got acquainted with the owners there. And Mr. and Mrs. Adams, who were the founders of the school, offered to me to have an exchange arrangement. So I worked in their office in the morning and in the afternoons I could take classes, which were mainly drawing classes that I took. And what happened there, actually I was only there for maybe about six

months or so when it was time for summer vacation. So Robert and I decided we wanted to go spend the summer just painting. And by going up to my grandparents' old house-my grandparents had had a house in Calistoga which, as you know, is up in the Saint Helena Valley which is now the heart of all that wine country. And it's a beautiful valley there. By then we had been reading about Van Gogh and the Impressionists and what a great idea to just go out and paint directly from nature. So we got together our paint boxes and folding easels and took along a lot of canvas and stretcher bars-enough to keep changing. And my parents drove us up to Calistoga, where they stayed. And we had many relatives there because this is where my grandfather had had a place of business, just outside of Vallejo. And with all these ten or twelve children and the multiplying, we had a lot of relatives there. And my father's brother and sister also lived in Vallejo.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Before we get away from Art Center for too long, do you remember your first classes there? What they were like? Any of your teachers?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: The only teachers that I remember, really, was Barse Miller who taught drawing and I think he taught water color, too. And then, they had a number of teachers that were quite prominent artists at the time. I don't remember their names. Except the one who did painting was Stan Reckless. And he's the one that my brother studied with the most because he taught them a lot of things about painting, so he could experiment with different mediums like-oh, egg tempera and things like that. I remember helping him making the gesso panels so he could paint with egg tempera and so forth. And he worked in various mediums-pastels, for one thing. In fact, there's a portrait on the wall over there that he did of me when we were students. He was very much interested in the pastel work that Degas had done. And so it was this time-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you know how to spell his last name?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Reckless?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mm-hmm.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think probably with an R-you know, I don't remember seeing it spelled but it probably is R-e-c-k-l-e-double s. Just like the word *reckless*. Yeah. That might be wrong. But he was a very capable painter.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you study with him or your brother?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. Just my brother. Yeah. Which happened when we left for the summer to go to Calistoga, where we did a lot of painting there-in fact, I have one of my paintings in the-and, of course, it was such a very picturesque place to work. But what happened, we were so carried away really painting there that we ended up staying beyond, after the time that school had started again. So when my parents picked us up and went back to Los Angeles, why, school had already started. And it turned out that the office no longer needed my services. They had gotten someone else. I wasn't very indispensable there. And so I ended up with something even much more interesting. Although that was the total experience of my studying at an art school, it turns out. The Art Center School at that time was located right in the center of the art activity of Los Angeles really.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Where was it located in the city?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: On Seventh Street, near what was called West Lake Park then. Now it's called MacArthur Park. And just a few blocks from there was-well, Otis Art Institute [Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles] had been started. It was still in the big old home of Colonel Otis. And on the adjoining street was a private foundation called the Foundation of Western Art. And it was privately funded and we went-

[END TAPE 1, SIDE A]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: The year that I moved to Los Angeles, 1937. So when I started working at the Foundation of Western Art must have been about 1938. And this was especially interesting, because the Foundation specialized in showing works of California artists all the way-many from San Francisco or Bay area as well as southern California. And it was all by invitation. The director of the gallery was Everett C. Maxwell. And apparently one day when I was in looking at the exhibition, he told me they needed somebody to help look after the gallery. So, this worked out very well for me. I would go every morning, about ten o'clock, and open the galleries. And he would come in just about twelve o'clock, noon. He operated like a clock. He was very precise about everything. And my job was to do everything from sweeping out the floors to addressing the announcements, the invitations and the announcements that were sent out on a monthly basis. And to hang the shows. And pack and unpack paintings that were-some were shipped. But most of the things were brought in by hand. This was still the Depression era and people were just-you know, even shipping things was an expense. And actually they were beautiful little galleries. It had all been designed by Edgar Kaufman [sic., Gordon B. Kaufmann] who was the architect who did the Los Angeles Times Building. And at that time I was there, he was doing the Santa Anita Race Track [Arcadia, CA] as well as many other big buildings. But he had built this for his

own purpose. See, the rear of the building was all his offices where he had all his staff of architects. And the part on the street front were two very nice galleries that were done with brick floors that were always highly polished floors. And it was somewhat of a Mediterranean style architecture. While I was working there, he decided to build on the upper floor, convert it into an apartment for himself and his wife. He had been living in Pasadena. And for some reason or other, he wanted to have a place right in the city. And so I got a little bit acquainted with him. And also, some of his clients would come. I remember one in particular was Earl Carroll, the theatre man, would come about every day while they were designing a building, his new theatre. And his chauffeur would stand out in front waiting for him. One day he came, Earl Carroll came in and asked me if I knew of any sculptor that could do a commission for them. Because in the foyer of the theater, he wanted to have a big life size nude figure done. And for this, the artist would receive the publicity in exchange for showing the sculpture. And so I brought up the matter to Mr. Maxwell when he came in. And he said, Nothing doing! We don't know any artists that should do that. [Laughs.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were you working in art at the same time as you had this job?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Aside from meeting a lot of the southern California artists who would come in to see all these shows all the time were people like Phil Dike and Jean and Arthur Ames and not far from-well, two blocks over on Seventh Street was the Federal Art Project headquarters. So many of the artists were connected with that and they would come over during their lunch hour and what not to see the exhibitions. So, at the same time, since I was working there mainly in the mornings, I, just by pure chance, got involved in another job. And that was carving, making hand carved picture frames. The art material store where we-Robert and I-patronized for our materials was owned by Gustave Gilbert. And his store was called modestly The Louvre. [Laughs.] And he was right on Seventh Street, down, really on the opposite corner east of the Art Center School. And down in the next block was the Flax Art Supply Store. These were the two major art supply stores of Los Angeles at that time. So, all of the artists came to these places to get their materials and framing. And so I got acquainted and met a lot more artists through this. And seeing all the supply of art books and I would buy things as I could afford. Some of the books that I have here are of- mainly of the Impressionists that we were much involved with at that time. As far as carving, there's one of the frames right there that was one of the most elaborate and one of the first ones they wanted someone to make a copy, pretty much, of a frame that they had. And that's what started. From there, I designed and made a lot of moldings and I had to learn how to design the moldings that could be run to do, accommodate certain kinds of carvings and so forth.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did any of the skills that you acquired then, have you carried them over to clay at all?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I guess this is-I always apparently lean more and more towards liking, doing things, three dimensional work. And a little English artist who used to come in the shop all the time knew all about how to do this. And when Gustave suggested the idea, why, Buck-Buck Weaver was the name of this artist. He was a character noted among a lot of the film people because he was also a cowboy. He would take these young people on excursions to Arizona and New Mexico. And he painted. But he also knew how to carve picture frames. So he got out a catalogue that the store had. And he picked out the different kinds of tools that would be useful for carving picture frames. Because I had never used carving, wood carving tools at all. So, when we received these, why he showed me the methods of how to go about it. So I think for a couple, several years I would carve these. Mostly on order, because they were their most expensive frames. And they boasted that this was the only store in Los Angeles where you could get hand carved picture frames. And so, this way I got acquainted with the supplier of the wood and moldings and so forth. And I got some blocks of wood, of walnut and other hard woods. And I used these carving tools and chisels and started carving figures. I did a couple of little torso pieces carved in walnut. I think our daughter still has one of those. And that, in turn, I learned that people like Art Capinco and other sculptors that used to come into the store and that I would see in the exhibitions. Because at this point, we were-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Art Capinco came into the store?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. And I would see, mostly see his work in different exhibitions. Because, from here, we would, you know, follow the current exhibitions being done. Because there were a number of art galleries in the area.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Which ones do you remember?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, there was Stendahl's Gallery [Los Angeles] which was on Wilshire Boulevard, not very many-a few blocks away. And the other one that-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What did you see there? Do you remember any of . . .

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, he exhibited things like-Nicolai Fechin was quite a well known artist at that time in the L.A. area. For very spontaneous-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Fechin?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think it's Fechin, F-e-c-h-i-n, I believe. Something close to that. And other western painters. Even had the works of, like, Maynard Dixon and so forth. But there-that reminds me-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did he also show any ceramics?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, no one showed ceramics. In fact, nobody knew what ceramics were, I think, in those days. [Laughs.] But, speaking of Maynard Dixon, I just remembered I left out one very important thing about Stockton. Should we go back to that?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Sure.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Because while we were acquainted with the painter Arthur Haddock, he had a very good friend by the name of Maynard Dixon who was a very prominent artist at that time. And he had his studios in San Francisco. And Arthur had-I don't know how-he had gotten acquainted with him to the point where he would go save up his vacation time to go for one or two weeks and he would go with Maynard to Arizona or New Mexico and paint the desert. And so he suggested that Robert and I should go down to San Francisco some time and meet Maynard Dixon. Well, so we did. We were in high school at that time, I believe. And so we went to visit him-he had his studio on old Montgomery Street, the lower end of -- You know, Montgomery Street was the -- sort of the financial district. But at the north end of Montgomery Street was where a lot of artists had loft studios and so forth. And Maynard had this studio up-and I remember, we went up this dark stairway up to knock on his door. And he welcomed us in. And we both stood there speechless, I think. [Laughs.] You know, the presence of this great artist. And he had a big canvas that he was working on there. And we talked. And he was cordial enough, for what's maybe a few minutes or ten or fifteen minutes maybe. And we left. [Laughs.] We had the experience. But-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible] -Build up his reputation in your mind?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, you know, he was the only artist we'd ever known. And, you know, we thought that this is the way you did things. You know? He was very conscientious about his work. And Maynard Dixon was, at that point, becoming quite, really well recognized. He had done a lot of illustration work earlier in his career.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: There's a certain phase which is almost abstract in his paintings.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, mm-hmm. That's right. He was using the forms of the desert that, as you say, were almost like abstract shapes. Because it was always quite subtle. He was very beautiful the way he handled color. But it was very, very subtle. But at the same time, there is one other thing that happened just after that. Before we moved to Los Angeles, the director, Harry Noyes Pratt, suggested Robert could take classes at the San Francisco School of Art [sic, California School of Fine Arts, now the San Francisco Art Institute.] What was it? I can't remember the correct title. But it was the major art school of fine art painting in San Francisco. And so, he went, did take a summer session there because we-my mother had a sister who lived in San Francisco. So my brother could stay with them when-although it was the opposite side of the city. He had to cross clear over to North Beach where they had-is it was quite a beautiful school that they had built just devoted to paintings. And they had what was then quite prominent painters. One, I remember one was a French artist by the name of Lucien Lebeau. I've never heard of his work since then. But he was considered, you know, very well recognized at that time. And it was after that that then Robert, he got the scholarship and went to-and so, then, we all moved to L.A.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So back in Los Angeles, you remember going to the Stendahl Gallery. Were there other galleries that showed work that you used to visit?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, Dalzell Hatfield was one of the major galleries in Los Angeles. And he carried mainly all the major Impressionist paintings there. It was interesting that you could see these things at any time. And I think around that, maybe that same time, he is the first one to start showing some ceramics. He had a little niche of an area in his gallery where he had pieces done by Gertrud and Otto Natzler. And it-I hardly remember those pieces at that time. But I think he must have had them then because it wasn't until-it was just shortly after this time. It was while I was carving picture frames at Gustave Gilbert's that we started-my parents decided they didn't want to go on renting a house or an apartment. They wanted to build a house of their own. So my mother and I started to drive around, looking for a lot to do this. We found a beautiful lot up on the top of a hill, south of Sunset Boulevard and southwest of Silver Lake district.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Is this around 1940?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: This was 1938. Yes, still-because we weren't able to find suitable plans for a house. And so I-I'd always been following exhibitions of architecture and so forth. And I was familiar with the work of Richard

Neutra. And I knew that Neutra-his home and his offices were over there on Silver Lake Boulevard. So I suggested to my parents why don't we call Richard Neutra and find out something about designing a house, with no knowledge whatever of how architects functioned or whatever. So anyway, we called up one day and the very next night, we were sitting in the living room with Mr. and Mrs. Neutra in their Silver Lake house, talking about our house. And he was very enthusiastic even though it was going to be, turned out to be probably the smallest house he ever built. [Laughs.] So he-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So this was an interesting experience for me and my brother too. We went through all the discussions with Neutra about getting the plans worked out with what my parents wanted. The purpose was to have a small house that would be easy to take care of because my dad was going to be retiring in a few years. And so it was a house that Neutra designed done all in redwood. Because redwood was the new product those days. It was supposed to be the marvelous permanent material that was easy to care for, which didn't quite turn out that way. [Laughs.] But anyway-so my brother and I helped and worked along with the contractor doing a certain amount of the work with the house. And so I was very familiar with the whole process of the whole construction of the house. We had a very good contractor, who was a man who had been a ship builder in Sweden. And we came about having him really was just by chance. It was the fact that he offered the lowest bid. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember his name?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, I know his name but I can't remember it at the moment now. Oh, Erich Nelson. Anyway, he turned out to do such a very nice job that Neutra had him do some more houses for him which was unusual because Neutra usually was really upset with most of all contractors. And let me see-there was a thing-so in the process of designing the house, I had him do a double garage but on the whole north side, we had him make-put windows on the whole north side, with the idea that we could use it as sort of a workshop area. Well, while the house was just-after it was just completed- oh, this is probably when I did this terra cotta torso because I had this work space there. And I knew about-where I was talking about Art Capinco and other sculptors. There was another known then-Donald Hord was a fairly good, prominent name then. And there were several. I can't remember the others. But anyway, I knew they would- There was a place in downtown L.A. called The Italian Terra Cotta Company that had a huge beehive kiln, a big walk in kiln, where they would fire these sculptures. So I bought some terra cotta clay and-without any knowledge-I may have gotten some books about it, although I don't have any. There was very little-there were no books about ceramics in those days at all. So I built this torso by pretty much of a coil method, because I knew it had to be hollow. And at that time, let me see, around that time, why another friend-we had several friends who were art students. And one young fellow who was a poet that-his name was Dick Cannon, I remember, came by one day when I was laying bricks for the patio area and told me that he had learned about the fact that there was a very good potter who was teaching at USC [University of Southern California, Los Angeles] and that they had night classes. And that I would be able to enroll in a night class because I didn't have no college degrees to attend the college.

Even though I had, really had not seen much about pottery as such, except for one thing. While working there at the art material store, this Buck Weaver said he wanted to go up to see the San Francisco Exposition which was the big World's Fair. And of course, Robert and I were very much interested in wanting to see that too. So we drove up with him and spent several days seeing that. And I remember seeing, in the Japanese pavilion, they had potters there demonstrating throwing on the wheel and making, working with clay.

Yes, at that San Francisco World's Fair was a pretty minimal experience as far as ceramics is concerned. But I do remember very well it made a very strong impression on me seeing the exhibition of Japanese pottery and folk work that they had there.

Now, really, to go back to another thing that was overlooked when I was talking about being at the Gustave Gilbert's art supply store. One day while I was in the shop there, a lady brought in a whole portfolio full of prints that she was anxious to sell and left them with Gustave that he could have in the shop there to sell. So, we all looked at these and here they were, the entire portfolio was full of Kandinsky lithographs and etchings and let's see, I think some Paul Klee. But in was mainly Kandinsky's work. In fact, it may have been almost entirely Kandinsky, because right away, I told my brother about this too. And so they were the huge, they were a huge sum of $5.00 a piece. [Laughs.] And so all we could afford was-I bought a print and-two of them. And he bought two. And we still have the Kandinsky prints here which I've since heard is worth about-what is it?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.] Twenty-four thousand.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Because it is-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It's one of the series that he did in 1922. And very abstract shapes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And it is signed. So, anyway, that was an interesting experience. Because what happened, we-at that time, we had no idea and it didn't occur to us, but we have since gathered that it must have been Galka Scheyer because what we have learned through the Pasadena Museum and so forth and the history of her experience here, that was the period of time when she was in Los Angeles. And a lot of her purpose was to try to help sell their work because they were living in-still living in Paris where they needed the money. She was-you know, it was the Depression. So this apparently was Galka Scheyer who had brought these prints in to sell.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now you recognized them as Kandinsky and Klee? Did you like their work at that time? You must have to have bought it. But, this was very abstract work. Did it appeal to you?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yeah, we were very familiar with Kandinsky's work by then, because there were books of his work which we had seen. And I'm not sure if we had seen much actual original work. It may be possible-because the Los Angeles County Museum, which was then out at-still in Exposition Park-would have contemporary exhibitions. So I have a feeling that we must have seen some things. Because we were, by then, very familiar with the work of Kandinsky and Paul Klee and those people who worked in that. So that certainly was a big step up from the Impressionists' work. But it was all part of the experience. As well as seeing so much of the California water colorists that we were seeing at the Foundation of Western Art as well as it was not only water colors. But some of the exhibitions were devoted entirely to oil paintings.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you see a work by Millard Sheets at that point?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I was going to say, Millard Sheets and Emil Kosa and Phil Dike and Phil Paradise and Alexander Nepote from San Francisco and George Post. And Dong Kingman. Those are some of the names I remember off hand. Every once in awhile I run across-I have some of the catalogues from the exhibitions which gives the-oh, another one was Dan-Dan Lutz. And Tom Craig. Tom Craig was became quite a good friend of mine in fact.

At this same time, there's another thing that I should include. At this same time, while I was at the art store, Tom Craig was a customer there. And one day he told me he was applying for a Guggenheim fellowship. And he needed to frame up a whole bunch of water colors and paintings. And he wondered if I could come out to his place and work with him. Which I did, for some weeks. We worked on cutting mats and framing all his water colors and oils. And if I remember, I think he did win a Guggenheim fellowship. But when we finished doing this, he wanted-I can't remember if he paid me something. I think I was doing it mainly in a trade. He wanted me to have some of his work. So I picked out two beautiful little water colors that we still have upstairs, that are very typical of his work then. And so I got acquainted with him. And at that time, he was build-he had just gotten married and built a house and a studio up on Mt. Washington. And so I used to go up there to help him and that's where I met-Dan Lutz was there. He had a house and a studio there as well. So, this is how I became acquainted with a lot of the artists. And about that same time is when I started taking the classes at USC, the night classes.

[END TAPE 1, SIDE B.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mary MacNaughton interviewing Harrison McIntosh. This is Tape 2, Side A. And at this point, Harrison has moved to Los Angeles. And, Harrison, I'd like for you to tell us a little bit about your studio in Los Angeles which was located in a garage. And what you were working on at that point and then your transition to USC and work with Glen Lukens.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. In using the garage as my-well, it was the first workshop area, studio where I first did this terra cotta torso. And shortly after doing that is when this friend told me about a very outstanding potter who was teaching ceramics at USC by the name of Glen Lukens. So I went out one day during the enrollment period and discovered to my surprise that I was there early, which was very lucky. I got in the class. Because there were a lot of people who wanted it and never did get a chance to be enrolled. So this turned out to be something. As soon as I had I think the first few classes, I realized it was something I really wanted to do. And I found that during a night class-only two nights a week-that you really couldn't do very much in actually making something, which is what I tended to always wanted to do. And so I began to set up the things I would need to work with in this garage space. See, my dad's car was in half the garage and I had the other half where under these long windows on the north side, we had built sort of a work bench that was the whole length of this. And also, there was-we had planned and had a sink there. So I had running water and everything I needed to work with. And as time went along and I was learning more about the whole process from Lukens, I just took notes on everything as much as I could. And then started to apply what I was learning. The next day I'd work in my garage studio at home. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What did you focus on?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, in order to be able to fire pieces, I went out and found an old second hand Denver, I think it was called. It was a kiln. It was made by Denver Fire Clay. It was a little round kiln. It looked like a little round stove almost that had fire clay tubes in it that would carry the gas. And it was a gas fired kiln. And I set that up just on the outside of the garage where we had a side door that opened right to where I could have the kiln. And so, this way, I could make pieces that as I was learning the different techniques that Lukens was teaching, which were mainly making forms in clay and then making a plaster mold from the piece. Because he didn't teach any-these were all-these-some were-well, the first pieces we made were hand built really. That was sort of the first lesson. But after that, he did show how to make things on what was really a turning wheel.

He had a whole series of wheels that were made from old sewing machines which would-had the old fashioned treadle that you would operate and that made a plaster head on the top that would rotate. And, in fact, I thought this idea was pretty good so I could make-see, this way you could make round forms and you would have to use a support and tools. So it was very different than throwing something. You actually had a mound of clay on the wheel that you would trim to the shape that you wanted. And then put a coddle around it and pour plaster on that. And then you would have a plaster mold, when that dried out thoroughly, that you could pour a clay slip. So he showed how you would make a clay slip and make castings from a plaster mold that way.

So I set up, and I got an old sewing machine and built a treadle wheel to do this kind of thing in my studio at home. And then we-he gave only one demonstration on one night how to throw a pot from plastic clay. And this was a wheel that was the old European style wheel that you stood at and it had a fly wheel that you operated with a treadle. If you'd swing your foot back and forth, it would turn this wheel. And the reason he did just one demonstration is that he really, at that time, was very troubled with arthritis in his hands. And this is probably the reason we didn't pursue the idea further. At least he showed how this could be done.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were you immediately struck by that demonstration?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. I was, you know, fascinated by it, the demonstration of how it could be done because there was no one around Southern California who even had a potter's wheel. This was it, as far as I knew. And so we continued with the class, showing how you could also make, use the molds, for pressing clay into. So that some were used really as press molds and then you could make-well, at home I started making more elaborate shapes that would be like vertical vase shapes and so forth that you could pour the clay slip into. And it was useful to, certainly to learn about this technique of casting, because I could use these forms then to experiment with glazes. Now, this one thing though that Lukens did not give any classes in how to make glazes at all. He made his own glazes and he would use his glazes on the few pieces that you actually made to be fired. And he showed how to apply them, mostly brushing on and so forth. And a few different techniques of decorating. So I had to-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Why do you think he didn't teach the glazing technology? Was it too complicated, he felt?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think, I think in those days people were pretty secretive about the formulas of a glaze. And he had spent, I'm sure, a lot of time and work in developing glazes, because what was really important about his own work was that he liked to go out in the desert and dig up minerals of all kinds and experiment. And he'd made a number of beautiful glazes.

In fact, while I was there in his class, he had-it was one of the first one man show, an exhibition of his work at the Dalzell Hatfield Gallery. So this really-again, Hatfield was one of the first art galleries, at least in the Los Angeles area, to show and sell ceramics along with paintings. And the interesting thing about Lukens' exhibition was that most all the shapes that he made were mostly large flat shallow forms that were made for flower arrangements, and especially Japanese style flower arrangements. He had a number of friends who really-their specialty was just doing flower arrangements. So he insisted that his exhibition should be shown with-all the pieces had flower arrangements in them, which is the opposite of what anybody would want to do nowadays. [Laughs.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were his pieces done from molds or thrown?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, they were all from molds. And most of them were done in a clay that was quite course, really a terra cotta type clay with a lot of grog in it. Because he liked very prominent textures in most pieces. Although he did do some that were of smoother clays, because I have a piece here that someone here in Claremont gave me. This lady's mother was a very close friend of Lukens and she had a number of his pieces and so she thought I should have one. And it's a piece that is not at all typical of what we usually see of his work. It's done with quite a smooth clay. But it does have a crackle glaze on the inside and the outside of the clay is stained. This was another thing that he taught, he taught us in his class. Because most of the glazes would craze and he used that to advantage, like the old Chinese porcelains that had to have crackled glazes that were

stained with using strong tea and so forth to stain it. Well, he used pigments like burnt umber. You take just dry burnt umber pigment and mix with water and brush this all over your piece. And suddenly you'd have a beautiful crackle glaze. And then he would use that same technique of using umber, or sometimes iron oxide, red iron oxide, to brush on the outside of the rough clay. And then you rinse off the excess and you're left with the finer particles of the umber, or whatever that would emphasize the texture of the clay. He didn't do this on everything but certain ones.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Would he put a clear glaze over that?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, he would put waterproofing over it, because this, this-he wanted to keep the character of the clay and in order to make it water tight, or repellant, he would-he bought-I remember, it was Standard Oil made a water proofing compound that was used for tarpaulins. You know, you take canvas and put this water proofing on it and make a water proof material. And that's what he used. It was really a petroleum product with a certain amount of wax. It was sort of an emulsion really that he would apply over the piece after it was-of course, it had to be bone dry after the staining operation.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was it a greenware? I mean, not greenware, after it had been bisqued.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: After it had been fired. And these were mostly fairly low fired pieces. I don't remember, really, what cone he was firing, too. Actually, we never participated in any of the firings. And of course, being a night class, it would have been difficult probably.

MARY MCNAUGHTON: He fired them before glazing?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, no, he would-I'm not sure. He probably bisque fired and then he would glaze. Then he would glaze usually the inner surface of a piece with these beautiful watery looking glazes that he had. And then when it would come out of the kiln, then it would be-he would use this procedure of making a solution with burnt umber or iron and brush all over the piece, rinse the excess off, and then it would be put aside to dry. After it was bone dry, which may be some days, then he would apply the water proofing compound over that. And so that was pretty much the-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Would he apply that to all surfaces of a piece?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh yes, yeah. Mm-hmm. Yeah. A certain amount of it would probably seep through the crackle glaze but, of course, the unglazed underside part of the bowls would be just the raw clay, either terra cotta or whatever type he was using. So staining was the thing that he did quite a lot of and then the water proofing.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you try any of these techniques yourself at the time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes. Yeah. I tried all those different methods in my own studio at home. And then when-of course, that lasted for only one year. And meanwhile, for glazes, I then got acquainted with the different supply houses that had-where you get all of these materials. And there, I found you either buy prepared glazes or they would have publications, usually brochures or something, that would give glaze formulas and so forth. So then I could experiment with glazes on these casts. What I was doing were mainly cast pieces. And I have examples of a number of those. Well, from one of the supply houses, what was-the name of it was-one was called Ward's I think.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In Los Angeles?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. In Los Angeles. Or, one was in South Pasadena I remember, where people-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, were the glazes that you used ones that you fired to cone five? Or how high would they go?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, no. At that point these were all low fired. They were-probably down, maybe put on cone 06 and maybe lower. I don't even remember now. I keep wanting-I've got notes on all these things but I'd have to-I haven't really organized any of that to remember what it is. But they were all low fired things.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were there any more general approaches to art in clay that you-that Glen Lukens imparted to you? A kind of philosophy or a way of thinking about working in clay?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That was probably-I forgot to get your comments on that. But yes, his philosophy of working with clay was probably one of the more important things that he taught. Because he was always very enthusiastic about working with the materials and making the shapes. And even though they were really, as I see it now, very, very limited really. But with him, it was very much a matter of textures and color qualities that really he was most enthusiastic about.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How would you describe his colors? I mean, could you-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, the ones that I remember-these are seeing his own pieces mainly in exhibitions-were these very watery, quite transparent glossy glazes. And some were very waxy glazes. Like in soft white waxy colored glaze with a very prominent strong crackle in it is something that he particularly liked. And these others that were wort of a turquoise or, you know, pale delicate greens and blues. Those are some of the main colors that I see. He didn't do anything with decoration on pieces. All his decoration was in the materials itself. The texture of the clay, the crackle of the glaze and the surface of the glaze.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was he a teacher who wanted you to follow in his footsteps or one who encouraged you to find your own path?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I don't remember him really talking much about that. Really, I think maybe in his day classes, where he had students for longer periods of time, he may have done things like this. But in the night classes, it was such a short time, it seemed as though it was mostly that about all there was time for was showing the technique for doing this and doing that. And there was, by the end of the term, there was a few things got fired we could discuss. And he did talk a little bit-I remember I did-on the first piece I made, I did a little tiny sort of a flower decoration thing that must have been either a stain, a commercial stain or something that was done on top of the glaze. So this was sort of a majolica technique. But I don't recall seeing anything, anybody doing very much with that.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH.: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, we have it. It's somewhere in a box. It's not much to look at but it was-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did he criticize students' work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, I don't think so. I don't recall that-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did he encourage you?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh yeah. He was always very enthusiastic about, you know, showing how you could do something and how great it was. And then you go ahead on your own and make things with it. So, you know, he encouraged people to-we weren't-he wasn't trying to say, Well copy this or copy that at all. You know, you were doing something of your own, kind of shape that you particularly wanted to make even though it was a little laborious to make a form of clay and cast the plaster and so forth.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember other students in the class at that time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, not very much. I remember there was one woman who was a little more of an elderly woman. And slightly crippled. But she was very enthusiastic about working with clay. And I don't even remember the finished works really of anybody, and hardly any of my own [laughs] really except this one piece. So I remember mostly the enthusiasm that he had for doing things in these various ways and just teaching how to do it mainly. But there's one other important thing that I shouldn't forget about this. One night, towards the end of the term, he had a party at his house. He wanted us all to see his new house. He had just finished. He had Gregory Ain who was a very prominent architect at that time in contemporary architecture, had just finished designing and built this house for him. And so he-we all met there and seeing his new house, which was quite small really. Even though he was a Ph.D. in ceramics at USC, he had a very modest income. Well, of course, this still was the end of the Depression and I guess that explained it. But he was able to afford to build a house which he was very enthusiastic about. So this was again part of my contact with contemporary architecture. So that was an interesting, you know, aspect of it.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now did you meet Albert King around this time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, after, later. When the classes ended, I was then making pieces and experimenting with all, making different kinds of shape and experimenting with-oh! The glazes were applied by spraying on. So I had-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you mean Lukens taught?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Lukens taught. Yes. That's one thing I should mention. Because at that time, I bought a spray booth that would fit in one of these windows. And I'm still using the same spray booth it turns out. [Laughs.] It worked very well and it still serves us very well. Because I still spray the glazes on in spite of trying a lot of different other methods. But-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yeah. Well, of course, Rick Petterson also sprayed glazes on. So, let me see here. At this point-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So you're working on your own.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Now I'm working-yes, I was making pieces and so that I could try all kinds of glaze combinations. I'd experiment with applying one glaze over another and how they would react and so forth. And I began to have a market for these things in a modest way. By then, my brother had been working at Disney, Walt Disney's, where he was in their background department. He'd gotten a very good job there, in fact.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was he in animation?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, just backgrounds. The color, establishing the color key and doing backgrounds. He never did really finish at Art Center. He became a little disillusioned about all, just doing illustrations and so forth. So he started painting portraits for people. And while he was doing that, a man by the name of John Hubley, who had been a fellow student, told him Walt Disney was looking for somebody who could do very meticulous painting on smooth surfaces. And he said, Robert, you ought to go out there and show them some of your work. And so he did. And who should be the person who was looking at the work was Phil Dike who, of course, he didn't know of all personally. I only knew of him. I knew him slightly, seeing him in the gallery. But anyway, he was hired immediately. And he painted the first multi-plane film that Walt Disney ever did was Pinocchio. And it had-he had to paint these scenes on big eight foot panels of plate glass. And it was-I don't know if you're familiar with the opening scene of Pinocchio, shows all the roof tops of the village and this was painted on several different planes so the camera would pan down, giving the illusion of going between buildings until it arrives at Gepetto's window. And Robert had screen credit on Pinocchio for the work he did in all the backgrounds for that film.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, Walt Disney had invented the process. But this was the first time they were trying it. And so Robert was the one-they needed a person who could, was able to paint that way. And well, as a result, he and his wife also worked at Disney. So they used to take my pots, these things I was making and experimenting on, and sell them. A lot of their fellow artists were gobbling up these pieces that I would sell for a dollar or a dollar and a half. Two dollars probably was the top price [laughs] which was-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Was Robert married at this time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. They had gotten married. And so this-now we were getting into a period when I got-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This was around 1940?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. And around this time, I'm trying to remember, I think is when I got acquainted with Al King who was actually-Robert had known him as one of the teachers at Art Center School. He was one of the first to teach working with color and color photography. And he was quite an expert in color theory and the use of color. But, his greatest love really was making pottery and working on porcelain. So he had, he had built a studio and a big down draft kiln at a place out in Vernon where it was the only place in Los Angeles that he could have an open fire down draft kiln, in an industrial area. So he bought a little house there where he and his wife, Louisa, and built a very good workshop, pottery shop. He called it always The Pottery. And my work in ceramics he-somehow or other, we got together. And I went out to his pottery shop and on weekends, I would work in that pottery shop. But, let me see. We're getting into a point where the war came along, in between, at this point. Because the work I did with Al King was after the war, whereas the first things I'm talking about that I was doing, the pieces were being sold at Disney's, was just before the war. So-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I wanted to ask you a question, Harrison. Did you meet Vivika Heino at any point during this time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. This was-Vivika came much later. I got acquainted with Vivika and Otto out here at Scripps, which was much later on. But maybe we should stop a second.

[END TAPE 2, SIDE A.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institute, Session 1, Tape 2, Side B, interview with Harrison McIntosh, February 25, 1999.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I guess we want to pick up with a few things that I've remembered that also took place in Stockton. One thing I should mention at this time is the fact that my parents were very, really very much encouraged at what we were doing, which was very fortunate for us, because a lot of the members of the family

wondered why in the world they were letting their two sons pursue an interest in art. So it was very, very good for us that they encouraged us to go, follow through with what we wanted to do. Meanwhile, through Arthur Haddock, we met another artist who was actually a commercial artist that worked for the newspaper, *The Stockton Record*. And, of course, Robert got to know him also through the drawings and things that he was doing there. So, Byron Livingston was his name. And he loved to paint and in this situation, he was really more a Sunday painter. Because his only opportunity was on weekends. He would go out with Arthur and they would paint together. And we -- there were different occasions where he would advise to meet him in his office, which was on the upstairs floor of the newspaper. And we'd go there very often in the evenings where he would show us all the various techniques that he was using for drawings for the newspaper. And also a lot of his work was using air brush for touching up photographs and things of that sort. But, at the same time, he would use his evenings this way to practice his oboe. He was a real music lover and his favorite instrument was the oboe and it's such a powerful instrument, the only place he could do this was in downtown Stockton up on the second floor when there was no one around. Because it was-at his home, it was too much of a disturbance. So, this was another phase of art and music that we got involved with at that time.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: We turn to World War II and your participation as a medic and your marriage in 1942. If you could discuss that. And then whether your artistic work was on hold during that time or you were able to work intermittently.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Actually, it was pretty much on hold, because at that time, I'd been doing my ceramic work in my parents' garage. And also, I got married to a girl, Mary Stanfield, who was also an artist. She was a very good painter, very much of the Impressionist era really. And how we met was really through another art student by the name of Rexford Holmes. And this again is to go back to the time when I-at the same time in fact, working at the Foundation of Western Art. Right across the street from this was a marvelous little building which was in the rear of the Otis mansion. This building was the old carriage house and Jake Zeitlin, the famous book seller, had taken over and had a wonderful book shop that was really-all he dealt in very rare books mainly. And he lived on the upstairs quarters. And then he would have periodically small art exhibitions. Sometimes things like photograph shows of Ansel Adams or Westin. And there I saw some of the first ceramic work before I got involved in ceramics, figure pieces done by Suzie Singer. She had, I believe, rather recently come to Los Angeles. And Jake Zeitlin was very good in showing her work to give her an opportunity to get, to find some income, because there weren't too many places for showing works of this kind. And, of course, I saw-at least later, when I came out to Scripps College, why they had some of her work in their collection. Well, let's see, to complete what happened at this time. I received my draft notice and told the draft board that I had plans. I was just about to get married. And they said, Oh, that's all right. You just go right ahead because we don't want to interfere with your plans. So we did get married and we rented a small apartment that was just a short distance from my parents' house, where I could make use of the studio to continue making the ceramics. Well, of course, only a matter of very short time afterwards I did receive the notice to appear from the draft board for service. And so I was enlisted into the Army for which I had no skills or preparation whatever to be useful in any means. My brother was very fortunate in that when he was drafted, while he was working at Disney's, he received a uniform at Fort MacArthur and came home, and the next day went to work at the old Hal Roach Studios which they referred to as Fort Roach because this had been taken over by the Air Force. And his work was very valuable in making training films for the air pilots, which is what he did all during the war. Meanwhile, I was put in the Army and sent up to the San Francisco Bay area. And then taken by, with a bunch of all the rest of the fellows on Army trucks up to a place called Mount Diablo which was a very familiar sight, because when we lived in Stockton, the only view we had from Stockton of anything rising above the horizon, was Mount Diablo. So there I was in a training camp which had been an old abandoned CCC camp. And this was operated by a group of young fellows who had enlisted in the National Guard that were from St. Cloud, Minnesota. And their job-they were really part of an anti-aircraft battalion who were in training out here at Camp Hawn when the war broke out. So they found themselves suddenly permanently in the Army. And so I had I think something like six weeks of training there. And while I was there, I discovered that there was a -- several of the men there operating a medical aid station. And that looked like something where I might be more interested than shooting guns at people. And so I asked the captain if I could join in the medics there. And he said certainly. And so I found myself in the medics. And of course, there was no training really except what the fellows-and there was a doctor, captain, who was stationed there with it.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were you able to do any art at all while you were in the service?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, no. There was no chance of any doing any art at all. Later, when I was transferred down permanently, I was put into several different-they had posts around different parts of the Oakland area where they had search lights and anti-aircraft positions. And I was eventually-I landed in their headquarters which was in Berkeley, just a few blocks from the University of California. And there, this was a little more of a permanent set up. And I found I could take-there were some classes at one of the local schools, just within walking distance, where they doing some ceramics. Well, I went there a few times and it didn't turn out to be very satisfactory. And the Red Cross had people doing things for service men at the local library. And doing leather work and things of that. So I found things I could do with my hands, just a little bit. It didn't amount to

much of anything. But one thing that did happen while I was stationed for a few months in Emoryville. We were stationed-our aid station was in the basement of the local library. So I would go upstairs in the library and probably one of the few books that I did get around and have time to read was Thoreau's book on-oh, what's the name of the pond? Walden Pond. And that's had, I think, quite a definite influence on my feelings towards nature and with my, my attitude towards working with-eventually, with clay, as it turned out.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Had Lukens stressed a connection between art and nature? Were his pieces inspired by nature in any way?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think only to the extent that I could see in his excursions into the desert where he, as I mentioned before, would dig up various minerals and make glazes, which he was quite successful at. And it must have been very difficult. And which he used on his pieces.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: But his forms were not inspired by natural forms?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. No, the forms were really basically made as shapes to hold very shallow, platter like shapes to hold flower arrangements and such. And that was mainly when he made his connections with nature. So, let's see-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: When were you discharged from the war?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, the war was still going and my wife became very critically ill and I was eventually discharged to look after her. She had been gone to a sanitarium in San Francisco where I was close by for awhile and then had to go back to Los Angeles. And really she was-the condition became much worse. She had a very enlarged heart and eventually she, she acquired pneumonia and passed away after we had been married about six years. So, after that, I-well, being discharged while the war was still on, I was expected to have a job that was contributing to the war effort. And so, among the things that I-an application I'd received was with the Pioneer Flintcoat Company which, really, basically manufactured roofing materials and a lot of different kinds of asphalt products and so forth that were all apparently necessary for the war effort. This was really quite a very large company. And I was fortunate in a way in that I ended up working for, in their research laboratory as an assistant to one of the chemists. And the project ended up being somewhat related to a ceramic process. Because his whole project was in producing formulas for the rock granules that are used for imbedding into asphalt roofing, to develop different colors for these roofing granules. So my job was to prepare these various formulas and then fire these in what -- We had a little laboratory type rotary kiln. And try to make-develop formulas that would withstand all the necessary weather conditions. Then we would test these under artificial means in a weatherometer. And then we developed a dark room where I would take these various tests and test them under ultraviolet light to see how well the-the ultraviolet light wouldn't pass through the granules, in other words. So it was rather technical work, but it was useful in that I learned a lot about how to handle materials in a laboratory situation, which is what you do when you're making ceramics. You know, weighing out materials, making formulas from raw dry materials and so forth. And, so, in a certain sense, it was an educational process. And so after my wife passed away, why I continued working there for oh, a few months, six months or so while I was learning about the fact that I could use the G.I. bill to go and study something more about ceramics. And after looking over all the various schools, mainly the different colleges that were offering classes in ceramics, I found Scripps College [Claremont, CA] really suited me the best because it was a relatively small group there. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did anyone personally recommend it to you? Did you know anyone who had gone there and then had said they thought it was a good program?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. I didn't know a soul there. I went there just not knowing a thing about it. I had never seen the campus before. I just drove out to Claremont one day and of all times, when I got out here, it was snowing. [Laughs.] One of the rare times that that happened. But anyway, I found that Rick Petterson -- I talked quite a lot with him. And he showed me the department and what they were doing. And I liked the idea that he kept the ceramic lab open any time a student wanted to work there, day or night.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember what year this was?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, that was about 1948. And I went back to L.A. It was just one day's excursion out here to see things. And found that Rick Petterson had-he knew about me already. In fact, I knew how. But I had been doing ceramic work. And something I skipped over-just before the war started, a group of us started a little gallery to show-with Al King. Did I go into the matter of Al King's work?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: No. We need to talk about Al King.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That was just happening. Actually, you know, these things are sort of overlapping. Because just-was it just before? You know, I'm trying to-these are things I think I wrote down one time.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember when you met Al King for the first time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, that was-no, I don't specifically. Really. There was some point where we started this little art gallery which was out-we found a place on a-a bookstore had been in this location previously. It was a little shop that had been designed by Lloyd Wright, let's see-

Frank Lloyd Wright's son.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: In Los Angeles?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: On Sunset Strip, in fact. You know, a very nice location. And it was-there were several painters from Disney's and my brother and Al King. Al and Louisa King. And myself. And that I don't think existed for hardly even a year when the war broke out and we all got drafted. And so that was the end of that.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did Albert King have something called The Lotus in the Campus Studios?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. So that was then-what happened was during the period-yes, when I-well, I can't remember the exact sequence here. But I was also-it was the time I was still working at the Pioneer Flintcoat lab that I would see Al King quite often because this was also located in Vernon, the city of Vernon where Al lived. And his house and his pottery was really not very far from the Pioneer Flintcoat factory. And I would go-I remember, I had a week's vacation one time. And this must have been after my wife had passed away because I was then back living at my parents' house and I had, you know, free time to spend this week's vacation working in the pottery studio with Al and Louisa King. And besides that, I spent quite a lot of weekends also there, which was really a great introduction to getting-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was his work like?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, he worked entirely with high temperature porcelain. His porcelain was fired up to cone twelve and thirteen on reduction firings. And he had designed and built this special kiln to do this after a lot of research and study, because there wasn't very much literature, practically nothing on this, for individual potters. The only literature was for large commercial factories. And he did have a few friends that had been involved with some of the factories, that helped him quite a lot on the technical side of this. So he developed a porcelain clay body to fire at these temperatures. But they were all in clay slip. He was never able to develop a porcelain that was plastic enough to throw on the potter's wheel. So, the work that I did there with Al, he showed me his whole process which was really to make forms almost the way Lukens did. You make a form, make a plaster mold and then cast it. And so I made half a dozen pieces. In fact, I have two pieces here that I made. Yeah, we have one of them there. That I made there. And what we did after casting-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: After casting the piece, you can see it's quite-the body of the piece is quite thick because a lot of the work he did was to turn it then on the potter's wheel to do the refinement and finishing of the piece. And you could do quite deep carving. Well, some pieces I did make was quite thin though, as I recall. We have a platter there is much thinner. And he developed some beautiful celadon glazes. And then he was very interested in trying to make red glazes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That's John, isn't it?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. And he also had some that was like the Chinese oxblood glaze. His real inspiration was to try to duplicate the old Chinese glazes and the porcelains and the celadons. And he was really getting quite successful results.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Did he exhibit- [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. In fact, his work was only-very few people really knew about him. He wasn't much, I felt, of a business man. For his income, I think as I mentioned before, he taught at Art Center School in color theory and so forth. But he was a good friend of various artists who were especially interested in Chinese art.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now who were the other artists in the small gallery that you put together with Al King?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, besides my brother Robert, there was-I remember the name of Stan Spohn who was a, one of the artists at Disney's at that time.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: S-p-a-h-n.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: S-p-o-h-n. Stan Spohn. And I'd-there may have been one or two others and I can't remember their names. But these were all friends of Robert's.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did your gallery have a name?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, it was called The Californians. In fact, I still have a sign that I was carving with the name on it that was half-it's half finished because the war stopped everything. [Laughs.] But I think we may have printed a little, a card for it and that was about it. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: When the war started for you, what year was that?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Let me see. Boy, it's too bad. I've lost all these notes. I had that down. I don't remember what year it was I was inducted.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, '42 probably?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was probably-well-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: December of '41 so it-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was a year or so later. So it, yeah, may have been. And I'll try to remember-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Back at Scripps with Rick Petterson, what were the things that he taught you that made an impression on you at that point in your career?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, when I finally heard from Rick that I'd been accepted, Millard Sheets was the Chairman of the Art Department then. And he had arranged that I could be admitted as a special student into the graduate school program. And all this was conducted in the same ceramic labs as the undergraduate students at Scripps, which were of course, had a different schedule. So there were only maybe a half or dozen graduate students there. So Rick conducted his classes on, you know, pretty much of a personal basis. We'd just gather around and he would occasionally have some specific assignments but mostly it was discussing the-you know, how to make glaze formulas and various techniques of everything from throwing to trimming and decorating pots. He had-well, it was one of the few places that did have-he had maybe, oh, half a dozen potters' wheels which were designed by a friend of his, Bob Stelter. And I still have one of those wheels that I had Bob Stelter made for me when I finished there. So we had, you know, a lot of freedom to work really. He encouraged people to experiment with forms and also a lot of different kinds of clay. So we made triaxial tests for, both for clays and for glazes. And then also at a lot of different firing temperatures. He had everything from small electric kilns to larger gas kilns which were -- and maybe this is how I arrived at firing most of my work at cone five because I found that the clay bodies and the glazes that I made for these really had the kind of qualities I liked the most at cone five. But he did have another kiln that was just then that people were starting to experiment with firing to cone ten in reduction firings. And I did a little bit of those but there was only one student in particular, David Stonerod, I remember, who liked to really work on the clay bodies and he did a lot of firing at cone ten. And so what was good-that Rick gave everybody the opportunity to work at a lot of different ranges.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Besides Dave Stonerod, who were the other students there then?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, one of them was Don Schaumburg who later, when he graduated, went to I think, Tempe University.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Don Schaumburg?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. And yeah, we have a piece of his. And-

[END OF SESSION 1, TAPE 2, SIDE B]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution interview with Harrison McIntosh by Mary MacNaughton on February 25, 1999. This is tape three, side A.

So let's go back, Harrison, to other students you were talking about at Scripps College when you arrived in 1948. Dave Stonerod and Don Schaumburg and you were talking about Ward Youry, tell us more about him.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, Ward later went on to, oh, where was it-Ohio, I guess, Ohio State, which was the only other college in the country that offered a Ph.D. in Ceramics. And when he completed his Ph.D. he was hired by Long Beach State [California State University - Long Beach], where he taught the rest of his life, in fact, until he retired. And, ah, let's see, another student that was there at that time was Helen Watson. And she was doing very interesting work and went on after, when she received her M.F.A., she went to Sweden for, I don't know, one or two years I think, and did some additional work and study in ceramics there. And eventually came back to Claremont, while divided between her old home and Texas. And I think that covers most of the people that were studying there.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How much contact did Millard Sheets have with this group of graduate students?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, we were all taking other classes, of course, at the same time, in different subjects, but Millard was always very much interested in ceramics and he was very much, you know, of an encouragement to many of us, and myself in particular. Because I know when we would have the student exhibitions, why, he bought a number of things, and I know especially of mine, each time. And I'm sure he bought things, you know, of various other students. Because we were, we were only, we were only really permitted to show, you know, naturally, our best work for the student shows there.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, what do you remember of Petterson's tastes in ceramics? What kinds of ceramics did he like to talk about and was he interested in Chinese?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Uh, yeah, Chinese was just one of them. He was interested in everything, really, that was going on. In Sweden, for example, we all were very familiar with the work that the Gustavsberg potters were doing there. And there was a shop in Los Angeles that carried the work of a number of the Gustavsberg potters, William Koga and Stig Lindberg, the work of these two men particularly.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Koga, K-O-G-A?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, mm hmm.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And Stig-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Lindberg. Yes, this was at a shop called Zacho's, that had a lot of the finest things that-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Z-A-C-C-O?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, Z-A-C-H-O. And they, Zacho was from Sweden himself and had, well, the finest things that were being done in glass, ceramic and silver. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What street was it on?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That was on Wilshire Boulevard, just down the street from Bullock's Wilshire. So this was, outside of Beverly Hills, this was some of the finest stores in L.A. at that time. And it was all not far from the art galleries that I spoke of before.

Well, Rick was a-Rick Petterson really covered everything. He, the annual ceramics show was something that he built up considerably from the time that Bill Manker had started it only a few years before. Rick would invite potters from all over the United States to show there. That's how we became familiar with some of the different potters in the east. And he also had a show where he a got a lot of the work of Bernard Leach and Hamada [Shoji Hamade], things from Japan, and let's see, some of the other Japanese potters. And he also-let's see, did a lot in getting visiting potters. This is how Bernard Leach came here and demonstrated-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember when that was, when Leach visited?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it must have been around 1949 and '50. And another, another time-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I thought Leach was before, just a year before I came. So it must have been in 1949.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, it must have been around '49, then. Because I think the following year, why Bernard Leach came again and brought Hamada with him. And I, we have a photograph of Hamada demonstrating. In fact, Rick built a special potter's wheel of the Japanese type so that Hamada could work with it, using a stick in a hole to turn the wheel and so forth. And he arranged, Rick-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, just that once that I, I know of.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So, the second-Bernard Leach came once, in the spring of '49, and then he came again the next year with Hamada?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, as I remember it.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Okay.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I don't know how accurate this is, but I know there was a second visit that way.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yeah. Okay. With Hamada?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Um hum.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was-let's go back to the first visit. What do you remember of that?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Really not too much. I remember the visit of Hamada more. Because, also, I think the Yanagi came with him. In fact, I'm trying to remember. See, when Leach came here maybe he came only that one time, with Hamada. Because when he came the first time, he came out here to Mills College in Oakland.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Oh!

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And I was, you know-you know, I have try to clear up my thoughts on this because at that time, of course, everyone knew about Leach coming there. So I had planned to try to go up to take his seminar. It was for almost a week, I think, there. And so Rick arranged that I should take a tape recorder with me to record all of Leach's lectures. Because after he would give a workshop demonstration in the morning, then in the afternoon he would give a lecture. And there I was, sitting in the front row, with this old tape recorder that would start squeaking every time it-that I finally had to give up on it. It was just too noisy. But, it was-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So you

attended Mills?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, mm hmm.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: The first visit.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Now, Mr. and Mrs. Garrison gave a scholarship to Harrison.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, that was it!

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: On the seminar.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh!

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think a seminar was around it. And I was here at that time, remember?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes!

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But, I-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But you wouldn't go.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But I wasn't married.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What kinds of work did Bernard Leach make in his demonstrations?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, he demonstrated his method of throwing on the wheel and then he also, I remember what was unique to me, was how he would make slabs of clay for making flat platters. And that was to have two sticks that had little slots cut in them at about half-inch intervals, on which he would stretch a wire, and then he would pull this wire across-you know, he would put a big wedge, a big lump of clay into a sort of squarish form and then he would pull this wire through and he could keep adjusting it and cut slices off, until he'd use up the whole block of clay. And those-I don't remember that he did much of anything with that, but I gather it was to make flat platters. Either he would lay it on a form, to make a mold-but that was-those were the main points. He didn't do an awful lot with it. And I think, well, he also maybe did a demonstration of . . . He didn't do much trimming, so what he'd do was to wire-cut a piece, and then when it was leather-hard, that was, you know, the next day after or so, he would show how you could roll this, the foot, slightly, so that you softened around off the bottom, but still leaving the wire cut marks on it. Which was a technique that was very, also very European, because this is what Marguerite Wildenhain did, which I found out later when I took a session with her.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember anyone else who was at that seminar at Mills? Any other young students like you, who were-or artists, that you knew?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, I didn't know any of the other people there except Carlton Ball [Carlton F. Ball] who was the ceramic instructor at Mills College at that time. And he's the one who had invited Bernard Leach there. And, no, the other, the other students, I-they didn't get-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were you aware of Bernard Leach's book, The Potter's-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes!

MARY MACNAUGHTON: book published in the 1940's?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I was one of the first-I bought his first edition book, in fact. And when he came here, did the unusual thing of asking him to autograph it. And also, Hamada autographed it. And also Yanagi [Soyetsu Yanagi] was with him and he autographed it. So this is one of my prized possessions.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: The first edition book of *The Potter's Book* [*A Potter's Book*. London: Faber and Faber, 1940.] Because that became practically a potter's bible. Nothing had ever been written about pottery for a studio potter before then. He started something, because now there are thousands of them.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What do you remember of that second visit by Bernard Leach to California, when he came to Scripps with Hamada and Yanagi?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, actually, they did just that one day's demonstrations and then Rick had arranged for them to appear in Los Angeles. At that time, Rick was also president of the Design Division of the American Ceramic Society in L.A. And so, he arranged for all their whole membership and potters from all around southern California came. They did this at Expedition Park. I think it was at the museum there, in Expedition Park. At it was huge throng of people, potters from everywhere attended that. Because Hamada and Leach, of course, by then were really famous among potters.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was their demonstration like at Scripps? Did they throw off the wheel, I mean off the-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, let me see, if-Hamada, I don't know. Yes, you may remember seeing pictures of this because I think Bob Garrison did film on several different demonstrations that way. But, I don't-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We have a film about Hamada demonstrations that- [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah, a lot of the, a lot of the students all gathered around, watching.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We have that film yet, no?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But, I really don't remember much about the actual demonstration. A lot of these things kind of melt together.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did Leach speak for the two other artists? Were they not too fluent in English?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, Leach acted as translator and spoke for them. But after they were through, I went and talked with Hamada personally, and I found he spoke pretty good English, but was in a, I guess, pretty limited that he didn't want to speak in public.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He never spoke English in public.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: With more than one person.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, then, this-I should say, this was just one of the many, maybe that's why it's hard. A lot of it melts together, because Rick did invite a number of different potters here, Tony Prieto [Antonio Prieto]-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Before we leave Hamada, I remember one day when Hamada had done his demonstration of raku ware, as soon as the piece was ready, he put it in the fire with the straw, just next to the wheel. The students had prepared the fire. And when they took the piece, there were several pieces of course, and when they took the pieces out of the fire the students just jumped on all of them. And Harrison, who was always polite and thoughtful, never got a piece of Hamada and everybody else got a piece.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think you're confusing him with Santa Ana and Adam's demonstration.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: No.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Because Hamada wasn't here long enough for pots to dry to fire. Whereas Santa Ana and Adam stayed for several days and-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, who are these people you just mentioned?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I was starting to mention about different potters that Rick invited to come here. And the incident of Santa Ana and Adam, this is the-Adam is the son of the famous Indian potter Maria.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Maria Martinez.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Maria Martinez, that's right. However, that demonstration was sometime later, over at Mount San Antonio College [Walnut, CA].

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, was it?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: They didn't come here. The demonstrations, people that Rick invited here, were like Tony Prieto, who was a-he was from the Bay area. He later, at some point, did teach at Mills College, also.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In fact, they have a museum in his honor there. He came, I guess, after Carlton Ball. And anyway, also, he invited Marguerite Wildenhain, who came down and stayed full for-demonstrated for several days. And then there was another potter who was from Japan visiting here. I had not-most of us weren't familiar with him, and I don't remember his name, but, he gave some very interesting demonstration. Because his work was very different than anybody else. He worked with a very dark, dark brownish clay that was quite stiff and must have been difficult to throw. And he made several pieces with that clay.

And so this was the thing that, you know, was very beneficial for all of us. And then this happened over, well, several years that I was there.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, back to Hamada, the idea of the Zen acceptance of the accidental, was that something that you saw in his work? Was it important, or were there other things that you valued in it?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. This, I think, is a thing that a lot of us learned about, mainly in Leach's book. And, which also I know Rick did discuss, you know, the Zen philosophy of why Japanese folk pottery looked the way it did. And of course he was also a great admirer of the Japanese brush work. In fact, we all, most of us, used Japanese brushes for decorating. In fact, I still do. I still have brushes and I bought more when I was in China.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Now Rick, you know that Rick was raised in China and spoke Chinese fluently. In fact, Harrison went to China with him in later years. But, because of his background he was a great admirer of oriental art in general and Japanese in particular.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Tomba [Temmoku?] pottery? Did he like Tomba?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think he found good things about all kinds of pottery, really. In fact, he, in one of the annual ceramics shows, the first work of Pete Voulkos' that anybody ever saw here, was when Rick invited him to show here. And later on, I think it was that same year-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember about what year that was?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it must have been around 1951 or '52. We were married in '52, and I know on-I first met Pete, it must have been, about 19-well, this gets confusing. '52, because-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, before we-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, Rick had shown his work here, at the gallery, along with other potters from California mainly, I guess. Yeah. And because I'm getting familiar with his work, I remember going-after my wife had died, I took my parents on a trip. We went to Yellowstone and then up to Bozeman, Montana. And I knew Pete Voulkos lived in Bozeman, so we stopped there and looked him up. And sure enough, I met him and Archie Bray at the Archie Bray Brickyard.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, in '49.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: In '49 you take a trip with your parents to the Archie Bray Foundation?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: That is [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Spring of '49.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Spring of '49.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And, um-yeah, we had gone to Yellowstone and then to-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: [Inaudible] office there for the first time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And I saw, um, yes, I looked up Pete and found, I found him here. They were all working together in Archie Bray's brickyard. They had a shop area, where they could make pots and so forth. And there was Pete and, let's see-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Rudy Autio?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Rudy Autio and, now who was the other one? And at that time, Pete was still doing his quite classic forms. You know, large pots and-so, we had various short visits there and went over to a local café and had some lunch with him. And then we went on our way. And so it wasn't until much later that I got much more acquainted with him. Well, after that he had come here and Rick had him spend a day or so giving demonstrations. Everyone was anxious to see how you throw a large pot. Because this is what he was known for.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did he do it in sections, or did he throw an enormous-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, threw it all in one-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Amount of clay?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: All in one piece. He didn't do any of

these real giant ones, no. But, and he did some small ones. In fact, I have one of the small ones here that was later-well, he did-it dried enough that he decorated it. And then it was after he left that they fired the pieces, and Rick gave me one of the pieces of that. And so, let's see, where are we?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Then was Pete Voulkos in the *Ceramic Annual* before your trip or after your trip? Do you remember that? When you came back? Did Rick include him in an annual exhibition, the *Ceramic Annual*? Include Pete?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think it may have been the Ceramic, his work in the *Ceramic Annual* first, because I knew his work already. And that's why I looked him up. And, so-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, by 1950, Harrison, you have also been in an exhibition at the Everson, right [Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY]? A Ceramic National Exhibition?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, really? Well, you know, that could be. That was probably one of the first exhibitions that I sent some work into. And, I was-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So what was your work like at that time?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Now, I was-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He was very successful.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Was that the one? Well, yeah, I had been in different exhibitions. That, as Marguerite mentions, the city of-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In fact, that show was on at the time Bernard Leach was here. The City of Paris was, well, one of the major department stores, a very elegant place, in San Francisco. And the woman in charge of there had been in charge of all the crafts and so forth at the San Francisco World's Fair. And so, they had her at this store and she organized an exhibition of just ceramics from, I guess it must have been mainly just California potters. And I had sent some pieces for that show and won their first prize or something there. But I remember hearing afterwards that Bernard Leach had seen the show and he didn't think much of California potters. In fact, he had said so in his lectures. He really antagonized a lot of people, because he claimed that we didn't have sufficient roots in our work, like European potters or Japanese potters. And so I guess we were doomed to failure. [Laughs.] But, anyway, he was a personality, all right.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, when did you meet Marguerite? We've jumped over that.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, this is around when this happened.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: About-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's what I was going to get into next. Because at this same time, Rick Petterson was in charge of the exhibitions at the Los Angeles County Fair. And Millard Sheets had organized this whole art building so that they had painting and sculpture at one end of the building and at the other end it was the craft, was an exhibition of American crafts. And Rick was in charge of that. And he set up the thing in a way that it was, became a national competition for craftsmen in all different mediums, which included, besides ceramics, wood, metal, weaving, jewelry, and so forth.

And I would work there each summer to earn money for the year. And when the fair was on, that particular year, I was stationed at an information desk that they had in the center of the main room. And one evening I happened to notice a very attractive girl. She was there with a young man, this appeared to be a student. And this girl caught my eye somehow or other. And the next morning, when I went into the ceramic lab at Scripps there she was. [Laughs.] She turned out to be an exchange-she had a Fulbright Fellowship from France and was teaching some at Pomona College [Claremont, CA], and was free to take classes in the graduate school. And since it happened she had been a student at the Beaux-Arts in Paris [école Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, France], where she had studied a lot about painting, but there was no ceramics. So she enrolled in the ceramic class. Well, this was very nice. Over time I became kind of her personal instructor in ceramics. [Laughs.] Because I had been there about a year or so already. And so, that's the beginning of things.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And now we need Marguerite's version of this event.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: [Laughs.] All right. All right.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, I was there just with a date, it just happened to be a student who invited me to come to the fair. But I had just arrived less than a week before from France, and I was living at the French House, taking charge of the French House and the students there. And I had some classes to teach in French, not in Art. And I did not see Harrison during my visit to the fair. But the next morning, the first time I saw him, at that time I was walking down the steps that led into the ceramic lab. And Harrison was carrying a vat full of pots in front of the cases, you know the-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: The glass cases.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The little drying cases.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, the shelves.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And he caught my eye because he looked very Latin. And I did not have any attraction towards those Nordic, German-looking Americans. But this man, who looked so Latin, immediately caught my eye. And of course, as soon as he saw me, he sent me a very strong look, which of course I could, I could not miss.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, tell me what this ceramic studio was like at Scripps at that time. It was in the basement, as it was for many years? Where the wheels were, that's where you worked? So you went down the steps to that area?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Um hum.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was the glaze room above?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Up above, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Where it was?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Uh, yes. Yeah, very much that. Yes, we had downstairs where there were the wheels and we did all the clay work. We had a clay mixer there, so people could prepare different kind of clay bodies and reclaim clay, and do all the clay work there. And then the upstairs was the glaze lab and also the kilns. And, in fact, it even had a couple of small electric kilns downstairs, so that you could use things that, more or less, as test kilns. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What kinds of wheels were there then?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, these, I think as I mentioned before, were-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Kick wheels?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Made by Bob Stelter. No, they were electric wheels, but they were on a vertical platform.

[END OF SESSION 2, TAPE 1, SIDE A]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is tape three, size B of the interview on February 25 with Harrison McIntosh. Now, back to the ceramics studio at Scripps, when you were there around 1950.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think I spoke a bit already on the way Rick conducted the classes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Who were the other students there then, besides Marguerite?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, let's see, this is-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Marjorie Bergeson.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Maybe, I don't remember. She may have. I think she was still a Scrippsie.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How do you spell that?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, but she was working in the lab.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, she-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Marjorie?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, Marjorie. Marge Bergeson.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: B-E-R-G-E-S-O-N. She lives in Fairmont. You know, she is a very fine artist. She did a number of things, in illustration; she did a lot of sculpture, mostly. She did that [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, she studied very much with Bert Stewart, who taught sculpture at Scripps at that time. And the other people, I think, as we may have mentioned, was Don Schaumburg.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Right.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Helen Watson [Helen Richter Watson] and Ward Youry. And there were several others. Then, well at times, other people would come into that. Like Betty Dike would sit in sometimes on.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That's what I meant, students outside Ceramics who you had contact with.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Well-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.] He was already that. He had [inaudible] Ph.D.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Actually, a lot of the other faculty were very much interested in what was going on in ceramics. So I did some pieces with Paul Darrow. Paul Darrow decorated a number of pieces of mine. And Phil Dike did some. And Phil also decorated some of the larger pieces that Rick Petterson made. And, let me see-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Jean Ames, was she interested in ceramics?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. They were.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: They were like her students. All of us were her students.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah. This is the thing you should also include, what Marguerite just said. The fact that many of these people were all in the same classes, the design classes that Jean Ames is teaching. And there also Paul Darrow, Roger Kuntz and-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: What about Doug?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Doug. Yes, Doug McClellan and Jack Zajac, we were all in the same class at that time, all studying with Jean Ames. And as I say, some of them did some work in, with ceramics. But mostly, just maybe, as I mentioned already, decorating pieces. But around this same time, well, we-oh, I should, I should not forget, one prominent part of that class was Rupert Deese, because we eventually went in together.

Because what happened, a friend of ours, Shelly Horton, had rented a little building from the colleges on Foothill Boulevard to use as a painting studio. In fact, he was a graduate student in painting and was just finishing his studies. And so, he was also teaching some private classes there. Well, he was about to move, move out, and he

suggested to Rupert Deese and myself that maybe we would like to take it over, to have a studio to work in, because when we finished our studies at Scripps. So, we did.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Did you ever see that little building?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was a little, it was a little stone building, right across the street from Wolfe's Market. It was built-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was built of magnificent, big field stones. And the roof was supported by telephone poles, old phone poles and a tile roof. And it had been built, initially, as a golf hut. Because the whole area, clear up to where the Botanic Garden is now, was a golf course. And this was largely built with, by, and under the influence of Albert Stewart because he liked to play golf. And he and some friends got in and had this built. And it was, it had one door and two windows on each side, all four sides.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, when you mentioned Shelly Horton, he assisted Alfredo Ramos Martinez at one point, on the mural.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I believe.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you have any memory? That would be before you came to Scripps though, wouldn't it?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, this was just before I came there.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did Shelly ever talk about it?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But I got very much-I knew Shelly quite well because he was very enterprising. He had rented a little bungalow in back of Mrs. Frampton's home, and it had two bedrooms. So he rented, I rented one bedroom from him to have my living quarters right in the center of Claremont. Shelly told me a lot about what he had been doing before. This was all before I arrived. And, ah, he became quite a close friend of Ramos Martinez, apparently. They would spend, have dinner, spend their evenings together and so forth. And so, and he, well, he felt very sad about what happened-his having died-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He died very suddenly.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Suddenly, that way.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He was a source of information when we had the mural conserved.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So, that was a-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, tell me Harrison, what is your work like during these years? How is it changing?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, my work, I think, has always gone through slow evolutions. Because I worked, initially, with a red, clay body. Although at Scripps I tried, did some work in lighter, buff colored bodies. But never anything in real porcelain. Because I wanted to stay with the cone five work. That I felt, actually, that if I was going to make a living at making pots the way I liked to make them, I would have to kind of simplify the whole procedure.

So when we moved into the stone, the little stone studio, Rummy bought a second-hand kiln. Rummy is Rupert Deese, by the way. [Laughs.] A second-hand kiln from someone in San Diego, and we had a friend bring it up here, and we installed it. And I brought out all the various equipment that I had in my parents' garage in Los Angeles, which-so we had something to start working with. And I built a potter's wheel and, yes-because somewhere in between here I had gone to Pond Farm and made drawings of the kind of wheel Marguerite Wildenhain used.

But, to get back to my work at that point, we tried first-we both were, seemed automatically, to tend to want to work at cone five, because that suited our purpose. Because that meant that we could have a kiln that wasn't terribly expensive to operate. It used much less gas that way. And I could get a sufficiently vitreous stoneware body. Because the body formulas that we had were very dense. And, ah, so I was working with a red clay body, as was Rummy at that time. And first we tried working on a casting body that we could convert into the throwing body, which didn't work out very well. But, because we were making-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you make your own clay at that point?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Uh, yes. Yeah, we, actually just in barrels, by hand. Because we were making clay slip. And because also, we were making a number of cast pieces. Rummy really liked designing forms and that would be very suitable for casting. And I did, as well. I made a number of different forms, shapes that way. And it turned out that people would buy these things. And through various sources-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What were your sources?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, we would exhibit our work in *California Design*, which was a thing that had been started by, was it Helen Morterman, I think?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: No.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, no. Excuse me. Yes, anyway, we'll think of it.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was it an annual exhibition?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: An annual-well, it was an annual-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Or gallery?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Exhibition that was held at the, at the Pasadena Art Museum [Pasadena Museum of California Art, Pasadena, CA] when it was first built, the new museum, in fact. This gets into, well, we're getting into different, overlapping, things here. But that was how a lot of our market developed, really.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And also the other craft shops here.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh that's right. Some of that initial work was sold.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yeah.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that because those things that I was making, and Rummy too, would be sold here at little art craft shop at the Padua Hills Theater. Because they had a policy of selling work from all of the local artists. Which was-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.] Sculptures-and there was another ceramist who lived just south of here, south of this house. Her name was Hildred Reendz. And she made mostly very nice [inaudible] and things.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Small little-small animals and things.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How would spell her name? Hildred?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Hildred with R- double E and D-Z.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Mm hmm. [Affirmative.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Okay.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: She moved out to Mexico, so she stayed in Mexico.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Eventually. But, let's see. So, what happened after we did a certain amount cast forms and then gradually we developed more into throwing clay body. And eventually, I found it more sensible to buy from the supply houses, already prepared. I found that there was a very good clay body, red clay body, that fired at cone five, very similar to the one I was making myself. So this was a more sensible way to go.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And had it been pre-wedged, so there was less air?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, ah, it was a de-aired clay body. But I usually, I would eventually wedge into my scrap clay with it, to make a softer body. Because usually when you, first, the way it came right from the supply house, really was very dense and more difficult to make, to throw pieces.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Did you buy from the [inaudible] company at all?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, it was from Westwood Supply Company.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was it?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Over in the City of Industry. They've been there for many years. It's now called Laguna Clay Products. And so, what was happening in the same process, Rummy got married and then I think about a year or so later, why, Marguerite and I got married. During this whole process, Marguerite-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What year were you married?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Marguerite was only here for one year.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Then you insisted two. I went back to France in between.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, maybe that's another story.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah, I wasn't able to convince Marguerite to stay and get married.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Harrison asked me-Harrison asked me in marriage-let's see, Harrison asked me in marriage at about Easter time of 1950, just before going on a seminar at Mills College. And I told you that I would give you an answer when you came back. And when he came back I told him I was going back to France. Because I was engaged in France at that time. So, this is another aspect of Harrison's personality. He accepted the fact, of course, he had known all along that I was engaged. So, you know, he was courting me without too much hope anyway. And when I left, he took me to the train station at Pomona, so that I could take the train to New York and then the boat to go back to France. And a year and a half later passed by while I'm there. A year and half later, when I was free again, Harrison sent me a one-way ticket to come back to marry him.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So you had stayed in touch. Somehow you knew she was, whether she was-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well we stayed-I'm not very much of a writer, a letter writer, but it was enough to keep in touch. And what really brought it to a head was that my brother's sister-in-law, who also worked at Disney's, had a vacation for several weeks and she was going to go to Paris. And she had already met Marguerite when she was-because Marguerite got acquainted with all of my family when we were here, naturally. And they all liked her and disappointed she didn't stay. But, so, this sister-in-law, in going, in making her plans to go to Paris, she had contacted Marguerite and Marguerite was going to show her the city. And I told her, Well, when you're there, find out how the situation is with Marguerite and whether it might be a possibility that she would come back to get married. And which she did, came back with a positive reaction, and that's what, where we ended up sending a one-way ticket.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, it's good to know you're persistent.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He told me, he told me that a lot of people at Scripps, all our friends were really teasing you and pushing you into this.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes. When I was working at the fair, also, there was, Tirza Scott, David Scott's wife.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Theresa Scott?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Theresa-Theresa-Tirza we called her, Tirza.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How do you spell that?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: T-I-R-Z-A. She was from Peru.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: She and Allie [Alice] Petterson, Rick Petterson's wife, the two of them also worked at the fair during the summer. And when we were packing things up after one exhibition, they just kept heckling me about when was I going to, I should really be getting, marrying Marguerite, you know. And so everybody was happy when this happened. So much so, that when Marguerite did arrive and we got married, they put on a huge party for us.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: First [inaudible] ah-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, if you want to get more details-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We were just married within a week after I arrived. And Harrison was living in the [inaudible] house, which was rented by Shelly Horton, and he was sub-renting the rooms upstairs to different graduate students, including Alma Tolstedt who was playing the cello in the room next door to Harrison, and then Harrison and a few others. And when I came, Harrison gave me his big bedroom and slept in the little, tiny bedroom across in the, across the hall. And then we were married a week later, but very modestly. We had no money at all. Harrison was surviving on his GI Bill, which was $50 a month. And we had-we were the first couple at Our Lady, the new church, Our Lady of the Assumption. Because before the Catholic people here only had a little chapel in the Barrio. And we had just a few people at that wedding. I was dressed exclusively in hand-me-downs, plus a $2 hat that I bought in Pomona. And I had a dress that a friend from New York had given me on the way back from, to France. And Harrison's parents were there and President Lyon and Mrs. Lyon [E. Wilson Lyon, president of Pomona College 1941-1969, and his wife, Carolyn Lyon] came to our wedding, because they remembered me and, of course they had been-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: From Pomona?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: From, yeah, you see, it was plain [inaudible.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: From Pomona College.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Lyon, President Lyon was the one who invited Marguerite to come, initially, to Pomona College on their scholarship.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. And, ah, let's see. Then after the church wedding we had a very nice little brunch prepared by Allie Petterson at her house. So we had a brunch there.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And then-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: There was that group of, a-[inaudible.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was Allie A-L-L-Y?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. No, Allie, A-L-L-I-E, she was, she spelled it.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Because, you know, she [inaudible.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was Alice, but we called her Allie. So she and Tirza Scott had prepared the brunch, and after that they equipped us completely, from head to toe, to go to the mountain to use the cottage, the mountain cottage of Big Bear, which was owned by David Scott's parents. And-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: By then-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Huh?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: By then David was-was he Chairman of the Art Department?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. Yes. He was Chairman of the Art Department at that time.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: At Pomona?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. Oh, I should-no, at Scripps, at Scripps.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: At Scripps.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: At Scripps, yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But, you know something that I, we should have said a little bit before that? When I was here the first year, on my fellowship, David Scott was the Director of the Art Department at Scripps and Tirza, his young wife, was in charge of the Spanish House, which was located behind the French House. Those two, French House and Spanish House, one behind the other, were two little pavilions, little bungalows, really. And they were really replaced by the Oldenburch Center later on, after we were married, long after we were married. And Tirza was in charge of the Spanish House. I don't think she was teaching, but she was there as a student, you know, where she could speak Spanish.

Anyway, they equipped us from head to toe. They put a big mutton coat on me and ski boots. And they

equipped Harrison, too, and sent us off to the Big Bear cottage. And we were snowed, we were snowed in there for three weeks. [Laughs.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: [Laughs.] [Inaudible.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It's like a way to get to know one another. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. So we spent the whole time making love and shoveling snow.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was a big, big storm and-[Inaudible.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Because the car was buried under snow.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Big storm, where nobody could get out.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Ah, that's wonderful.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In fact, maybe you should tell her the story about the first night on our way there.
HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh yeah, on our way to Big Bear we found, we went through one pass and we got as far as Victorville and found out that the roads were all closed and that we couldn't go on up. So we had to spend our first night in a motel in Victorville. And after we got settled in this motel, we went out to look for a restaurant for dinner, and we had dinner in a little restaurant along the road. And when we came out, there was a huge rainbow in the moonlight-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In the moonlight.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Illuminated by the moon.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How beautiful.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was really a marvelous omen there. And then the next morning we were able to get on the road. And they had given us chains to put on the car. My little car managed to get us up there. So, that was the story.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So how long did you stay at the, at Scripps, studying ceramics with Rick Petterson?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But you know, you ought to finish that story. When we came back-see, while we were snowed in, in the mountains, our friends prepared that huge wedding party.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And that was really a marvelous way for me to be welcomed in this country.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And these were all the people from Scripps, from the Art Department. Millard Sheets and Mary [Sheets]-and the ones who really prepared the party were mostly Tirza Scott and David Scott, Allie and Rick Petterson, Betty Wood and Mark-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Betty Dike.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I mean, Betty Dike, Margaret Barlow, Margaret Montgomery Barlow, and, let's see, Mary Sheets.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Honey, I don't know how much she-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: She was there, but I don't if she-she didn't do too much of the work, then. But they had almost three hundred people who came and tell what-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: This was all in the old Sumner Mansion, which is down on the corner of First and College. That was before it was remodeled. And this had-the reason it was all hell there is that Shelly Horton had taken over, rented that from the college and started his Claremont Art School. He lived there and he had-I rented a room upstairs from him. He had brought his mother out because she was in Pasadena, and she helped cook meals for Shelly and so forth. But he also had me, talked me into teaching some ceramics there. He bought a couple of potter's wheels. And then he had Sam Maloof come, and Sam taught some classes in-in fact, Sam was mentioning the other day, he hardly remembers what he did there. [Laughs.] But, we were all there probably showing how to draw and do some-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was Sam making furniture then?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, I think he had started doing some then. Wait a minute, maybe what he taught was serigraph work. I'll bet, because this is what he was doing for Millard.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Um, yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: You know, he made hundreds and thousands of serigraphs of Millard's work, that's what Millard hired Sam for, initially. And so, yeah, I think that's probably what he was teaching. And he had, well, Shelley himself taught life drawing classes. And I don't know whether, he may have had someone else. But I, those were, that was the main thing. So they cleared away all the equipment. And in the, what was then called a sun room. It had a screened in porch. Maybe you know the room. It's on the north side of the building.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It's on the north side.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Was where we did the pottery. They pushed the potter's wheels together and somebody had gone out and bought a big barrel of gringolino wine, which, of course, was illegal in Claremont in those days. But they had-it really made a party out of this. And even Dr. Lyon and Mrs. Lyon came to the party. And they had music and they even danced.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And Harrison's uncle had come from his restaurant in Palm Springs to cook ravioli for all these people.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And then after the dinner, while we were opening all our presents, which were mostly things for practical use, a broom, a chair, we had nothing. And while I was opening all the presents people were getting very . . .

[Tape stops, restarts.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, this must have been about 1953, when I was given a scholarship to go and study a summer session with Marguerite Wildenhain up at Pond Farm. We had already gotten acquainted with Marguerite Wildenhain when she was here, about the, maybe the year before, where she spent several days giving a workshop, that Rick had invited her to Scripps for that purpose. So Marguerite and I went, drove up to Pond Farm and we were fortunate in having a good place to stay, because I had this uncle, that had done such a nice job with our wedding party down here, had a small hotel and restaurant on the Russian River that was just a few miles away from Marguerite Wildenhain's Pond Farm. So we stayed in one of his, he had several little cabins next to the hotel, and we stayed in that. And Marguerite worked in his restaurant, serving guests, while I was off at Pond Farm studying all the various things that Marguerite Wildenhain went through. She-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: She had studied at the Bauhaus, correct [The Bauhaus School of Design, Weimar, Germany]?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah. She was, of course, told us about her experiences. At the Bauhaus itself, she really was not there very much, because they had established the people who wanted to study ceramics with a potter who was located some distance from Weimar, because it was something like a day's journey or so, or at least some hours away. Because occasionally one of the, some of the professors, from the Bauhaus, would go to the pottery to analyze and criticize the work that the students were doing at the pottery. And this pottery, I think, was run with the person teaching the pottery was a man by the name of Marcks, I think it was. And who Marguerite always spoke very highly of his work.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Was it Marcks? Was his last name Marcks?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, the last name was Marcks. I think M-A . . . M-A . . . M-A-R-C-K-S. I know it wasn't Karl Marx. [Laughs.] Anyway, and he taught-she taught-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was Marguerite like as a teacher?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: She taught what I always assumed was the traditional, European method of working with clay. She had a certain way of wedging the clay. And then there was a-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was it like? What was her method like?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it wasn't a matter of rolling it the way the Japanese do. It's a matter of sort of slicing the lump of clay with your thumbs, you know, and dividing it into two sections, then slapping one piece on top of the other and then rolling it, and repeating this until you feel that the whole mass of clay is homogeneous. And-

[END OF SESSION 2, TAPE 1, SIDE B]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, interview with Harrison McIntosh, February 25, 1999, tape four, side A. Harrison, do you want to go on and tell us more about the difference between the Marguerite Wildenhain's method of wedging and the Japanese method? Did you adopt her method or feel more comfortable with the European method of wedging than the Japanese method?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, I probably am, because that's still the way I wedge my clay. I found that seemed to work the best for me. And, ah, but to go on with it, she was very, really, pretty systematic about her approach to teaching. The first thing everyone had to do was to make a cylinder that was maybe only about four or five inches high, a perfectly round, vertical cylinder. And these were thrown on a series of kick wheels that she had built in a-you know, this was a little farm house location, and this had been the chicken coop originally. So, it was a fairly long, narrow building with open windows on both sides, so you had good light. And all the wheels were of a bench type wheel. So you sat, and they were all, you know, one behind the other, in a row on both sides, with an aisle down the middle. It accommodated, oh, I don't know, maybe ten, ten or fifteen students. Well, we would sit at the wheel and in front of the wheel it would be-is a board, a ware board, that's maybe about five feet long. And, ah, so you throw a whole series of cylinders, one right after another, until you fill the whole board. And when that's all finished, she goes and examines-and in the meanwhile, she's watching your technique, to see how, after she's demonstrated, to see that everyone is learning how to do this. And then she examines the, each of the persons' work and decides, well, which one is the best one. And you keep just that one and everything else is thrown back into the scrap clay. And this goes on to different steps-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did she ever cut pieces open to see how thick the wall was?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, yes, that's the thing. Yes. To see if it was, how uniform you were able to make the piece. And, this-she followed through on making various forms of different sizes, until you finally got to a teapot. After you had managed-this lasted, what, about something like six weeks, I guess. Each day making a different form or sometimes repeating the form, and then combining forms, until you learned how to make a teapot, and make all the, all the parts. And you'd end up making a whole board full of teapots. Well, along the way, of course, would be how to pull a handle for making, on the cup shapes that you'd make or a pitcher, the whole technique of how to stick the clay to the piece and then pull it and attach it with a slip at the bottom and-and so, the teapot, as I recall, was pretty much of the final piece, because that was much more complex. The bowl was a piece, and you had to throw the spout and throw a lid that would fit and then pull the handle on the piece and trim-she also did very little trimming. So you had to learn how to throw pieces quite thin, right from the bottom up. And she also was very much like Leach.

[Tape stops, restarts.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, Marguerite, you remember some things about Marguerite Wildenhain?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, I remember. I remember that when we were throwing the teapots, she was adamant about finishing the teapot with a spout which poured water properly.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It's difficult to make a teapot that works well.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah. Because she also felt that things should be very, work well functionally. Because part of her experience, while she was still in Germany, she had designed a whole dinnerware set for a major factory there, and this was in porcelain, I think. So she had a lot of practical sides as well as a very strong philosophy of the relationship of clay and with nature. She liked to live surrounded by nature, that's why she was quite isolated up on the top of this hill with Pond Farm.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Who else was there with you, studying, when you were there?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Let me see. There was only one other man. There's a picture of me and this fellow and two other students in her book. Oh, what was his name? I don't recall knowing of his work afterwards, but I have recently heard that he, oh-that he had moved to Riverside, where he was a potter there. Oh, what is his name?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, we'll think of his name later in the day.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And he died just a few years ago or so.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Oh.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it was someone who knew him who was connected with the Laguna Clay-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Tong. Tong was the guy's name.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yes. Yeah, that's very close.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did she work, did she teach you to work with porcelain or were you working with another kind of clay?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, no. No. This was all strictly stoneware clay.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Stoneware.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Mm hmm. [Affirmative.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: She was also teaching a philosophy of life.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: She was close to nature. That was very important to her. She conducted, outside of the classes, we would go on picnics with her. We would go and walk on the beach. In fact, I have a picture of her, Marguerite and I, wrestling together. And of course she was a lot stronger than I was. So she put my two shoulders on the sand very quickly. But it was a part of her education, of what she was trying to teach the artists. And of course they were all there, because they knew what to expect on that matter. But she wanted to make them realize that they had to carry that feeling into the work they did with the clay. The clay, the pot had to remain very direct. That's why she was throwing it in that manner.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And she would also have sessions, now and then, in the, outside the pottery shop, in part of her garden, which was mainly a vegetable garden. And we would all sit around in a circle while she discussed, like, decoration was the things that were really taken from nature and so forth. And discuss her whole philosophy, of attitude, towards working with clay.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did she use Japanese brushes or something different? Probably European?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, actually, she didn't do very much brush work.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Mm hmm. [Affirmative.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Most of her pottery is done where she will incise a drawing into the, almost the wet clay. Sometimes you can tell from that. And, in fact, it was usually, I think, even the leather hard. I don't think she worked in the clay when it was bone dry. Then she would use color, color these with colored glazes, really. But these were all quite earth colors, really.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Very often delineating . . .

[END SESSION 2.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is Mary MacNaughton, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, continuing with an interview with Harrison McIntosh, March 3, 1999. Harrison, we were in the middle of our discussion of your experience with Marguerite Wildenhain at Pond Farm in 1953. Could you tell us more about what it was like to work in her studio and what it was that you took away from that an experience as an artist?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think I may have talked about some of her approach to, well, everything from throwing, where we would make multiple pieces of a given shape and then keep only one of those, which we could do the finishing work. As one piece was leather hard, rather than trim, do much trimming, it was mainly a matter of keeping the wire cut at the bottom of the piece and sort of rotating it and rolling it around to soften around the bottom edges of the piece. And after we had gone through different stages of throwing from the cylinder, and I think I mentioned on up to other shapes until we did a, finally, a teapot. And out of these, eventually, that were kept to be decorated. Now, some of them were decorated . . . She showed us various decorating techniques that she used. Some were done, as I remember, with, in the leather hard clay, where you would incise a pattern into the clay. And then when that was dry, we applied some of the colors or glazes that she had. And then there's-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did she fire twice? Did she bisque fire pieces and then glaze fire?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: You know, I'm trying to remember. I think a lot of the things were done in single firing. Because it must have been, because I know when I came back to Claremont, working my studio there, I tried the idea of-in fact, for a long time I did fire a lot of my work in a single firing process. And, of course, I was spraying the glazes on, whereas I think most of her work, her glazes were applied by brush or dipping. And I found with my, the clay body I was using, and making relatively thin pieces, that the dipping was, didn't work very well for that. So, overall, I-among all the different techniques that Marguerite taught us, I found that when I got back to

working in my own studio, I started to use certain techniques that she taught us that seemed to work for the kind of forms I liked to make. Except for one thing, I tended to want to make forms that, oh, had a smaller foot and had a form that would have a certain feeling of lightness to it. And so I tended to do more, a lot more trimming to get, establish the kind of form that I really wanted. And so, these things evolved from, oh, seeing, you know, a lot of the pots in museums and so forth. So I didn't really follow what Marguerite Wildenhain taught and Bernard Leach.

Much of his technique was very similar, actually. Because his work was still founded in not only the English tradition, but especially, of course, Japanese. So, anyway, I didn't really follow, to letter, any of these approaches.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: In what ways did you strike off in your own direction, then, after working with her? How did you do things differently than she did, besides trimming?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think I found certain techniques she used for decorating pieces was very useful. Although I think I gradually evolved into doing maybe more work where I would work on the dry clay, after the piece was bone dry, where I could do, incise either a thin or a heavy line into the surface of the clay. And then use a sort of a mishima technique, where I would brush my engobe into, but over the incised line, and then rub off the excess when it was dry, giving me a very sensitive kind of line quality that I found I tend to use more and more and which I still use very much of this technique.

But with Marguerite Wildenhain there were also, I'm sure, other things, that were useful. Although I, she didn't use a brush very much. And I found that I was tending to use the Japanese brushes more and more for using, both in applying engobe and also wax resists. This was a thing that I began to use quite a lot, wax resisted in various different ways. Either applying it with a brush or brushing, a combination brush and then a sgraffito through the wax and getting still another kind of line quality, using-but always, most always, using my, the engobes either over or under and scribing the sgraffito line through an engobe.

And these engobes were things I made-well, really it started out when I was still studying with Rick Petterson at Scripps-using a basic clay that I may have been working with. Very often this is what I finally evolved. Instead of making a prepared engobe body, why I'd end up just using the clay body that I was making my pots with, dry it out to a powder, and screening that and mixing that with various oxides and working out certain color intensity with all the oxides as, you know, copper, cobalt, iron and manganese, basically. And these kind of formed the main engobes that I-well, and my colors really came from that.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: But didn't using the same clay also help make it more compatible, that the two went together?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, that's right. Yes. And this is the thing-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: No separating or problems.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, the engobe, well, automatically became very compatible with the pot I was using it on. And also, by using just the oxides, rather than commercial stains, I found that my glazes would, in turn, have a feeling of being really part of the clay body and part of the glaze, because they were all really very fusible engobes. So I would get very, a very nice quality between the clay and the glaze and the engobe. And even firing at cone five and with this particular matte glaze that I seemed to have preferred and ended up doing most of my work with, it had the kind of qualities that really pleased me the most.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What about your kiln? What kind of kiln were you using at this point?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, when I was at Scripps, of course, they had everything from some electric to gas kilns. And that's where I seem to have settled on working mainly with cone five. So when we, Rummy Deese and I, moved to our own studio, the little stone house on Foothill Boulevard, why, we had a gas kiln. Rummy had found a second-hand gas kiln down in San Diego and that was brought up to the studio and this is what we started using. It's a top-loading Dickenson, top-loading gas kiln. And it was really, basically, a muffled-type kiln, which suits our purposes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Could you explain what muffled-type kiln is?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, a muffled-kiln, as opposed to an open-fire kiln, where the burners, the open-fire kiln has the burners exposed right into the, directly to the ware, in the kiln. Whereas, the muffled-kiln has a, really a baffle wall. In other words, a fire clay slabs that separates the space between the burner and the interior of the kiln itself.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Does this reduce shock on the objects from the fire as it, as the temperature goes up? Or

does it have other effects?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it may have some of that, but I've thought, mainly, it gives you a more uniform heating surface, really, around the pieces in the kiln. And in our case, we needed to have a very clean, oxidizing fire for the kind of glazes that we were both using. See, we both have tended to use the same glazes, even though we each have used a different clay body. But the glazes fit, fit very well, the bodies that each-that we were each using.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How would you contrast Rummy Deese's clay body to yours? Would it have more grog [sand] in it, more-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, actually, his clay body is even smoother because he screens it. Eventually we inherited a big clay slip barrel from a neighbor. And so he has used that for mixing his clay body, as a clay slip. And then he screens that so that it's very smooth. There's not a bit of sand or grog in it. And the clay, the body that I was using at the beginning, I was also mixing as a clay slip, but first and then dry it in plaster bats, ready to use. And I've never used any sand or grog added to it, at all.

But in a fairly short time I found that the big supply house, where we got all our materials, it was the Westwood Ceramics, it was called then, had a, was making a red clay body very similar to what I was preparing. So this, I thought, could save me a lot of extra work, by buying the prepared clay. So I would buy that about a ton at a time, because in those days I was producing quite a lot of pots. And it was less expensive this way. And, let's see, I was using a red clay-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember what a ton of clay cost then?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, my memory, for figures, is terrible.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was not that much. It was a hundred and fifty.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, I think it was less than a hundred dollars then.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Maybe ninety or something like that, I think.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Are we talking, now, in the mid-fifties?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: This is-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, probably. Mm hmm. Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It hasn't changed very much, actually.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, well, it's a hundred and-what? Twenty or something. I don't get a ton of clay anymore. [Laughs.] I get only a few hundred pounds at a time, that we could bring in the car. And, but I was going to say, at the same time, Rummy, his clay, we started out trying to use the same clay body. And then, gradually, we kind of branched out into our, what we liked personally. And so, he was making this body-well, by this time, when he had the clay slip barrel and so forth, I think it was about the time we moved up here to Padua Hills, which was then 1958.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: '58?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. He is making his clay into a brown, more of a brown body, where he adds burnt umber to his dry materials and mixes that and has a very smooth clay body. And I have changed clay bodies every now and then, for one reason or another. And, let's see, I think that may be pretty much covers the basic materials.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What do you like about the smooth clay, in other words, not having grog in it? What is the effect that you like, in that decision?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, there is a very good reason for that, in that I've found I like to do more and more sgraffito work, where I was incising right into the clay body. And of course, when you have sand or grog, why this interferes with that and gives you a, you know, an interrupted line. So it became more and more essential to have a smooth body for this reason. Of course, if you're doing work just on the surface, why, of course, your body, it doesn't make any difference. But, doing this technique of incising into the dry clay, then it, you get

much nicer results, of course, with the smooth clay body.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It's easier on your hands, too, isn't it? Because grog can be very irritating and can sometimes cut little pieces of-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yeah. I suppose so. Actually, I've never worked with a course clay body, so I've preserved my hands, I guess, that way. [Laughs.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What did, now-now, you say that Marguerite Wildenhain had this technique of incising into the clay when it was leather hard? Did she use engobes too? Did she combine the color in the incised line?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think so, although she never did teach anything. It was just, you know, one, short summer session. So she didn't teach anything about the glazes and engobes and these techniques. She would have some of them available, towards the end of the session, for the students to use. But, you know, in observing her work, I'm quite sure these were, some were very matte-like surfaces, like an engobe, and others would be even glossy, and many of them were sort of in between. So I think she was adding glaze or fusible materials to engobes to get the kind of qualities that she wanted.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I-I think-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And then, also-yeah?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think she liked to give it texture, even within the engobe surface. She liked to give it a rough, more earthy quality. And Harrison stayed away from that, because it did not correspond to his temperament and sensitivity. Harrison liked to make sometimes fairly coarse or incised lines, colored lines-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Curved lines.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But very often, depending on the shape of the piece, he likes to have a very sensitive, delicate line, that is not imposing itself, but just adapting to the form.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I'm not sure that the clay we were using at Marguerite Wildenhain's, I don't recall that it had a coarseness to it. It may have had a small amount of fine sand or something in it. Because it did throw very well. But, basically, I think, Marguerite liked to have her work retain a certain real, strong earthiness quality. So that she had all of these materials worked for her in that direction. So she also, I think, did some work when the clay was almost, somewhat a little soft, because she liked to do decorations that were very spontaneous but beautifully drawn, either figure things, very often. And so she used, you know, a combination of techniques there, I'm sure.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you find that you were more interested in geometrical shapes or in regularity and symmetry than she was?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, I think this is what gradually evolved. And so, I think my own work sort of developed as a result of learning different certain techniques or the certain attitude towards working with clay from all the different people that I worked with. Probably all the way from Al King, Rick Petterson, Glen Lukens, Marguerite Wildenhain. And later, you know, I became very well acquainted with Pete Voulkos, it was later at Otis, and understanding his work. And so, my own things kind of evolved out of a combination and seeing many things in, you know, in the museums, particularly. Like the Sung, Chinese Sung pottery and folk pottery, and also the Greek, Greek pots, which had a, you know, the other extreme. So, um, that can get-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Okay.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's it.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: We're just about to the end here, so let's-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh.

[END TAPE 4, SIDE A]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Art, Mary MacNaughton interviewing Harrison McIntosh on March 3, 1999. And we're continuing on tape four, side B, with a discussion of Harrison's career after he's completed this experience with Marguerite Wildenhain at Pond Farm in 1953.

Harrison, you begin exhibiting your work in 1950 at the "Ceramic National Exhibition" at the Everson Museum in Syracuse. And then again in 1953, you have work in the California Design Exhibition in Pasadena. Can you tell us how these first exhibition experiences came about and how you sent your work in, and how you saw yourself, at

that point, as an artist?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I was working in, by then, my own studio that Rummy Deese and I had together, on the little stone building on Foothill Boulevard. And apparently I was making pieces that I must have thought were suitable to send in to an exhibition. And I guess we received announcement of this, the Everson having their annual competition. So I sent-you know-I don't even remember the details. I don't think we were submitting slides in those days.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you just ship a piece?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Shipped a piece to-for the competition. And I was accepted in the show. And I don't remember if that is the one that they bought for their collection or if that was later. But, anyway, because I did send in to other, later shows, I believe. Oh yes, in fact, see, we have notes here. I sent, submitted things from 1950 to 1968. I think they were having the show every two years. And I think I got some kind of an award or notice of some kind. And one year they bought the piece, which they have in their collection. And it's, reproduced in a nice, full-page color of a recent book that they just published. And they also have some other pieces, I understand, that were given to them by different collectors. And so-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What was the "California Design Exhibition" like, in Pasadena? Was that also an annual, or semi-annual, bi-annual exhibition? Do you remember?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think, I believe it was a bi-annual. But anyway, the first one was held in 1953. And that turned out to be something that was really, I think, a very helpful to a lot of craftsmen around California. I know it was, especially, for myself and for Rummy Deese and Sam Maloof, our good friend doing his furniture. Because in that, it seemed that we all got quite a lot of exposure. And so, I really never had to look for places to sell my work, because there were several people who had shops. There were no galleries in those days, showing the crafts or any ceramics at all. But there were stores like Kurt Wagner in Redondo Beach, who had carried very fine contemporary home furnishings. A lot of it was from Sweden and Denmark. And he, I believe this is how it came about . . .

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember what his store was called? Was it Kurt Wagner's?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was called Kurt Wagner's, and it still is. He had just started his business, I believe, around that time. He had been working, himself, he was working for Allen Adler, who was then quite a prominent silversmith. And he had decided to open his own shop of contemporary work. So he would order and buy work from me to sell in his shop. And then there was another one, in Pasadena, that came on a little later, called the Abacus Shop. And that was run by, what was his name? Oh, no matter. And these, so these gave us some outlets. And along the line there was, there was a gallery that even had a show of my work. I don't remember the name of it. But there were many things, many things as a result.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were there any galleries or shops in Claremont that sold your work?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yeah, the [inaudible] shop.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes, it was up here at Padua Hills, the little art craft shop that they had specialized in showing and selling the work of the Claremont artists. So this was very helpful for me, really, in many ways. From the time I was a student at Scripps, they were selling some of my pieces. And, of course, when Rummy and I had our own studio, why, this was one of our outlets.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Um hum, this was one of the principal outlets, because it was easy to furnish them.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That's right, and very close by, too.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It was convenient.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And we gathered up, so we gathered up a following of people, locally, which carries to this day.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes. Yes. I'm curious, you mentioned before that your interest in Chinese Sung and Greek pottery, what was it about those older, and in some cases, in both cases, ancient, forms of ceramics that appealed to you? Was it form? Was it an approach to decoration? What was it that you liked about them?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I think it probably has been form more than anything else, because that is something I always have enjoyed doing, is creating, well, the subtleties that you get in just refining a form. And that's why, this is one reason why I end up doing so much trimming of the foot of a piece, to complete the whole statement

of the piece, in getting the form just to the proportions that I particularly like. And it's pretty hard to expand in a- that's probably why I've never been a very good teacher. I'm not very good explaining what makes a piece work and what makes it not work. So, I don't know, maybe it's partly a certain instinct, you feel like it's reached the right point.

And then, of course, you have to do something, at least I've always wanted to do something, more with-rather than just put a plain glaze. Which I admire very much, but I've never used glazes as just the beauty of the glaze in itself. I've tended to have glazes that work better by these various techniques that I've mentioned of decoration. So, the idea of then doing a decoration that would be compatible with the piece itself, so that you have, hopefully, you end up with a beautiful piece made from a relatively humble material, without overly glamorizing the subject.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mm hmm. And with Greek pottery, is part of the appeal the fusion of utilitarian and aesthetic?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it's probably so.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I don't think that the utilitarian quality was noticed too much by Harrison. I don't think he cared too much about that, one way or another.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, that's-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He looked at it as pieces of sculpture.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Well, that's something I was just going to, that this brings to a point. When I first started, I thought, Well, you know, I should-it would be a good idea to be able to make a quantity and make things like, you know, coffee mugs and beer mugs, and things of this sort, that would have a useful quality and reach a lot of people. But I found I never was that skillful at throwing rapidly, and to be what you now call sort of a production potter. So, I have, that, of course, tended, I was made to lean more and more in the direction making a piece that became kind of an object in itself, and but it still could be used.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It could be used anyway.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In other words, a bowl can be used for many purposes and a bottle or a vase can still be used for putting flowers into it. Or I always thought, Well, it would be nice if it could just stand on its own. If you don't have something to put in it, it would have enough strength of character that it would be an object in itself.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That's what I was thinking of, not work that is commercial ware, but objects that may have held wine, or oil, or water. In other words, that could be used if one wanted to use them, but which were beautiful objects just to contemplate.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Well, yeah, that's it. The Greeks, you know, carried this to a fine point, and so did the Chinese, for that matter, you know, made many of these things that started out as utility pieces, became works of art in the final result.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think that the utilitarian quality of Harrison's pots was really only because he wanted to follow the tradition and he admired the people who were making things for very close, human use. And also because of the commercial value. It was easier for him, in the early days, to sell pieces that people could visualize as being used with flowers, not so much to drink coffee, but with flowers and so on.

But I really think that this became more and more, very, very minimal goal for Harrison. And I think, mostly, it's because he's a perfectionist. Not only in the material and the technique, but in the development of an idea, an artistic idea. And then the utility quality is-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It's a by-product rather than your goal?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yes. Gradually, what had happened, the utility side had become less important.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think he would have become a sculptor if he had been born rich. He would not have been a potter, he would have been a sculptor, working with clay. But he would have made sculpture forms like the torso or the sculptures that he can afford to make now, even if they do not sell. He still likes to make pots, but he makes a pot as he would a piece of sculpture. It just happens to be on the potter's wheel and to end up being a vase.

But I think that the form-some people, in fact, even among viewers and the public at large, some people see things through form and others see things through surface textures, colors, luminosity. Even when they look at the face of a person, some people see the structure, the bone structure of a face, and say this woman is beautiful, because of the bone structure. And another person may look beautiful to other people, even if she does not have an outstanding bone structure, because of the color of skin or eyes and so on. And I think that Harrison is basically much more sensitive to form in everything in life. He likes lovely flowers, but he designed a garden which was without flowers. He has a few flowers because I insisted on them. But he saw the garden as forms. And the shape of trees, the form of the cluster of leaves, is what counted for him. And I think that, I may be wrong, but I think that it is through form that you really can express more deeply the soul of the artist.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, I'm curious, having worked with Rummy Deese for so many years, what do you two share in terms of an aesthetic, and how are you different?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, that's sort of difficult, because I'm not a person who tends to stop and just analyze what's going on or comparing one person to another. Because we've always tended to, you know, work, a lot of the time, side by side, sharing the same space, studio. But we don't tend to, I think, tend to try to analyze. You know, we have a respect for what each is doing and I think we have, share very much of the same attitude towards working with the materials. And so, Rummy has evolved into a very distinctive manner or sort of style of his own work.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Especially [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And as is separate from mine. And we, I don't think we ever really discussed the matter too far, except we-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yeah, you work with similar glazes, so you have a--

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, we work-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Certain shared sensibility-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Just in terms of the way you-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Actually, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What you prefer.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Actually, we work with the same glazes. You know, this was part of the idea of trying to operate a studio in an economical way, to make it possible to produce things. Well now, the costs part of it isn't that important anymore, but it certainly was at the beginning. [Laughs.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: But you wouldn't do something to save money if you didn't also like it. So you both prefer a certain kind of glaze.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's right. I think maybe our problem is we both spend-we spend whatever amount of time on a given piece, that it takes to make it turn out the way we want it. And so there's maybe a common ground there. We never try to consider that taking short cuts, you know, because this is going to cost too much. I know sometimes, some of the first pieces that I worked on years ago, that were-where I had quite an intricate decoration that took a lot, ended up taking a lot of time. And at that point, I thought, Boy, I don't know if anybody will ever pay what it takes to make this piece. And to my surprise, we put a price on it I thought it need to be and the piece was bought right away. So that was encouraging. I thought, Well, I can spend even more time on things if it comes out with character that people recognize it.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Can you give any idea of an average amount of time that you would spend on a piece? I know it depends on the scale and the complexity of your decoration. Do you also, do you work on several pieces simultaneously? In other words, do you have some drawings, some that you're decorating, some that you're just making in a day? Or do you tend to focus on one activity each day, one kind of activity each day?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, usually I throw a number of pet pots at one time so that then I can do my trimming, you know, when they are ready, and do all the trimming at one time.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But by a number, he doesn't mean twenty or thirty, like John [inaudible], for instance, he means four or five.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, or, depending on the size, it may be, you know, up near six or eight.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It's seldom much more than that, really, depending on the size of the pieces. But that way I can also follow through and-and these pieces are not all alike. Very often, usually, each one is different. Which seems odd, but they're all sort of related in a way that I may want to do a-well, each one, I end up doing whatever kind of decoration or engobe combination that I want. Sometimes I may do a group of pieces that I intend to use one particular glaze on. But sometimes, halfway through the process, I decide, well, these would be better with this other glaze. So I may be thinking of terms of being efficient about using one glaze for everything, and then it doesn't happen. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I often told him that he would not only be more efficient, time-wise, if he could make five or six of the same ideas, with very slight variation. And it also would allow him to perfect the form as he goes along, from one, from the first to sixth piece. But the problem is that because he works so slowly, and he does have, he has always had a great deal of demand for the pots, even earlier, he cannot afford to do that. Because the people are waiting for the specific piece.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: For the specific thing.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And he knows that he has to make those pieces.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Fortunately that doesn't happen all the time. I'm usually freer to make whatever or what. But along, well, sometimes this is an advantage, what Marguerite was talking about, because in the process I may start throwing a piece and it will suggest a variation or change and I end up with a completely different piece, just because your head's working all the time and you think of something else, and-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, do you and Rummy tend to work in the studio at the same time of day? Are you in there together all day, or does he prefer mornings, you afternoon, or vice versa?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, this has changed a lot over, what's it been, about fifty years, that we've been sharing a studio. Because for quite a number of years, he was working, he was teaching a night class, I think it was, at Mount Sac. And so his working hours in the studio would be quite different. And then, later on, we were both asked to work at Interpace Corporation, and, ah-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What year was that?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I-I spent-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible] that is coming up.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Now what-what-what year, I've forgotten what year that is now. We'll come to that.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In other words, I was just explaining how different the hours could be. Because when that happened I was working two days a week there and I would spend all my, rest of my time here, in the studio. I usually have tended to work during the morning hours and again in the afternoon until around six o'clock, is when I tend to start. Well, now-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: When you start or you stop?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: When I stop.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: When you stop.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I have never been much of person to work at night, as many potters do. But that just happens that way.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Is it important for you to go to the studio every day, every, say working day that you're there? Or do you take long, would you take breaks between work sessions of a couple days at a time usually?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, mostly I tend to want to work in the studio at least some. Even now, I've been working mainly in the afternoons, because we have a lot of other things that I've been trying to catch up on, on work in the garden and so forth, where I can get some physical exercise in the mornings. But like last year, last year-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: A lot was going on as far as production. That's normal at his age.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And also because in the winter the studio is not as inviting for him. He likes a great deal of warmth, he needs a lot of warmth, and more as he gets older. So the studio is not as inviting in the winter, and he goes there more in the afternoon. But as soon as the good, warm weather comes back, he is much more productive in the studio.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And yeah, this is very much the pattern now. While, although last year, when I was preparing a one-man show, I was working pretty steadily every day, morning and afternoon. You know, five and six days a week, or seven. And whereas, in recent years, Rummy has tended to work, he may come in before, oh, maybe around eleven o'clock or so, in the morning and then work until one or two, and then go home for lunch. And then he comes back at four or five o'clock and works until seven or eight in the evening. So, ah, it varies.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It sounds like a good European schedule with a siesta time in the afternoon.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, I think Rummy has a great deal of household duties.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Oh.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes, I see.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, and he also-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, it's extraordinary you worked together for that many years.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible] single was working.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, I was going to ask you if you could claim, like Sam and Freda Maloof, that they didn't have arguments?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, that's right. Yeah. We've always worked-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I should say Sam Maloof and Freda Maloof.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, that's what Sam says.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: [Laughs.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That's what Sam says, not what Freda says. [Laughs.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, Freda has always tried to hold Sam back.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I think Freda could do a lot with a look, too.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, well, exactly.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Words were not always necessary.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Especially with Sam.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Sam.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah. Especially when he was, would come home with another purchase of one kind or another. He's bought, you know, pots or sculptures from people, paintings. And Freda would always say, You know, Sam, you know, this is-because she did the book keeping, too.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, I think that she had a very Puritan upbringing and it was very difficult for her to adjust to the generosity and expansiveness of Sam.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That's right.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, anyway . . .

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I wanted to say something about their relationship. First of all, naturally, both Harrison and Rummy like to work to perfect a piece as far as it can go. Which is very different from the spontaneity of potters.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, not everybody. I mean, there's a variety.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: No. Well, many potters, at least of the generation, especially with the Pete Voulkos generation, have the-cherish the quality of spontaneity that he did not [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, well, we're coming-we're coming-to that. We're coming to that later, about, you know, understanding Pete Voulkos and the spontaneous work.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, but the thing is, when we were talking about the way you worked and the way Rupert worked.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And both of them have a lot of similarity, not only because they use the same glazes. But they are both perfectionists, they both do, like to work in a very thoughtful manner with each piece, completing the idea as far as they can go. There is one large, very difference, though, Rummy is much more intellectual than Harrison. And he works in a more intellectual way and maybe less emotional, on his work. That comes from the fact also that Rummy reads a lot, he is very much interested in theater, with his wife.

[Tape stops, restarts.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Harrison, could you say a little bit more about solo exhibitions you had during these years? And we see that you had exhibitions at the craft shops we were talking about and in Bullock's Wilshire, in Los Angeles?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Bullock's Wilshire was every year, for a number of years.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Actually, it says in '57, at Arizona State University in Tempe, and then in 1959, Long Beach Museum of Art [Long Beach, CA].

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That was a, yeah, that was very good. The-let's see, the Design Division of the American Ceramic Society, of which I was a member at the time, had a group exhibition there. And out of that, the director invited me to have a one-man show there. So that was really the first one-man show I ever had in a museum. And they have since invited me to show other work there at different times and it's very active now. Then, well, I had all these, at-oh, the Long Beach Museum of Art, yeah, that's the one we just finished. The Pasadena, Bullock's Wilshire-oh, the buyer that they had in charge, the woman in charge of their, let's see, section where they carried beautiful, fine crystal from Orrefors and different things like that, liked ceramics and she had a show once a year of Gertrud and Otto Natzler. And so she learned about my work somehow and invited me to have a show. So for several years I'd have a show one year and then the following year the Natzlers, and then I'd have one, we alternated. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you know them well?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's when I gradually got acquainted-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The Natzlers, you mean? Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, I had gotten acquainted with them.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How did you meet them?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, initially, when I was still a student with Glen Lukens. The Natzlers-my brother and his wife and I learned about the Natzlers' work. They had seen it somewhere and learned that they had a studio at their home on West Adams Boulevard. And so, one evening, we went over there and that's where I first met the Natzlers. And I was just a bare beginner in ceramics then. But I remember they had, in a sort of a back porch of this big old, marvelous old house, they had the potter's wheel and this little round, electric kiln that they had brought with them from Vienna. And, well that much of it I remember very well. And, I mean, my brother bought

a small piece of their ceramics. He and his wife-

[END OF TAPE 4, SIDE B]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is the Archives of American Art, the Smithsonian Institution, tape five, side A, interview with Harrison McIntosh by Mary MacNaughton, March 3, 1999.

Harrison, there's a big event in 1954, the birth of your daughter, Katherine. And if you could tell us about that and then this new direction you go in as a consultant designer in 1955-'56 with Matlox Manufacturing Company in Los Angeles.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, let's see, this time in my life, when a lot of things were happening, one thing after another. When our daughter was born, we were still living in a little, tiny bungalow on the alley in downtown Claremont. And I had the studio on Foothill Boulevard, and it was not long after that-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Our house, that house, was found by Harrison when we got married. It had been a small chicken coop, and was in the alley behind what is now the Home Savings and Loan.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And while our daughter was-how old was Katherine when we went to Manhattan Beach? The Matlox Company-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: She was one year.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Knew about my work and decided they wanted me to design a whole group of, I guess, what they called "giftware" pieces for them. But the owner wanted us to come out and stay in Manhattan Beach, which is where the factory was located. And how old was Katherine then? She was an infant.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: She was only about eight months old.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: She was in a stroller, I remember.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We went there in the summer and she was eight months old.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So we rented a house and it was within walking distance, up on a hill, overlooking the ocean. I could walk down to the factory every day. And worked on a group of pieces that could be used as bowls and vases for flowers, and even some small planter shapes, and so forth. And this was something that was very much foreign. I'm still surprised, wondered why the owner asked me to do this. [Laughs.] Because they were in the habit of producing ware that had very elaborate decoration. And their, one of their features was hand-painted decorations on pottery, none of which is what I was doing. And, anyway, we, ah, let's-I think, made a whole group of things and got the laboratory to make some matte glazes, things that were quite different than what they usually produced because this was the direction they seemed to want to go in.

Well, after we spent the whole summer there and did, completed a number of pieces, but nothing ever came of it. [Laughs.] I don't think they ever marketed them. And so, it was an interesting experience. And so, I came back to Claremont and working full time in the studio here.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It gave us a free summer on the beach.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And we were well paid for the work. And so, yes-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Then tell us how you came to be an instructor at Los Angeles County Art Institute, later known as Otis.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, this came about, when was it, the date?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In the summer of '59.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: '5-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, before that.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: '56, '57, was the first.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, I, that year I taught a night class at Otis. I can't remember the circumstances, why, who it was supposed to be teaching. But, anyway, I guess it was Millard Sheets was the director, head of the Art Institute then, asked me to teach his night classes, which I did. And I was able to stay over at my parents' house, we stayed there, so I could teach the night classes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you remember any of the students who were in your class?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Uh, no, I don't think anything memorable came out of it. I-this made me feel I was not really cut out for teaching because I'm not a very good showman, to demonstrate and work up enthusiasm and so forth. And they were-I believe this is when-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was Pete-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: When Pete Voulkos-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was he there?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Had first started. And it's when they had just finished building the new ceramic department. Because I remember being around when they were moving a lot of the equipment from the old building to the new one. And Paul Soldner was one of Pete's first students there. Paul had, in trying out, they had, he and Pete designed a new potter's wheel that had a lot of power. So he wanted to see how big a pot he could make, and he ended up making a piece that must have been at least about seven feet tall. And they had a terrible time getting it out through the window of the place. But, of course, they never could fire it. [Laughs.] And, but-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, Paul's MFA show there was a series of very tall vessels.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah, I remember him making those pieces, because by then, I think a lot of them were-the first ones probably were in the old building and finished in the new building, where they had a bigger kiln and so forth. And, yeah, I remember very well his show of all these pieces that were around four and five feet tall. And, in fact, I liked them so much I wanted to get one of the pieces from him. And, however, I still had a pretty modest income and I suggested maybe we could make a trade or something. Well, Paul needed the money for things and so did we, so I never got one of his taller pieces, but I got a couple of his pieces later on.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, we got a [inaudible] vases.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Were you aware of others students there at that time, like John Mason and Jerry Rothman? They must have come a little bit later.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes, these came later, when I taught a summer session there. And that came about in what year?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: 1959?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: 1958.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: 1959. That summer Pete didn't want to teach the summer session because, as I remember, he was writing an article for a magazine that he had been asked to do. And so he-I was teaching classes there, well, in the morning and then again in the afternoon. Well, Pete would come in about, just about, just before noon, and so we would go out and have lunch together. Across the street on Wilshire Boulevard there was this restaurant and he would have his breakfast and I had my lunch. Because this, he was just starting his day. And then he would work in the office in the afternoon, I got to see him very often, working on writing his article. And then late in the afternoon, when the classes would end, why, all Pete's friends, who were really his fellow students that he'd had during the regular term, would all start dropping in, like John Mason, Paul, of course, Paul Soldner and-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mike Frimkess?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Mac Mclain-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mac McLoud?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And, let's see, I guess Frimkess and, what's his name? Price?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Ken Price?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Ken Price. I never did get acquainted with them as much, but I knew the others quite well because I guess they came and stayed around much longer. So they would begin to get started, with Pete usually starting working on a large piece of one kind or another. Oh, another person who would very often drop in was Fred Marer, that's where I first met Fred. He'd come almost every day, especially when they had unloaded the kiln and they had, they would have a lot of the pieces around. I remember admiring John Mason's pieces. At that time he made some really handsome, covered-jar pieces that were very robust, strong forms.

And, however, I couldn't afford to buy one of those, even though-we were, you know, just getting ourselves barely established. We were still living in the alley, I guess, at that time.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, Fred Marer, who was teaching math at L.A. City College [Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles, CA], was a collector in those days, beginning his collection. And, as you said, he would often get pieces directly from the artist, right after the kiln was opened. What kind of-how did he strike you at that point as someone who was really eager to know more about ceramics?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think he was there just because he liked ceramics. And he was fascinated, and I can see why, to see these young fellows really doing such really powerful work. And I don't think he thought of himself as a collector at all, at that time. He would come over after school, after he was finished teaching, he'd come over and sit and watch the fellows, watch them work, talk with them. You know, they were all, became real buddies. And so he would get an occasional piece. I had the feeling, as he could afford it, although the pieces then were probably very, very reasonably priced because they were all still students.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Where did Fred teach?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: At L. A. City College.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He taught at L. A. City College.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Oh.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: On Vermont Avenue.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He was a professor?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes, of mathematics.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, mm hmm.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: But Fred began collecting with this-at this time, he bought a piece by Laura Andreson and then started collecting this group at Otis, and his collection grew from that point.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: But, just for the record, his collection has come to Scripps College by gift and long term loan. And it's a marvelous teaching collection because it documents, in greater depth than any other collection, this period of ceramics.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes. Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It's also international in its scope and includes not only United States' artists, but Mexican, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and British ceramics.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, the important thing about it probably is the fact that he had, has examples of their early, earliest work, really, that went from the time they were really just starting. Because at that time Pete had, let's see-I remember one, was it New Year's Eve, that he invited Marguerite and I over for dinner at their house. And, let's see, it must have when I was teaching the night classes. Because we spent this New Year's Eve together. We didn't have, it was no big party, we all had dinner together and everything. And when we left he wanted to give me a little pot that he had done. And it was, I still have it, it's a little bottle, like a bottle vase. But it was one of his first pieces that he started to distort. It's all squeezed and this. And it, ah-that must have been in '5-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: '56

HARRISON MCINTOSH: When it was, '56, or-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: '56, I know.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yeah, '56.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And, anyway, this was the turning point, really, the period when he was really loosening up and departing, I know. I remember one day, while I was doing the summer session, Marguerite and I had gone down to Little Tokyo and in one of the book stores I found a book that was a whole series of something like twenty volumes. But one volume in particular was about the Japanese Raku ware, which I bought that. And when I came back to school, at Otis here, it was Pete was there in the office and I was, showed him the book, and he started leafing through it. And there's one piece in particular that is a-well, I guess you could say it's almost sort of a vase shape, but it had been, fallen in the kiln and it was just charred and had a terrific character to it. I still have that, picture of that marked in my book, because Pete really fell in love with that piece. And this was the kind of the direction he was beginning to take at that time, to really get much more out of clay.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: This must have been a revelation for Fred Marer after collecting Laura Andreson.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Because Laura Andreson was probably his first contact with ceramics.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mm hmm.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Could be, yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And then the total opposite.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yeah, it's a very different sensibility. And at this time, I remember, there was increasing tension between Pete, who wanted to follow this looser direction, and Millard Sheets who had hired him, thinking he was a virtuoso ceramist and could make a perfect forms. So do you remember that period, in terms of that increasing distance between the two?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yes, because see, when Pete had given a demonstration here at Scripps some few years before, he made these beautiful, classic pots. In fact, I have a small one that he made at that time. And I think this is what Millard visualized. And the fact that he could make these on a large scale, big pieces, was, you know, even more fascinating. But, unfortunately, Millard didn't realize that what a creative person Pete really was, and he wasn't about to stay in-you know, he had accomplished, he knew he could make things like this. And so he wanted to do something more. And this was around the time Pete had, I think he had already been to New York once or twice, where he got acquainted with some of the abstract painters of the time. What's the name of the Greek painter? I can't remember his name.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He'd [Peter Voulkos] been to Black Mountain College [Asheville, NC]-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Which he said made a great impact-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Had a great impact on him.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's right.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Hm hmm.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And so this is when all this change was taking place.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And he's also interested in Picasso's ceramics.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And called once, having an argument with Millard over Picasso. Millard did not like Picasso as much as Pete did.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: His temperament was totally the opposite.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In fact, when you speak of Picasso, it made me remember another incident. The same summer that I was there, Dalzell Hatfield Gallery had an exhibition of Picasso's ceramics. So-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was that '56-'57 or 1959?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It must have been '59.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: '59.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, because it was in the daytime, when I must have been teaching. And Pete had, you know, some of this group of students, friends of his, who all went together down over to Hatfield Gallery at the Ambassador Hotel and saw the show. Which turned out to be mostly the platters and plates that Picasso decorated. I don't remember if there was much else, some of the other pieces, which he did a lot of other pots that were thrown by the French potter whose studio he worked at.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Ramé-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mm hmm. [Affirmative.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But, anyway, this, Pete was, you know, very anxious to see. This was maybe the first chance to see some of the actual work that Picasso was doing. And I'll never forget a little incident along the way. You know, in the Ambassador Hotel, as you enter, along these elaborate-the corridors, they had all these very elegant shops, one of which was a shoe store. And Pete stopped and he saw this pair of shoes that he really thought were terrific in the window. And I remember standing there and he was raving about these shoes. And the next day he went and bought these shoes, it was something he just loved. But, anyway, that's the connection-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, I know that in the Marer collection we have several platters by Voulkos from this period in which the Picasso-esque imagery of bowls and decorating the plate as if it were a canvas come together.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Yeah. Well, you know, it was interesting to have all of these things happening, which I, you know, had pretty close contact with. And still, I remember one day we were at a, well, a sort of reception party Pete was having over at the studio one day where, on Glendale Boulevard, where he and John Mason had a studio together. And Mac Mclain said to me, he told me, he said, When are you going to start doing something else, you know? I can't remember the words he put in, but I had the feeling he wondered why I was going on making pots the way I was instead of making pots following, you know, what Pete was doing and all the rest. And I've often thought, you know, that as much as I admired and understood, I think pretty well, what they were doing, it just wasn't my nature.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: No.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: No.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: You know? And rather than to make some imitation, you know-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes-[inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Second-hand ideas of this sort was never going to come off. I knew from the beginning I was not a person who could work spontaneously with clay. So I went on following the way I, still pursuing the kind of, I don't know if you can call it a perfection, but a certain quality that I wanted to achieve with my own work. And so, that's what I've stuck to. I was never really thinking very seriously one way or the other. I just felt, this is the way I work, period.

And, however, this had kind of an influence in the long run that did change things, in a way. Because as Pete's popularity grew, and he and the others were all being asked to be on the juries for all kinds of national ceramics shows, I know I sent into-I had been up, in a number of exhibitions up to that point, but I found out, at one show I sent to, my piece was rejected. And I thought, Well-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think it was Paul Soldner who rejected it.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Paul, I think, may have been on the jury. That what I was doing was out of step with what was being, you know, the acceptable trends. And so-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was this, say, by the early '60s?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Um-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Early-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Probably so.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Probably.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Can you tell from the bio? What shows the biography there? It's hard-you know, this is-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Where was that? What was-what was the show?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: This is a thing that came on gradually-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That I found I was showing less and less at the exhibitions. Well, for one thing-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Maybe it was the Wichita [Wichita Art Museum, Wichita, KS.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it might have been. I was asked to be on the, I was on the jury for the Wichita Museum-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, yes, that's right.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Asked me to be on the jury, so I think it was after that.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was after that?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Mm hmm. Well now that we're in the mid-'60s, let's talk about your work at Interpace Corporation. How did that come about, from '64 to '66?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Let's see, in between, in '63, is when the Pasadena Art Museum-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Okay, let's go there first.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Happened. Because that was, in a certain way, a sort of a turning point. Because they put on a very nice show of my work. I think it was a fairly large show.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And what happened, the night of the opening reception a lot of people wanted to buy the things. Well, the museum wasn't accustomed to selling anything. And so the director called me the next day, I guess it was, and wanted to know if it would be alright if they would sell some of the things. And so, I said, Well, sure, it was fine. You know, this is what I was, I wanted to, you know, was trying to make a living at pottery. And so they readjusted their plans. And so they would put, I think, red stickers or something on, so that the exhibition stayed together. But they were very pleased, you know, that this had happened.

And at that time, someone, a couple who had started to buy some of my work in San Marino, oh, the Brandos, Mr. and Mrs. George Brando, took it upon themselves to have a reception for Marguerite and I at their home at that night, after the exhibition closed. And they invited a lot of the people who came for the opening reception. And this, overall, was quite a boost, I think. I really never had problems about finding places to sell my work, because there seemed to be people who wanted the things. And the Brandos became quite good collectors.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: They would come out every so often to the studio and buy things for their-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: They have one of [inaudible] pieces.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Home. Well they have a beautiful home there. It's this style of architecture, but on a grand scale.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So, tell me now, how Interpace comes about.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Millard Sheets was the instigator.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Millard Sheets was asked to be the director and form a new design division for the Interpace Corporation. That must have been when Interpace bought over the old Gladding McBean Company [Gladding, McBean Company, Lincoln, CA.] And so Millard had the idea that it would be wise to just hire potters, people who worked with clay, to be the designers for a clay products company. So he, one day, called me up and asked if Rummy and I would like to come and have lunch with him. So he, we met him, and he, or he picked us up, I guess, and we drove out to Old Sage Hen and lunch with Millard while he told us the whole program of what he was planning to do with Interpace, and wanted to know if we would, you know, be interested to be part

of that.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Was this when he interviewed [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think we were, may, I'm not sure if we were the very first, but it was the beginning of the whole thing, anyway. And so, we had a choice of, there was the section that designed for dinner ware and then another one that did the tile work. And since I was interested in architectural things, I thought, Well, it would be interesting to work with tile. And so that's what I did. For about two years, I think it was, that I did that. But I worked there only two days a week, that was the understanding, that I could do it just part time. Because at this point I finally, we had built our house in 1958 and so I, let's see-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was 1964 to '66.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That I did the [inaudible] at Interpace, yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So I wanted to make use of my-I got a good studio to work in, so, and I had, you know, things, commitments and so forth. So, anyway, that's what I did for the two days a week. And I worked with, you know, it was a really interesting group of people that Millard had gotten together there.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you have freedom to design anyway you wanted to?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yeah, absolutely. It was unusual, we had, let's see, we had other people that came, working with us, was . . .

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, in the tile was Dora DeLarios and Jerry Rothman and later Henry Takemoto. We had a long time trying to find Henry. We wanted to get him to come and couldn't find him anywhere. And then in the dinnerware was Rummy, Rupert Deese, and who were the other people doing dinnerware?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I don't know, [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Oh, yes. What was the girl who's such a good potter? She came in later. I'll have to ask Rummy who all these people were.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Not Janice Roosevelt?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. No. No. It wasn't. Well, anyway, they had, in the tile-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you work in your own studio or in their studio?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In their studio. They built a, they had a whole separate building. Our, for the dinnerware, it was a building that already was well established for that purpose. But for the tiles, they set up one, another, one of the old buildings at the far end of the grounds at the factory.

And we worked out ideas to make large, twelve by twelve, architectural tiles that could be used both for floor tile and for walls. And these could be for commercial buildings. And so we designed tiles with all kinds of qualities. I did, I worked on mostly things that created textures. And so we would make prototype models of all kinds of things that were, in many cases, you know, decorated with engobes and with different kinds of glazes. And we had the lab, the laboratory was very cooperative and worked out very nice matte or semi-matte glazes that could be used for floor surfaces and so forth.

And Dora DeLarios made many that were, had somewhat deeply carved patterns and so forth. And then Jerry became very interested in an idea to make a process maybe I should have a drink of water here-a process for doing the six by six white ware tiles that are used so much for everything from bathrooms to kitchens and so forth, to do this on a-Jerry was a very inventive person.

[END TAPE 5, SIDE A.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is the Archives of American Art, tape five, side B, interview with Harrison McIntosh, March 3, 1999.

Harrison, you were talking about Jerry Rothman's inventing a process for producing whiteware when you were at Interpace?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, these were the small, six by six tiles. And the, really, the main thing about the decorating process was that he worked out patterns that could be put onto a roller. And this would, in turn, roll over the glaze or engobe that would be used for decoration, and it was meant to be a, well like an assembly line, a continuous process. That you would get a, you know, the variations that would happen from tile to tile. Anyway, he worked very closely, the lab did a lot to develop and actually produce a trial machine for doing this. Although the, again, the factory never did go into producing these things.

And of all the big, the other tiles, the twelve by twelve tiles we did, quite a lot did come out of it. Of course in the process we had many designs that were never used. But, you know, it was a matter of experimenting and trying many different things. And usually, members of the sales department would come in periodically. Or one time they even had a big, fancy banquet at some hotel, where they displayed all of these tiles to get the reaction from people. And so, quite a number of them were actually produced for some years afterwards.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: You can see some on the fascia of the tall buildings in Los Angeles.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, many buildings, for either the vertical surface and then, also, lots of floors were used for these things. And so, that was my two years-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was there anything for you, as an artist, that came out of this experience? Did it, did you develop new techniques or ways of working during this time, that you could bring back to your own work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No, I don't think very much in that direction. I think, mostly, we used the experience we had in the studio to apply to the factory production. Certain things will work for that and so this is what, I think, really was the result. And, of course, it was a good experience to learn a lot more about how a factory operates, and in connection, and with the lab, laboratory, and working with other people. And, you know, it was a very, very good experience.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: This was just before the work we did with Mikasa.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's what I was going to say. What we did then, really, was one reason, perhaps, why Mikasa was even more interested in what I was doing.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And tell us how that venture came about in 1970, with Mikasa.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, when-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, first allow me to say that Harrison discontinued working for the Interpace because he did not like the freeway driving and it was interfering with his production. So that is why he really stopped doing it. But Rupert just continued to work there full time, because Helen Deese was not teaching yet, or she was only substituting. She was finishing her degrees, they had five children, four children. And Rupert wanted a regular job, so he continued for many years. And that's why he was only working in the studio here only at night.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, or he would come on weekends to work in the studio at times, too. Because he wanted to continue a certain amount of his own work. But, what happened, well, later on, when Marguerite stopped teaching at Scripps, she was much freer and decided to do something more with managing and arranging things for my ceramic work, and decided to take a trip back east.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Well, of course, because he had five one-man shows in Southern California, already.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yeah, we hardly-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And then I had saturated the area, so I decided to go east.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I hardly needed so many shows. [Laughs.] But, anyway, I'd never been involved with other parts of the country. So Marguerite went to Washington, where we knew someone there, and then to New York, and then Chicago, where we were acquainted with the Bennett's [Bennett's Pottery Supply, Ocoee, IL.] I don't know if I told you, that story is another thing. Anyway, she had gone to Carson Pirie Scott and showed them photographs and samples of my work, and they decided to have an exhibition of my work. So, which came about later on, I shipped a whole, big exhibition of work to them. And there-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He had a big, one-man show. Very large. Very, very large.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: What happened, a young man, a Japanese man, from Nagoya, happened to see the exhibition. And he was there because he was the son of the owner of a big factory in Nagoya that produced dinner ware. He had been sent to get his studies at the University of Chicago. So he was there visiting again, saw my show, and he bought about five or six pieces of the work, took them back to Japan to show his father. And for

some reason or other, they decided they wanted to talk to me about designing some dinner ware, doing some work for their factory. And they were, but all their work was contracted through the Mikasa Company.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The Mikasa Company is a distributor; they are not producing ceramics themselves.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, yeah, they didn't own any factories.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Not only that, it's a [inaudible] American company, which asked factories in different parts of the world, in Europe, and mostly in Japan, to do dinner ware for the American market.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So what happened, one day I got a telephone call from a man here in the Mikasa office in Los Angeles, saying that he would like to come out to see us, that he had two men from Japan, from their factory, would like to come and talk to me about doing some work for them. So I knew nothing, I never had even heard of the name, the Mikasa Company. So, anyway, they came and here was this young man and his father, who was the owner of this big factory in Japan, and the Pacific Coast manager of Mikasa Company, his name was Alf Blake. He was later to become president of the company, so you can tell he was really a very likeable and very experienced person. And we became very good friends, later.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh yeah, Alf was of Swedish descent; the others were all Japanese.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I was a little skeptical, at first, about getting involved in something like that. But I had always had a certain interest in what can be done on, in mass production, to be improved, you know, to make a fine quality where, in a mass market this way. So we agreed to do that. And so this was the beginning.

I had at first said I'd design for them, I did all the prototypes here in my studio, right at home. And at that time they had a man, one of their New York people, their main office was in New York City. Well, anyway, he would go, several times a year, to Japan. And so, he stopped here in L.A., and he'd come here to the studio or I'd take the samples to show him there. He would take all my models and samples to the factory and then they would try to work from those to duplicate, make them dinnerware. That wasn't too satisfactory, but they did produce one set of dinner ware which was sold all over the country.

And then, the following year, Alf Blake called me one day from New York by then he was president of the company, this was several years, a couple of years later. No, he was not yet president, he was Pacific Coast manager. And he asked if I would be interested in designing some crystal for them. And I told him, Well, as you know, I've never worked in glass. But I said, I'm willing to take a chance and try it, if you are. Because he was familiar with my work. You know, being here, seeing what I had and so forth. And he said, Well, we're working with two factories. One, we're contracting with, one in Japan and the other one's in Germany. And I said, Well, by then I had already-yeah, he had taken me to Japan once, to see all their facilities, just on a one or two weeks trip. So I said, Well, I've already seen Japan, I'd like, maybe Germany would be interesting. [Laughs.] So we decided to go to Germany. So we went the following summer, we spent the whole in Bavaria, a beautiful part of Germany, at a very old, five hundred year old, glass factory that made pure, lead crystal. And they put us-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I'd like to say how we managed. We had a discussion with him, first in Los Angeles. And we really argued about the contract for a whole afternoon, do you remember?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Well, we had a hard time, not having any background in this kind of thing, how to go about it. And, anyway, we came to an agreement on a royalty, basically.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We don't have the [inaudible] to bargain it.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: They would give us a certain advance and then the rest was on a royalty basis.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And the next week [inaudible] paid all the upkeep, on the location.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yeah, they put us up-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: For the first time, he wanted to, he wanted us to do all the work on location.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, that's it. So they put us up in a very nice resort hotel, very beautiful, modern, in a little town called Grafenau that was a few miles from the factory. Because Spiegelau was where the factory was located, it didn't even, it was such a small town, it didn't even have a hotel. And they gave us a brand new Audi car, so we could drive back and forth, and had the use of this car all the time. And so, we spent the summer-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible] car [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Designing and we designed some thirty pieces of crystal that, this again, was what they called, really, giftware, those were bowls and vases. And also, we did a set of wine glasses.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Stem glasses.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Stem glasses. And it was a marvelous experience because-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you enjoy working with, designing in glass, a different medium than clay?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Transparency?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, we first went through the whole factory, learned about their process and so forth and the facilities there.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And we had, we had taken, to give us a start, we had taken along with us, we had prepared ourselves by photographing some of Harrison's pots and made contour lines of Harrison's pots, so that we could use this with, of course, an adaptation for glass. But it gave us a start for basic shapes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We used that. That's his vase over there, with some of Harrison's-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Because we realized this was going to be, you know, with a limited amount of time to do all this. And, ah-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How much time did you have?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, we spent the whole summer there.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The summer [inaudible] after that-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It must be-Marguerite was-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Summer after that, for ten years.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: By then you were teaching.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yeah, I was teaching by myself.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So we-so we had-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We had to come back for that. In fact, for that and for the trip to Japan every year afterwards. We went during my summer vacation, and very often we were still busy, working on designs when I had to come back in time for school and Harrison had to stay to finish my designs and his, two or three more weeks.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: See, even though they had hired me to design this, actually, we work as a team, because we were both, Marguerite, with all her art background was very good at drawing and so forth. And so, we designed all these things together. And the process was fairly simple, because I was already familiar with the process of molds. And what they did was use two-piece wooden molds.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: For glass.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: For the blowing. So the glass was hand-blown into the wooden molds. And what was wonderful about, compared to ceramics, is the fact that we could make a drawing, complete a drawing one day, and give it to the factory, and the next morning we'd come in and they'd have a finished piece sitting on our desk, you know. And so, you could work pretty fast from one thing to another.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was really funny, Mary, to see the reaction of the people. Because at first, Mikasa had paid for my trip to accompany Harrison and keep him happy. But I was not going to just spend my time in the hotel room, so I started working with him. And in a German factory, women are not to be found except for those who were scrubbing the stairs with soap and water every single day, and the one secretary in the office. And the women were serving beer to all the glass blowers. And they had huge carts, filled with beer, that would circulate all day long. And all the glass blowers had a big stomach. And when we-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I hope they didn't have burns from dropping things after too many beers.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And the funny thing that they, when we designed glass later on in Japan, we found ourselves again in this enormous, big, hangout full of glass blowers. And there there was absolutely no beer. There was only a bucket, a Japanese bucket of water, at one end of the building, with this long spoon, you know?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Ladle for them to get a drink.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And all the Japanese glass blowers with absolutely flat stomachs.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was interesting. But the German people were very nice, but they were very down to earth and very serious.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, we were-well, yeah, there was one of the women, one of the secretaries in the office, who spoke English and the manager that ran the factory spoke English, too. So that's how we got, made out.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And they wanted us to come back.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you pretty much think of your designs in clay as translated into crystal? Or did you [inaudible?]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, no-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Only in the beginning. Only at the beginning.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It was a matter of having to visualize how the piece would look as a transparent thing. So it's a challenge, but you can-before, in making a few pieces, you can readily tell, you know, what's the direction to go.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In crystal work you need a, all of the pieces that we did in Germany were very successful for a number of years, all over the country, after that.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Yeah. In fact, the factory was not big enough to produce enough for the market, and so they tried to get other factories who could produce the same quality things. But there was only one factory they did get in, later in Austria, to produce some of the stemware for a while.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: They did it with a mold-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: With a mold, not particularly hand blown. And they are still alright, they are still fine. But Mikasa has a policy of never keeping any line more than five years.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And they have no open stock once it is closed.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Did you keep examples of what you did?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, I can show you.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, we have quite a lot of glassware-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And dinnerware.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And a lot of it put away because we don't have room to show it all.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And then the dinnerware we did later in Japan, was much more expensive ware then-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, that's the thing I was coming to next. After that . . .

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Than the first we had.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: By then we began to, they wanted more dinnerware. And then they decided they wanted us to go to Japan and do it, so-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What year was this? When you went to Japan?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, that must have been about 1973-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The following year.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Or '74, because we did this, all the designing for Mikasa was done between 1970 and 1980.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: The last work we did for them was 1980.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Mm hmm. [Affirmative.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So we went a number of summers, because the summer was when Marguerite was not teaching. She spent her vacation working for this work and Mikasa. But, we enjoyed it so much, you know, because the Japanese people were marvelous to work with and everything about it-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The German people were pleasant but the Japanese were so much better. Because they were serious in their work, but they also were gentle and they had a sense of humor, a sensitivity that corresponded to ours, that we felt at home with them. And they felt at home with us because we were small. Even the president of the Mikasa Company is a tall Swede, and they never felt as comfortable with him as they did with us.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So, what was your process when you got to Japan? You would design, draw a piece?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. They gave us a room-see, they had their main office in Nagoya and the building housed the whole staff downstairs. And then on the top floor they had a room where they put two desks together so Marguerite and I could do, because we had to do everything by drawings. You know, we'd visit the factories and see what the factory process was first, of course. And then, whenever we'd have drawings completed, they'd be sent out and, first to the mold shop. So sometimes we'd go to visit the mold shop to see the actual plaster models when they'd get them complete. And these factories-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: See these factories were in the mountains.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: These places-yeah, see, Nagoya-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: When we were not spending the day drawing, designing-[inaudible], we would go and visit the factory and then we would work very closely with the factory.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: See, Nagoya is sort of surrounded, in the outskirts, by these very large pottery factories. And then, further up in the mountains, there would be these smaller potteries and workmen who did specialize in just the mold-making. So the mold-making wasn't done right in the factory, like many cases here.

So, then we would go ahead and, once these things were approved and they would be making certain things like a dinner plate and a cup and saucer, and then later, some of the more elaborate pieces like a coffee server and so forth, and casseroles. We would go, then, to the factory where they were producing the ware. And one factory, there were three different factories that we actually designed for. One that worked in, mostly where they produced their own decals. And they could take and duplicate my hand decoration I would do on a plate, that would look exactly like the thing I had done by hand. And they did a few of these things. And so, we designed, of course, all the different shapes, and then we would design decorations for these. And in one case, one year, we had our daughter, Katherine, do, she was doing-she was still a student at Scripps and did some transfer decoration by photography. And anyway, we had that done for one set.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah, they did. And we have a set where, yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But, there were also some other factories that had beautiful glazes. So we had no decoration at all. And we could combine, and we must have done, oh, six or eight different color combinations and glaze combinations. Many of them were in a very subtle matte glazes and some were glossy glazes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: This was the period in America where the fashion was stoneware for dinnerware, not porcelain. And of course, this is completely gone now. People now use only porcelain if they have real ceramic dinnerware.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But at that time they wanted stoneware, which had a more earthy quality.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, so we were able to do some things that had very deep, subtle tones that resembled stoneware, really. Well, it was the color qualities. And then others that were very high key, gloss glazes, for, like, a breakfast set and so forth, that we could use on the same shapes and so forth.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And we designed glass in Japan, also.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, that's right. One summer they, after we did the dinnerware, they wanted us to do glass and this was way up in another part of Japan, way up in the mountains. And it was an interesting experience. But there, they didn't make fine crystal. It was, they used colored glass and different things. And it was, ended up with just a very limited amount of marketing things that we did there. We only spent one week or two weeks, I think, there.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, Harrison, during this time, this period now, say from 1968 to 1980, we're talking about, and the ten years you worked for Mikasa, how is your own work changing? Is it? Or is it staying constant?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I think it may have been pretty constant, really. Because, see, this was only the few months, at most, during the summer.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And the rest of the year I spent making my own things.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In fact-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And I was still having exhibitions.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We could say that the President [of Mikasa] wanted us to work full time for him, together as a team. And he even from New York especially, took us out to dinner, to ask us if I could stop my teaching and if we could work full time. But, at that time, we absolutely told him it was not possible, because we could not lose the security of my teaching, with the retirement and health insurance, and so on. And Harrison did not want to lose his freedom of working, producing for himself, in the studio.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, and also, I think this was around the time when I became involved with the Louis Newman Gallery [Beverly Hills, CA.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, mm hmm.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Louis Newman had seen my work somewhere and had contacted me several different times about wanting to sell my work. And I was pretty hesitant about getting involved with an art gallery, because art galleries didn't sell ceramics in those days. And my brother, being an artist, and I had many friends who were artists, painters mainly, who had very bad experiences with art galleries. And I was selling my work directly to shops like Kurt Wagner and the Abacus Shop in Pasadena. And also, there was America House in Washington, D.C. that was buying things from me quite regularly.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And the shop in San Francisco.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And, yes, the City of Paris, in San Francisco. Oh, and another-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: There was a gallery there, too.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's right. So, I had, you know, many sources that were . . . And these things I would sell directly for cash, you know. They weren't put on consignment. Whereas, I knew if I got involved with a gallery, they would want things on consignment. Well, finally, after about two years, Louis kept calling me-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Maybe I should say this in front, for all the potters. The way we did it was never to put

things on consignment. Because Harrison was not producing enough to have things out, not sold. So, the galleries would order-very often they would come and choose two, three, four thousand dollars worth of pottery. And they would just buy it outright. And then we would just ship the whole amount to them. And when they were, they had sold enough, they would ask for another order.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So they bought directly from you.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Directly. Yes. I had felt, you know, if I was going to do this for a livelihood, you couldn't afford to be putting things on consignment. In other words, your finances-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Is this still the way you prefer to work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, no, this is-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Not since [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: This is where big changes had gradually-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It's not necessary with the big prices he commands now.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Gradually took place, when I finally, Louis talked to me. He had this nice, new gallery in the Bonaventure Hotel, and he wanted to have an exhibition of my work. So I decided, you know, this would be an opportunity to make, you know, maybe more important pieces, you know, that could be, demand higher prices and so forth. So, we had a show there. Well, the first show, we went in for the opening night reception, and everything in the show was already sold. [Laughs.] So, I was-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Was that 1979?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That must be.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It was, like, the first show at the Newman.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: If that's the first one, that must be it.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Probably, yes. Because-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, that was very impressive. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He got some [inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So I stayed with Newman for, until he finally closed up.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He moved to Beverly Hills, on Beverly Drive, and he continued to have a show of Harrison every year or every other year.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, about once I'd have a one-man show.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: It says until 1987 was the last year?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Is that it? I think yes, he had to finally-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: No, 1992, I'm sorry.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, it is. I couldn't remember.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, 1992.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, well, that's when he had to close because the, some developer bought the whole block and he had to move out.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He lost his lease. Do you know who bought the whole block, on Beverly Drive? Victoria's Secret.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's what he had told us.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And Louis Newman lost his lease and moved-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, he tried for some time to get a new location.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Right, yeah.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Because he had a good following here, but he never did. In the process, a good old friend of his in Scottsdale, who had an art gallery there for years-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Elaine Horwich.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Elaine Horwich and her husband, because she later died-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And [inaudible] too.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, Louis went in partnership with him-

[END OF SESSION 3, TAPE 1, SIDE B.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: This is Archives of American Art interview with Harrison McIntosh, tape 6, side A, March 4, 1999. And the interviewer is Mary MacNaughton.

Harrison, when we stopped last time, we were considering a couple of aspects of your career. First of all, your longtime association with the ceramist Rupert Deese, your very good friend. And I'd like to know what it's been like to work together for so long and what the differences are between you. We've touched on this a little bit earlier. But, I'd be interested in your comments and Marguerite's. Marguerite, why don't we start with you?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think that there is an interesting harmony and also a difference between the two working together. They did not work side by side at all hours of the day; in fact, it was probably better that way. Harrison tended to work earlier in the morning and Rummy tended to work later in the evening. When they were together they were very accommodating with each other. They both liked interesting programs on the radio and they both liked classical music.

But when Rummy was alone, he would rather listen to the theater or to some interesting satirist or satiric [sic] conversation. Harrison always preferred classical music. And maybe this is one aspect which could explain, in part, their different personalities and their different approach to creating their work.

Rummy has always been interested in literature, in abstract ideas. He is very witty. Harrison has a good sense of humor, too, but Rummy has a tremendous intellectual memory, also. Harrison has always based his inspiration on this very personal observation of arts, of ancient civilization. He looks at the arts, at nature, or at life in general, with a more emotional approach than an intellectual approach. And I think that it reflects in the way he works, too.

His shapes come out very indirectly. He thinks about his forms a great deal, outside of his work time, and he thinks of the form, basically. And I think that it is mostly something which comes from his personal, very, very personal emotional approach to life in general.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Harrison, does that?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yeah. I think Marguerite explains these things much better than I can, except that it sounded, most of it, speaking in the past tense. Actually, we're still working that way.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It's just aside, but, you know-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: You know, this is, you know, we're doing this every day. Our schedules vary quite a bit a lot of times. We are working-we always load the kiln together, usually and we keep a very precise firing schedule. We keep a kiln log fire, for each firing, even though they're almost exactly the same. But, this way, if one or the other of us is going to lunch or something, someone is always knows exactly where the turn-ups of the firing procedure takes place.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And how often do you do firings?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, very irregular, because-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Almost seldom.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It's depending on, well, if I'm getting together a show and I have to get more things,

maybe. Even then, probably, oh, lucky to be once a week. And that would be a bisque firing and then a glaze firing. And sometimes there, maybe, go for a month or more at a time when we're not firing at all because we're- so we have, really, a pretty irregular scheduling. And it's probably more irregular now, as we have gotten older and have a lot of other responsibilities that seem to just divide up your time.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, you mentioned your kiln log. Could you tell us about your system of recording your work and documenting what you've done over the years?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, keeping a kiln log this way has been very useful in-it's a constant learning experience, because if certain results come out in a certain way, why we know exactly what our kiln firing was done. And I use that in, actually, we number every firing. So-and I keep a, what I call a kiln book, which is really a log recording every piece that I make. I assign a number, according to the year, and this-each firing is first identified with the date and the number of the actual firing that took place. And so, the numbering of pieces really is by groups, according to how many pieces in a given firing. And this can vary, well, all the way from a couple of pieces to maybe a dozen or more. Because we fire everything together. So some will be Rummy's pieces and some will be mine. And the firing is determined by when we have enough pieces to make a good, solid kiln load, then we fire the kiln. And so-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Has Rummy documented his work in a similar fashion?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, he does. Although he usually takes all of his pieces home immediately and he does all his labeling and recording of his pieces at home. And, in fact, all, he usually keeps all his finished pieces there. And so I'm not too familiar, really, with, except I know he does use a similar kind of system of numbering his pieces. It's very helpful, too, for photographing pieces and if any piece is sent out on an exhibition, why, just by having that number, we know exactly what it is.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Harrison makes, takes a picture, in the form of a slide, for each piece that comes out of the kiln, too.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, one thing I wanted to say in there, when they work together, Rummy, he's very good at repairing at machinery, much better than Harrison. [Laughs.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, he's also the one that keeps the kiln in good repair. Because we've used the same kiln now, well, since what, since 1950, I think it was. And so, this has, you know, it's made a good combination of working arrangement.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, it's extraordinary that you've been able to work together for so long and to have similar agreements on firing and the glazes that you use, and you have very distinctive work.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Um hum.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Now let's see, did we want to go into the next phase, about the galleries?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: The galleries? Yes. Yes, let's continue with the history of your exhibitions. You had left off discussing the Newman Gallery and the years that you exhibited there.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Now, I found that I really started with the Louis Newman Gallery in about 1979. I think it was the first one-man show I had there. And over a period of time, I've found I've had some nine or so exhibitions, one-man shows. And meanwhile, he, of course, carried my work all year round and made sales, so it was one of my principal outlets, really. Although I did have an occasional show at the MDA Gallery [MDA Foundation, Los Angeles, CA] and also took part in some group shows. But as far as the shows at Newman's, I've always had a certain number of my sculpture pieces. And, in fact, we did very well this whole time with sculptures. In fact, in looking up our records, we found the first, one of my first sculpture pieces, was bought by Lee Nordness for "Objects USA," which was made in, what, I think 1969.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: '68.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: '68.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: '68. Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Would you explain "Objects USA," what it was?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, "Objects USA," as I always understood it, was the first major collection of American crafts that was sponsored by the Johnson Wax Company. And they hired Lee Nordness, who had an art gallery in

New York City, and was very knowledgeable in the crafts. And he went around the country to purchase pieces to form this collection. And when he came to see us here, why, he bought, among all the things I had, he liked this sculpture piece in particular. And-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Which was the first one you ever made, as a sculpture.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I'm looking it up. It was the first, my first piece.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And so-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He bought several others.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And then we found, in looking up on my kiln records, that he bought several others, later, in the following year, apparently for his selling in his own gallery in New York. So this, at least this one sculpture, appears in the book, Objects of the USA, was published, finally, in 1970 [*Objects: USA*. New York: Viking Press, 1970.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: By the Viking Press.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I remember when the book came out. I think it was very important, too, for a young ceramist working at the time, to see so many reproductions of work by important potters and ceramists across the United States. It really gave people an idea of the scope and breadth of work being done.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And it had a quotation of each artist.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes, and each artist had a photograph of the piece, a photograph of the artist, and then a statement by them about their artistic philosophy. For the record, I see that you were-you had exhibitions at Newman Gallery in 1979, '80, '82, '83, '84, '85, '86, '87, and 1992. And you had mentioned that the Newman Gallery then closed in Beverly Hills, when they lost their lease.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What did you do after that point, after you left Newman? Where did you show your work next, in Los Angeles area?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, actually, I didn't really look around to have any other dealer handle my work, until Frank Lloyd came along, when he had taken over the Garth Clark Gallery. Garth Clark had decided to go to, stay in New York and just handle his gallery there. So Frank Lloyd, in taking over the gallery here, organized it-well, I guess the first thing that I-he asked me about getting a few pieces for a group show that he had.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: It was called "California History Number One", and it was made up of four artists, I think. Glen Lukens, Laura Andreson, Gertrud and Otto Natzler, and Harrison.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, that was it. And so, he, I don't know exactly what year that was, but it was in this period, just after Newman closed. And so, Frank was selling some of my things and had wanted to have a one-man show. However, I-maybe something I should mention along the line here, is I was having another eye surgery. So, I said, We better postpone it until after the results of this. And this problem with glaucoma had started early on, oh, sometime even before 1985, when I began to have problems with peripheral vision, first of all. And overall, I ended up having something like six different eye surgeries, and, ah-which has kept it under control, but has left me with more limited vision.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But I've still been able to continue working in the studio, with having suitable light to work with.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He had, also, continuous macular degeneration and he had two operations for cataracts, which, in his case, diminished his eyesight more. And he now has only a very small portion of his sight left. Very, very small. Because the doctor explained that the eye connection with the brain has about one million nerve connections, and he has only less than one hundred in the best eye.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So which eye is more impacted, then?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, well, my right eye has distorted vision. So it's really my left eye that's giving me-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That you rely on.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That I'm working on with, mostly. But the other one helps, you know. It's an aide, nevertheless.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: But, Harrison, in terms of making ceramics, you must have such memory in your hands for the feel of what you do, it must-but, how is it, how have you been frustrated?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it's-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: When he says that, then it's-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Not true?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It hasn't been that much of a frustration as it is to adjust, really. Because I can still do a lot of the same things, I find. But there are certain, certain things, especially in types of decoration or something that I don't see quite as well to do. So I-you just go on being more inventive, you know, to compensate for that. So, it, the only thing it's done is to slow me down. Because it does take me longer to carefully look and see what I'm doing. But I do, unfortunately, you can't make a pot with your eyes closed, you need, and especially the way I work with finishing a piece. You know, you have to really see, carefully, what you're doing.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think that, also, everybody feels, seems to think, that by throwing a pot on the wheel, you do it with your hands. But in the case of Harrison, the throwing is a very short, first stage. He really accomplishes the form that he wants with trimming, and he trims with a tool. Ever since he studied with Marguerite Wildenhain, especially, he has been trimming with a tool that he makes himself.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Except she doesn't do that.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: No?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: [Inaudible.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: No. That's what I have been explaining, when we talked about Marguerite Wildenhain, that I learned the techniques she uses, but I've never-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, yes, that's right.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: A lot of the forms that she preferred were done directly on the wheel. And I found, when I got back, I liked to refine the shape a little more to what I wanted, and to do that meant trimming.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Who showed you how to carve, to make that tool?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, I, why, that I don't even remember. Maybe, probably-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Have you made special tools for your use?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yes. Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: That one, yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Some of them I make are merely cut out of a tin can, really, to make a-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Ribs.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: A ribbed tool for throwing and-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Did Rick Petterson use that?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That what I was just going to say. It's probably Rick Peterson that we got, learned more about this kind of trimming a shape to refine the form of it more.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I took the class but I forgot that.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What else would you like to say about-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Oh, about the exhibitions-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: The exhibitions, more recently?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yes.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I see that there is quite a list of exhibitions which took place between the time when Newman closed in '92 and when Frank Lloyd contacted us. You see, you have "Heirlooms of the Future" at the Mingei International [Mingei International Museum Balboa Park, San Diego, CA]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, in San Diego.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In San Diego. The show at the Los Angeles County Fair. In 1994, "High-Tech / Low-Tech," was a very important show at the Palos Verdes Art Center [Ranchos Palos Verdes, CA], which combined the work of three or four potters. And then, very important, the ceramic designs for high-tech, like the wing of an airplane, for instance. And there was the "Thirty-Third Japan Contemporary Art and Craft Exhibition" in Tokyo. "Independent Visions, California Modernism," in Long Beach Museum of Art [1994]. In '96 you had a very wonderful show called "The Four Friends," with Rupert Deese, James Hueter, Sam Maloof, and Harrison McIntosh.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: At Toby Moss [The Tobey C. Moss Gallery, Los Angeles, CA.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: That was at Toby Moss Gallery in Los Angeles. Then you had "California History Number One," that we mentioned, with Laura Andreson, Glen Lukens, Harrison McIntosh, and the Natzlers, at the Frank Lloyd Gallery. That was the first one, when you were-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Oh, yeah. Um hum.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And "Survey of Contemporary Ceramics," at the Tustin Renaissance Gallery [Tustin, CA, 1996]. In '97, "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Exhibition," at the Renwick Gallery, in the Smithsonian Institution [Washington, D.C.]. And also, in '97, "Functions and Narrative: Fifty Years of Southern California Ceramics," at the Long Beach Museum of Art. And in '98, you had "Conversions," which was a very successful show at Mount Sac, in Claremont [Mount San Antonio College], in Walnut, California, with the painter Karl Benjamin, the furniture designer, Sam Maloof and Harrison, the three of them together.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And then, that same year, that was last year, in 1998, I had a very substantial one-man show at Frank Lloyd Gallery. And that's been the most recent one.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes, that's a very full exhibition history, and I think what one sees in the last five years is the different groupings of ceramics and furniture, sensibilities who have an affinity with one another and have also built friendships with one another. How, tell me what it's been like over the years, your friendship and association with Sam Maloof. I know you've had a very close working relationship with Rupert. Have you continued to stay in touch with Sam and get together on a regular basis with him?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. I've known Sam, actually, since the time before he started making furniture, when we got acquainted when I was studying at Scripps College in the graduate program for ceramics. Sam was not a student there, but he was working for Millard Sheets, doing-making Millard's silk screen prints. And there are many things that happened during that time which we were not always seeing one another that continuously. Because we, I got married, and we were raising a family, and we would see each other every now and then. But, as time went along, and each became more and more established, why, we've been seeing each other much more often, starting with having lunch together just about every week.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I was going to say, is that your regular lunch group?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Well, yes, it has evolved into that.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I tried to encourage Sam to let them know at least a day ahead of time so that besides Sam, Harrison and Rummy, who are always, the three of them, together at least once a week, I was trying to tell them to do it just a day or two ahead of time so that they could have some of the other artists from the Claremont join them. But, it has been difficult, because Sam just telephones fifteen minutes early, when he wants to come to the bank.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, this is something I would-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He knows that he can find Rummy and Harrison.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, no. The way it works, I think Marguerite has always visualized a much more elaborate and intellectual kind of affair, lunch. And we're not a bunch of intellectuals. Sam is not any more so

than I am. Rummy is the one who is the intellectual. But, you know, those were twenty years, was it, that Rummy worked for Interpace?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, it was just Sam and I. Sam would call me up. So, this must have been, what? Almost thirty years ago, by now.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: He'd call me when he had to come over to the bank. And he always did all his banking in Claremont. And if I was free, you know, why, he'd say, Well, we'll meet down at Walter's and have lunch. And so, if I wasn't tied up with firing a kiln or something, why, I'd say, Okay, and I'd get in the car and go down, meet him at 12:30. And so, it's continued to be, you know, strictly a spontaneous affair.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So, Rummy's a newcomer to this group?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah, when Rummy-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: They also have a bit of wine. [Laughs.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah, which may be about ten years ago, I guess, that Rummy, that Interpace closed down. And so, Rummy became much more independent. And he started working full time, here at the studio. So, this way the three of us began to have lunch.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, do your discussions at these lunch meetings ever touch on the work that you're doing at that time? Or do you talk about everything but your work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, we do both. Actually, we talk-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: The business side of the work.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: We talk about all the different phases of the work. Everything from, maybe, what we're working on to the shows that we have been taking part in, or of selling the work. You know, we talk about different dealers, or-and maybe, different exhibitions that we may be seeing. And we'll be talking movies, what the current things that they're seeing.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But, you know, I think mostly-I think mostly, that Harrison and Rummy are very good listeners.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, we know Sam likes to talk. [Laughs.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yeah. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And he talks about everything.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, we have learned a lot about Sam and many of his problems, as well. But, it's always been, really, overall, I've always felt, very, very constructive. And it's good to have someone that we can speak on such friendly, you know, completely at ease terms, no matter what the subject. Where you can talk about religion and politics and everything else, with never any friction. And, in fact, we're usually very much in agreement, especially when it comes to politics, so-however, this past few months, though, has been quite a different story because Sam suddenly lost his wife, Freda.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: He lost Freda.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yeah.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: And, ah, so we have seen Sam a lot, well, the very day Freda passed away. And we were together for dinner and have him over here and so forth.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He was here, he came the last, just last week, he came here for lunch with Jerry Madison of the Renwick Gallery. And we had a nice little lunch.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: I'm sure your friendship means a lot to him at this time, when he's readjusting everything-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: To being, to being alone.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, yes. Yeah, I think so. And there are also other people like this, especially Jim Hueter. He very often joins us for lunch, too. And Jim has taken, made a real point of inviting Sam over to meet for lunch, sometimes on his initiative instead of waiting to hear from Sam. And Karl Benjamin is another one. Every now and then, joins in the group.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How long have you known Karl and Jim?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Again, since we knew each other when we were at Scripps. Because Karl was in some of the same classes. Now, Jim, though, it's a little different story. Well, he, Jim studied painting a lot.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: With Henry McFee, didn't he?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, that's exactly what I was going to say, with Henry McFee. Yeah, he was very close to McFee and really a very good student of his. And Jim branched out into more and more sculpture, and gradually his painting became more and more of abstract in feeling. But, he works at his painting every day, you know. And has a, you know, good studio of his own to work in.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Speaking of abstracts, the sculpture that you've made has abstract shapes at its core. Can you tell us how the sculpture came about, in your course of working? And this was in, going back to 1968, when this first came together.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, those first sculptures I made, really were based on an egg form or a spheric [sic] form. And I used a rosewood blocks to mount this on. In fact, Sam would, made a lot of the blocks in either rosewood or walnut for me, for that. And it was mainly to make a form that was a step up from making, you know, a pot. It has a shape that has to be somewhat more related the setting where it will be used. In other words, I wanted to make a form that didn't have to have a lip or a foot or a base, but could be, seemingly, just floating on the surface. After that, I began to be interested in combining it with metal. In fact, some of the first pieces I made was to have a ceramic form that would rest on a polished chrome, steel plate. So that I would use the reflection of the ceramic part in the polished chrome, almost like a mirror. And that gradually evolved on into other forms where the chrome steel, and then later on, stainless steel was a support.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And the metal was an integral part of the general, the total form. It was not a base, as-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, usually I would design these by first making a form, a completed piece, shape, and throw it on the potter's wheel, and graded and glazed, with a definite idea in mind. But to complete the idea, I would then make a cardboard mock-up to support the piece, to see, to work out the idea of how it would work.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How the two shapes would interride?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: How the metal would be done to relate to the ceramic part. And then I took that to a metal-working shop, where they would cut and weld together all the pieces, the parts, for me-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, what did you-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: According my drawings. I made my drawings that they could work from.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: You know, you, there is a quotation here about the sculpture. Should I just read it?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That Harrison wrote?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. "*Blue Egg* is the first of a series that has been the natural outgrowth of the bottle, thrown on a potter's"-

[END TAPE 6, SIDE A]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Archives of American Art, tape six, side B, interview with Harrison McIntosh by Mary MacNaughton, March 4, 1999.

Marguerite, you were just finishing a statement that Harrison made in "Objects" USA 1968," if you could just read that last sentence, I think we were cut off there.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: "Leaving the hollow and even more simplified form to move in any direction, or in some instances, suspended in space."

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Harrison, I was curious, is there more?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. "How can clay express all that the potter feels and is only too conscious of, in this day? The speed of discovery, the greatness of humanity, the destruction of nature and ourselves, the new freedoms? Still, this simple material can help man find his way toward the serene beauty needed to keep all in perspective." Because this was not by the sculptor who did this, I would think.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Harrison, I think of, when I see the simplicity of the form and smoothness of the surface, not only your earlier work, which it's very closely related to, but I think of the sculptural tradition in the twentieth century that relates to, say, the work of Brancusi [Constantin Brancusi]. MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: The Birth of the World, which he put into a form that resembled both egg or head. Were you thinking of those natural allusions to egg, head, or was it not body related, those forms?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, no, I wasn't really thinking of those as much as I was just as natural forms, really.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He always thought about [inaudible].

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Hm-hmm. Although I've been familiar with the work of Brancusi. In fact, we even saw his, visited-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: In fact, I should add that-you see the sculpture of the egg, here? Harrison did that knowing of Brancusi, but having seen very little of his work. And then, we went to Paris and visited the Pompidou [Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, France] one year, as we did many years. And one, at that time, there was the studio of Brancusi, which had been transported in front of the Pompidou Center. They moved it again, away from there, because it was too fragile to leave there. And when we were there, then we discovered the same form, exactly. And this was a surprise, because-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it's quite a different approach-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes, it is.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Entirely. Because my, which, of course, it's a, you know, it's a beautiful piece. It's just two different approaches to the thing. Where I wanted to make this egg form, which has a sort of a halo on the underside, of copper oxide, that gives a delicate green note, which is, in turn, reflected in the circular chrome piece.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: But it is still the basic form of life, which Brancusi expressed.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: How did your thinking about your sculpture change from 1968 to more recently? Did-are you continuing to make this kind of work or did this represent a phase in your work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, actually, at different points in between I've made quite a lot of different kinds of forms.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: He had became a little more complex.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Were definitely more complex. Where I would have a-well, it's like a curved cylinder piece, that would form a big arc. And then I had another piece attached in the center, which actually was movable, so that the part, certain parts of it, could be rotated. And I don't have any of those, myself, but I have photographs of all these things.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: We have albums of all those.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: So, I've gone through a lot of different things that they're, well, they're a little hard to describe, really. But, Marguerite describes very well about a lot of things up to what the current work I've done, as being more created to, oh, spatial or things suggesting the galaxy and so forth.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: More cosmic allusions?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Cosmic is-cosmic is the word I was trying to think of.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think that this came parallel to another revolution in Harrison's pottery, because he continues to make pottery at the same time, ever since the beginning of his sculptures. At about the same time as he started the sculptures, the decoration on his pots, not so much the forms of the vases and jars, but the decoration, became much more dynamic. He had used, until then, the very regular rhythm of the stripes and also the spots, either brush spots or carved, incised, little spots.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, circles, all kinds of things.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Different-yes. But they were more of a static rhythm. And then he began to be more interested in more movements of lines. For instance, in one of the vases we have on the piano, the lines began to wrap around the vase. And sometimes, even, leaving the vase as if the branch that the vase represents is temporarily stopped by a regular embranchment and then continues, or is about to continue. I think that, very indirectly, all of these forms and the decoration has been inspired by nature. And it has been a constant community and affinity with nature which has created Harrison's inspiration.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Firstly-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: What?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Speaking of decorations, there's one series that we haven't even brought up yet and this made me think of this. Where I did a lot of figurative pieces.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Yes, we have a collection-we have a piece in the Scripps collection.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yes. Yeah.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Of figurative decoration on your vessels.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: I did a series, the first ones, kind of, rather based on the Japanese prints. I used those, actually, just reproducing the actual drawings on pots, platters and others, with the idea, because I'd always admired the kind of line work that the-that was done by the Japanese print makers, and with the idea that I would use these for first seeing how-if I was able to do this kind of sgraffito work that got into some pretty delicate, kind of subtle things, whether it could be done or not and still make it work, with the idea of then carrying that further to make designs and ideas of my own. And, of course, this-well, in the process, I began to use some by other, different other artists. I did, I used some by, Matisse [Henri Matisse] did some marvelous line drawings that I liked. And I used those, actually, what I did was to make a Xerox copy of the drawing and then I could enlarge it or reduce it to the size that would be suitable for my piece, so that I could get a more precise, really a reproduction, of the artist's work on a ceramic piece. Another one I did . . .

[Tape stops. Restarts.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: We were talking about your figurative decorations and that you would transfer the design with tracing paper. Is that correct?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, mm hmm.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: This was done for only a very short period, about six months.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yeah. Yeah, I did-yeah, this was just a small series that I did for one of the exhibitions. So, I was using very much of the same techniques that I used for many, have used for many years, with the sgraffito line filled with a black or a dark engobe and then applying other color engobes in very limited ways.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Now, could you bring us up to date with the work that you're doing now? What are the shapes that are interesting you?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes, you were asking about some of the shapes. Well, in this last show that I had, it was-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: At Frank Lloyd Gallery?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: That's right. And this was what, just last October?

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So that was in October 1998?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Mm hmm. [Affirmative.]

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Right. And a number of the pieces were based on rather classic forms that I've done before and just making the variations within those things. And also, in addition, there were others that, where I used, well, based on a shape, particularly, well, a bowl I had done earlier that I particularly liked the form of and a kind of diagonal decoration. And I felt this would make a good, more interesting, larger piece. So, I made a similar bowl shape, throwing a rather tall foot, and then I threw a lip that would accommodate a lid. So I was able, made a piece that was much more complex and it turned out to be a, you know, a completely different piece than I had ever made before. And so, this is kind of the way I tend to grow, develop ideas from previous work.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: So you find inspiration for new work in older work that you reinterpret and reenvision?

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Yes. Yeah.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think that since Harrison's vision has diminished considerably, he seems to produce work that is even stronger than before. He still has the delicacy that his bottle vase had, but I think that he has developed more complex and stronger ideas for jars, for large pieces, or larger pieces anyway, and for jars or even vases which are more powerful in form.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I did another piece for that show, come to think of it. Every now and then I like to make a piece that will just barely fit in the kiln, so that it's the maximum size that I can make. And I did a piece of that sort for this show. And I did several other much, tall pieces that are, maybe, oh, twenty, twenty-two or so inches tall, which is about the maximum we can fit in our kiln. And so, I like making, well, vertical pieces of this sort, where you can do quite a departure and it's a more severe, straight-line kind of forms. And this way, I like to put together an exhibition that has a variety of sizes and shapes and that will make a-well, will relate well together, but each is quite different from the other piece. Well, another one I had made was, I guess you would call it a tripod piece. I had been wanting to do something for a long time, something that would have just three legs on it, which were just molded to the bottom of a very fat, round, jar-like shape. And-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Have Chinese bronzes been an inspiration for you at any point? I'm thinking of the footed--

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Pieces.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Why, yes, I'm sure they have. I never have been inclined to try to just copy, you know, the proportions and the, you know-the bronzes have a terrific strength to them. But, of course, the things you do with metal are quite different than what you could do with clay. And so, I've-but, I'm sure these things have always been in the back of my mind.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, I think, Harrison, that we want to conclude this interview with, looking back on your career, are there particular forms that have been, that have sustained your interest over these many years of working, that continue to fascinate you and that you still want to explore? And looking ahead, what do you have planned for the next, say, year of working?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I don't think I've ever been one to be making plans ahead, because I kind of do things from day to day, really. In doing an exhibition, I do a certain amount of planning, as I just described, to have a variety of forms. But these are still, I guess, based on the kind of forms that are really based on the potter's wheel, throwing quite round-and I like, I guess I've always liked rather voluptuous kind of rounded shapes, because the glaze I've used, it turns out I'm still using the same glaze for many, many years, has such a marvelous, soft, tactile quality about it, that it lends itself to these kind of forms especially. And, I don't know, from that it's hard to say. I may make something quite different next year, I don't know. [Laughs.]

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: I think that there has been an evolution in the inspiration of Harrison's work. Through those dynamic lines, even in the pottery, he began to do some rhythm, which seems to be very indirectly, and yet very really, inspired by the movements of nature, the movements of the waves. He very often has a circle in the center of a big platter, for instance, which Gotlach [phon. sp.] himself had suggested represented the Mandala [phon. sp.] of the Indian philosophy. But, for Harrison it is probably more of a recollection of the beauty of the moon with the halo.

And then in his sculptures, he was always fascinated by the challenge of making a piece seem to float off the base. In fact, all his pots are always elevated from the base. He seems to like to give them a certain lightness. And in the sculptures, he was interested in the challenge of showing, of interpreting a mass of clay, which is the weighty, direct, basic material in the nature, and make it, yet, in such a way that it seems to be balancing into space, or floating into space, like the planets in the heavens. You know, like that sculpture in the back of you, there. The idea of it is a floating space. He has a wall of stainless steel, polished stainless steel, and on each side of the wall he has a semi-spheric piece, and with the two combined, from either angle, if you see the two pieces of the spheres together, you have a sphere floating into space. But if you see only one side, the reflection against the chrome gives the feeling, again, of floating. And one of the first sculptures he did was this one, where you really, does very directly, showed this feeling of balancing the clay onto the base. And at the same time, he has the decoration is very cosmic in itself, with the amoeba on the other side.

I think that, more and more, Harrison's forms in sculpture, as well as his pots, an expression of purity, not only,

well, the purity of the form represents the purity of the soul in Harrison. He is very much interested in all that is happening in the world, but his natural tendency is always to want to transcend all the momentary tragedies or turmoils of the day and to express something that has a timeless quality. I think that he is a great admirer of classical music and he enjoys the music of Bach, for instance-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: There's a precision in Bach-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Exactly.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And a precision in the forms-

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes. There's a precision-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: And decoration that you make.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: Yes.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Do you-Harrison, do you feel an affinity between-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: In fact, this brings to mind-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: That kind of music and your work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: One of the best compliments I think I ever received was someone who was given a rather large bowl of mine came to tell me how much, and she was a musician, how much the piece reminded her of the music of Bach. And I thought that was, because this is a thing I've somehow or other always trying to achieve in a solid material like clay, which is difficult.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: There are two reasons for this. The music of Bach, which many consider the highest expression in music, is extremely simple. I'm a pianist myself, and it's extremely simple and at the same time, it's the most difficult part-it's much more difficult to play a fugue of Bach really well, without using the pedal, without all the little fioriture that you can find in Rachmaninoff or Tchaikovsky, which are great, too. But I think that the simplicity of Bach, his-of course, you just said, his precision. And because of that it is really very challenging to execute. It's not difficult to interpret on the piano, and there is only one Bach. Nobody has been able to imitate him successfully.

And at the same time there is another thing. The music of Bach is probably extremely abstract. In dance, a *pas de deux* is the most abstract. It does not try to illustrate a story at all. Pottery, even pottery, is the most abstract form of sculptures because it does not represent directly any image of nature. And yet, through pottery the way Harrison understands it, or through music of Bach, you reach the highest feel of spiritual enlightenment.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: We often think, though, of something abstract being purely intellectual. And yet, Marguerite's talked about an emotional content in your work. Will make some comments about that aspect of your work? Do you feel it embodies your emotions?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, since I'm much more of an instinctive kind of potter, it seems, I think that there certainly is a very strong connection here. But, I've never been a person to tend to just analyze how and why I'm doing something a certain way. So, this is why it's great that Marguerite can put so much of my feelings into the right kind of words.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Well, I think also, when we analyze we tend to pull apart those processes that are actually fused in living, in lived experience. And the mind and thinking and emotions are all intertwined, so it's unrealistic to dissect them and pull them apart in a work of art. Um, Harrison, what, how would you like to conclude today, with any further observations or comments on your work?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, I wish I had some great words of wisdom, but I don't really. [Laughs.]

MARY MACNAUGHTON: What would you say to a young artist today-

HARRISON MCINTOSH: But, you'll have to guess-

MARY MACNAUGHTON: A young ceramist beginning today. What advice would give him or her?

HARRISON MCINTOSH: Well, it's been a long time since I've had any contact with students. And we used to warn them that to get, you know, it would occasionally, well, I still occasionally have some student come. But we used to have classes of students that would come to the studio, and I'd always warn them that this was not the best way in the world to earn a good living. That, and even in our own case, it takes, it's taken two people, not just

one, to-

If you want to really make the kind of things you enjoy doing-I feel I've been very fortunate, really, in being able to make the kind of things that I produce and there's always been an outlet for them. So I've been able to continue making more. In fact, while we were discussing all these various things, I was thinking, I've really been lucky to have been involved with a couple of very good art dealers to handle my work. Because it's one of the-and this is maybe something useful for a young potter to know, is to have someone who is selling your work who is really enthusiastic about what you're doing. Because otherwise, it's kind of a waste of time. They have to really feel an importance to what you're doing. And I've had both Newman that way and Frank Lloyd and his assistant Wayne, have been really enthusiastic and do very well with my work. Because I've never enjoyed selling my own work to people. So, we've never had a showroom here as such. We do have people come occasionally to the studio to get something. But it's only, usually, what I happen to have on hand, because I keep most of my work at galleries. So, it's nice to know the people, and we've known a lot of good collectors who have gotten people who have gotten my work. But, as far as doing the selling part of it, I've always preferred to leave that to somebody else.

MARGUERITE MCINTOSH: And maybe he could-this is a part that, the last paragraph that Harrison, that was given on a different [inaudible] that you could use.

MARY MACNAUGHTON: Okay, Harrison, this is a statement by Harrison. "There are no technical secrets in the way I work, and I strongly believe that craftsmanship is important only to the extent that it supports the spiritual content of the work. Form, emphasized by surface quality, must, above all, remain a very human expression. And the quality of a piece, at the end, depends on the human emotion it expresses or inspires." I think that's a good place to conclude this interview. Thank you very much, Harrison and Marguerite, for spending the time talking about your long and very productive career. Thank you.

HARRISON MCINTOSH: It's been a pleasure.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

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