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Oral history interview with William P. Daley, 2004 August 7-December 2

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with William P. Daley on August 7 and December 2, 2004. The interview took place in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, and was conducted by Helen W. Drutt English for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

William Daley and Helen Drutt English have reviewed the transcript and have made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

HELEN W. DRUTT ENGLISH: This is Helen Drutt English interviewing William P. Daley at 307 Ashbourne Road, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania. We are sitting in his studio, and it is the 7th of August 2004, and I am interviewing him for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, and this is disc number one in this part of the Laitman Project.

William Daley, when and where were you born?

WILLIAM DALEY: I was born in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York on March 7 in 1925. I was born in the section of the town called Uniontown. I was born at home – it was on a third floor walkup in this village.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I know that you have always had a strong passion for your legacy and your heritage. Could you speak to me about your parents?

DALEY: Well, my mother and father are from Irish descent. Both their families have been in the country a good long while; they were not immigrants. My mother lived in Yonkers, New York in a town below Hastings-on-Hudson, and my father was born in Hastings-on-Hudson. So I really felt in some sense that I really belong to the town, or I lived in the town. It was a great feeling.

And my father worked in the mill. He had become an apprentice to a house painter as a boy and became a house painter and went in the Navy, and when he came out he started a house-painting business. And my mother worked in the Moquette, which is an Armstrong rug company. She was a bobbin girl. My dad left school at ninth grade and my mother left school at fourth grade to work. My grandmother on my father's side, or my grandfather, died of consumption, and my father had to go to work.

I still have a letter from the principal of my father's school – the Frasier Free School in Hastings – that he was a magnificent student, and the principal was begging my grandmother to let him stay in school. And my father was a twin, and they had already taken his brother Edward out of school two years before. And my mother went – she then became a nanny and took care of wealthy people and children in Yonkers, New York. And she was married to her first husband, then he died of consumption, and then married my father. So I have a half brother whose name is O'Mara and I have a sister, Alice, and that constitutes the clan – the immediate clan.

My father had a really bardic memory and also loved poetry and he loved to talk. And he knew all of [Robert] Frost and all of Carl Sandburg and he would just go on and on and on. I used to sort of be willing to go out on the back porch in the rain to just escape hearing him. His favorite poet was [A. E.] Housman, and he would say to me, "Now hear this, Billy," and he would recite.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: The commitment that you have to house painting seems to be something that is very central and very much part of your heritage.

DALEY: Well, I taught Tom how to be a house painter, and I painted with my father. Back then, the town – he would moonlight all the time in the factory, paint people's houses to earn extra money, and when he would do that – when we would be walking to church, my father would take a diversion and show me what he was painting because he really liked it so much. So I worked with him as a house painter and then when I went out to Iowa to teach. And I only taught nine months and didn't get any pay in the summer, so I signed on as a union house painter. So you are right. Painting houses – I still paint one side of my house every year. On my 80th birthday, my wife, Catherine, gave me a 40-foot ladder.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: On your 80th birthday?

DALEY: No, no, what am I saying? I haven't had – my 70th birthday because I have not yet had my 80th birthday.

But, anyway, I put the ladder up on the side of the house and climbed up to the top and had a fantastic conversation with my father. And I literally almost – when I would paint and I was teaching Tom how to paint on the back of our house – when I was 13, my father put me out on the ladder on the plank with him and I would be in the middle of a yellow pine plank that was 20 feet long between the ladder brackets and it swayed up and down – it was very scary. And he used to say to me, "Billy, think into the wall, don't think back of yourself and you will be just fine." And my mother would call – called out and said, "Now Bill, what are you doing, having that child out on that side of that house painting? He will do that soon enough." And – [laughs] – my father said, "Ally, he has to learn how to do it sometime." So that is how I started painting.

And I got so I loved climbing trees and being up high in the air. I still love going up. So it was a real treat to go up on that present I got, that 40-foot ladder.

When I was teaching Tom, which is where I began, I really could hear my father around the side of the house, telling me what I should be telling Tom. And of course I told him the same things that my father told me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So it's pretty special.

DALEY: Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Also, language has been such an important part of your life, and the use of language and the way you invent words and use words and extol your thoughts through language.

DALEY: Well, I think he really loved it himself. He would tell me that the greatest word in the English language, the most euphonious word, was cellar door.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Oh, yes. [Laughs.] Right.

DALEY: Have you heard that at all?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, from Cinderella. She says, cellar door.

DALEY: Oh, okay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, anyway, he had all these kinds of things about – he would repeat the Shrops – things from *A Shropshire Lad* [A. E. Housman, London: K. Paul, Tranch, Treubner, 1896], and he would say, "See how marvelous it sounds, Billy."

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you think that is a part of your Irish heritage –

DALEY: Maybe, maybe.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – where language is such an important part of expression?

DALEY: I never thought of it – but it – I'm sure it comes from his celebration of it, although he liked – he thought artists were magnificent. He was in the Navy with a man who was an illustrator during World War I. And of course he never got on any ships because since he was a painter, they had him painting admirals' houses and things like that at Newport and then up in Rhode Island – I can't remember the naval base there [Naval Station Newport]. But he had, as one of his fellow painters, a man who was an illustrator, and my father would talk about the pictures that he painted and describe them to Alice and I – my sister – and she ended up going to art school and being an artist, also. But he really – and he talked about [Jasper Francis] Cropsey, the Hudson River painter who lived in Hastings in the preceding generation, and also that he was Irish and that he was a great painter. And my father's favorite painting was Rosa Bonheur's *The Horse Fair* [1853-55] in the Metropolitan [Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York], and I don't know if you have ever seen it, but it is a huge painting. It must be 20 feet by 8 feet high of people at a horse fair, and he would go on and on about what a fantastic painting it was.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So there was this great interest –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – in art in the house –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and in language and in poetry, and –

DALEY: Yes, through him.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, through your father, and do you think that it was these sensibilities that motivated you toward wanting to be an artist?

DALEY: Well, in the neighborhood that I grew up in, there wasn't much of a precedent for being interested in culture in that way and I think it really was that he thought it was a very special calling, and he was always buying us art supplies and in fact, I got a set of oil paints when I was maybe – a small box of oil paints for Christmas – maybe I was 10 or 11. And when I got them, I had a very difficult time getting to paint with them because every time I would start a painting, my father would want to finish it, and he would want to paint on it. And then once he would begin painting on it, he wouldn't let me paint on it anymore. And then my mother would intervene and say, "Bill, now the child is trying to make a painting and you should let him finish it." And he would say, "Ally, I'm just helping him." [Laughs.] So he did. He had an enormous appetite for doing things.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I'm just trying to remember – did we talk about the specific date that you were born?

DALEY: In 1925, March 7th.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And were there other things in your early childhood that you feel, in some way, acted as a catalyst for the way in which you developed as an adult, and affected your career choices?

DALEY: Well, I think it turned out early on that the thing I had liked most and was good at and was encouraged in was drawing and making pictures. And somehow, I became – my brother, when we went to parochial school, my older brother, Joe O'Mara, could draw beautifully, and he would draw all the things on the blackboard in parochial school. At Thanksgiving, he would draw big turkeys and at Christmas, he would – in colored chalk on the blackboard. And I kind of inherited it. I mean, when my turn came, I became the drawer of holidays on the blackboard until I left parochial school.

So I think I had some kind of propensity right from the get-go and I also was encouraged in it from the beginning. So I think that was it – of being good at it, or that was the special thing that I was able to do that other kids didn't.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: At what point in your life did you become interested in ceramics and become what you would call a mudman?

DALEY: Well, I think I did do it in high school. I made something on the wheel and – but I didn't think of it as being special in any way. But when I went to Mass Art [Massachusetts College of Art, Boston], and I was an art education major as a junior, and you sort of had to do everything, and I took ceramics with Charles Abbott. And the first thing he did was throw a casserole on the potter's wheel and told us that he paid the gynecologist or the pediatrician or whatever it was – was at the birth of his first child – paid them with dishes. And we were totally smitten by him in terms of his abilities to make things that were extraordinarily useful. And Cate and I were courting each other at that time, but I just knew that I liked it. I was terrible at it, and in fact, they called me Swill Daley because – instead of Bill Daley – because when I threw, I threw so wet that everything that I would make would fall down just about the time I had it finished because I used too much water. And the inside of the potter's wheel sort of looked like a pond.

So I really didn't show much ability at it. I just knew that I really liked it, and that is sort of the point at which I decided I wasn't going to be a painter and I wasn't going to be an illustrator because drawing really had always been the center of my art life – of doing drawing, and I used to – in art school, I was doing a lot of painting. I got a painting in the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston on Newbury Street, and I thought that was just the greatest – that as a student I submitted something and they accepted it. So I really thought I was going to be a painter, and I was being encouraged in that direction as well.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Aside from the drawing, painting, and emerging interest in ceramics, were there other media that you were attracted to and began to explore – use in your work?

DALEY: Well, it was interesting, I went to the Massachusetts School of Art, and it still is a magnificent school, but it was a strange thing of being with all veterans who had been shot at and so on. And we all thought that we could do everything, you know, which was a really – when I think about it, it was a very arrogant attitude to have, but we were all intensely interested in whatever it was that we had a chance to do. So every aspect of the visual arts – if we had a modeling class or a sculpture class or whatever, we really felt that we could do that, or we would offer ourselves to it in some way. So it was very competitive, it was also very exciting to be part of it.

I did my thesis with two other artists – Joseph Carreiro, whom you know, is one of them [Charles Quillen was the other]. I was editor of the yearbook one year with John Cataldo and Charlie, we – so I was very interested in graphic design. But we [Joseph Carreiro, Charles Quillen, and I] did our thesis on exhibition design and we made

a flexible display system that ended up being published in Interior magazine way back in 1949. So we were pretty all eclectic in the scope of our interests, whatever it was. Looking back on it, art making included drawing, painting, graphics, industrial design, and ceramics. Design, craft, and painting were all aspects of art form giving.

Joe Carreiro, was also my friend, whom you know, and became an industrial designer, but he was interested in furniture, but he was also a marvelous painter. So we all thought we were, I don't know, soldiers that were becoming Renaissance men somehow.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right. But you know, that was a very special time in history, and now – I suddenly realize that you were part of a community of individuals who were able to come to have the advantage of higher education because of the GI bill.

DALEY: That's right. Absolutely.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And could you speak about that? I mean, where were you during the war?

DALEY: Well, during the war, I –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: The Second World War.

DALEY: – left high school to join the cadets and I was going to become a flyer. And I really joined because I was – I wanted to get out of high school without taking my final exams, and if you enlisted, you would get your diploma because I thought I might not make it. So I went down – we had the day off if we went down to enlist, so I went down and enlisted and got into the cadets and began to – almost immediately to wash out and end up being a gunner in a plane and flew one mission and got shot down and went to prison camp.

And I must say, though, in terms of having someone having an influence on me, there was a man named Lloyd Long, whom I met in a flight pool in Florida before you were selected to go to your training. I met this man and he was really different. He was quite a bit older than I, and he was very interested in philosophy, his brother was a philosophy student at Berkeley, and he was from Fence Lake, New Mexico. And he started talking to me about – and he gave me Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy* [1927] to read, and, you know, I would ask these questions and he would kind of – well, he was really being a teacher. And lo and behold, when I got to prison camp, who was in the camp in this room that I was assigned to in the barracks in the Lager in Stalag Luft 3A but Lloyd C. Long.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Where was the prison camp?

DALEY: This was up near Stettin, up near – it was north and east of Swinemunde where the rockets were tested. So I really had someone everyday to walk around the compound with, getting my head ventilated, and, you know, we would talk about religion, and my father was very religious and I guess, in some sense, so was I. But he would ask me questions – well, if there is God, then there must be something behind God, who do you think is behind God? And all these kinds of mind-bending questions.

And we also had – managed to get a couple of books through the Red Cross, and the one book that I got hold of was the *Oxford Guide to Classical Literature*. So I had this guy Lloyd Long talking to me about all the constellations, which we could see out the window – we couldn't get out at night of course, being in the camp – but it was interesting because I had this – I started making a chart from Zeus outward. And I made all the chart of all the people of whom begot whom and all the rest of it, and then we would talk about it. So it had a kind of – later on, when I became – started reading into myths and so on in school, I really kind of knew all about them anyway from having had Lloyd Long as a teacher.

So in a way, that was great to have this. I always thought of that as some magical thing to have that. So in some ways, going to school, for me, started in prison camp.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's amazing that he was there.

DALEY: Yes, it was amazing. It was amazing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Some sort of karma.

DALEY: Yep. It was like – it seems like it was meant to be.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How was it to be at Mass Art as a GI older than the other students that began school – who were not part of the GI bill? What was that like for a person of your age at that time?

DALEY: Well, it must have been hard. There were only two male students that weren't veterans, and all the

women who were there had come out of high school and so on. At the end of our graduation in 1950, there was – it was like West Point – everyone married someone in the class who was a student. So we all have four years difference between ourselves and our spouses.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Is that where you met Catherine?

DALEY: Cate and I courted each other in art school and that kind of started in our senior year more seriously, but we were friends all the way through. It must have been difficult – Cate has said many times that being a student at that time was a fierce kind of thing because of all the – all the veterans were so focused on what they – the urgency about going to school that I think we were difficult on the teachers as well – you know, that –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, I can remember because I was a co-ed at that time, and veterans were coming into our class, and I remember that the restrictions and the barriers among the art disciplines suddenly were just tossed aside.

DALEY: That's right, that's right. In fact, one of – in art history, we were studying Japan and of course – I guess it was sort of terrible in a way, but one of the students said he had a whole bunch of souvenirs from Japan that he would be happy to bring in. And he brought them in to the art history teacher, Ellen Munsterberg, who is a marvelous teacher, and they were Japanese soldiers' gold fillings. [Laughs.] It was terrible. And poor Ellen Munsterberg was absolutely shocked and she called – she said, this class is peopled with barbarians, and she left.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But it – had it been a metalsmithing class, then you would have melted it down and made a ring. [They Laugh.]

DALEY: Possibly. But anyway, I'm sure we were a strange breed to be students.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But this is what was the center of the craft movement in a way – the fact that GIs entered the higher educational system and broke down the barriers by virtue of their presence.

Could you discuss the difference between the university-trained artists and one who has learned his or her craft outside of academia?

DALEY: Oh, I don't know. You know, since I went to art school later on – I got accepted to go to graduate school at Columbia [Columbia University, New York] and I also was accepted at Harvard [Cambridge, Massachusetts] – we didn't think we were part of academia in art school. You know, we really saw ourselves more as related to some kind of an academy or some kind of people that were –

[Audio break.]

DALEY: So, this is number two?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, this is disc number two.

DALEY: Well, you were asking me about –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: About academia versus a – someone who has learned their craft outside of an academic environment. For instance, a person like Wharton Esherick or George Nakashima or those individuals who went to study with studio potters in Japan or England, with [Bernard] Leach, with [Shoji] Hamada – you know, the difference between being trained as a potter within the university as compared with being trained outside with a master.

DALEY: Okay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: With a master in an independent studio.

DALEY: Well, I always thought I was becoming an artist. I never was specializing in anything. I wanted to be a painter, but I was just as interested in sculpture. So when I did get to do ceramics, I knew that that was the thing I wanted.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: But the other thing I think that was amazing about, at least for me with my background and most of the students that I was with, is that we were exposed to a kind of scope of things that I don't think I would have been exposed to if I was working with an art – a single person like a potter. I mean, the idea of reading *Education through Art* by Herbert Read as a student, or John Dewey's *Art as Experience* [New York: Minton, Balch & Company, 1934] as a student, you know, was a marvelous kind of thing of opening up. And, like, getting the

new directions books of – so of reading modern poets and writers – like, I read Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* as a student. I just think I had a kind of exposure to a breadth of things.

And also as a student in art school, we would save our money and, like, I would – we went to hear "Peter Grimes," Benjamin Britten's opera, and so on. We were sitting up in the top of the place. But we had a kind of very intense interest in a whole lot of different things, and maybe I'm characterizing being educated as a specialist in too limited a way, but I found that, you know, we really had some scope to what we were about, and that wasn't about becoming a potter or a sculptor or whatever. It was about becoming an artist, and I felt that way all the time I was learning how to be a potter.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But you found your own mentor in that arena. I mean, you found that with Charlie Abbott.

DALEY: Well, that's true, but, you know, in some sense, Charles didn't – was a very strange mentor – marvelous mentor, but he had studied – he was an architectural engineer who went to the University of Michigan during the Depression to study Oriental art history. He was a New England Brahmin from Maine and there wasn't any work so he decided – then we went down – found out there was a woman named Maija Grotell at Cranbrook [Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan] that actually made pots, not just studying about the history of them. And so he went down there to study with her. In fact, he and Toshiko [Takaezu] were the first students, I think, for Charles – for Maija Grotell.

But anyway, so he never – he thought Sung pots were the only kinds of pots, but he never told us what to do or any – he was very open and very mysteriously willing to let you proceed in any direction you wanted to. So in a way, he really fit the temperament of the students in the art school at that time because I'm sure that had he tried to show us how to – that this was the only way to do something, we would probably have rebelled. But in a way, we were interested in learning how to make things the right way. So we were susceptible to learning how to make handles and spouts and lids and so on.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: What would you say was one of the most rewarding educational experiences that you have had?

DALEY: Well, I don't know. It's interesting. Probably being in school as a senior and being in love with Cate and being a student. We had a class that they chose ten people to teach a Saturday class for kids that come in from all around the suburbs of Boston, and it was a real honor to have a chance to do that, and it was unbelievable because we would spend all week getting ready to have these kids come in. And of course, Cate had a class, and I had a class, and Joe Carreiro had a class, and John Cataldo had a class. And we would really be trying to vie with each other to see who could do the most intriguing thing with the students that would be the most – get the results that were the most fantastic. And being part of getting ready for it and then being part of the class and then showing the work and sharing it afterwards with each other and seeing the kids and what they did – it was unbelievable. I mean, there was – I have never – I have had a lot of thrilling experiences teaching since, but that was sort of the beginning of it. And I would have to say maybe that was the most exciting thing that I ever did as a student.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I suddenly had a memory flash, and I can remember that Cate also made pots at one time in the '60s.

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And occasionally, her name is on a pot that you have made together. Would you like to speak about that?

DALEY: Well, when the kids grew up – well, Cate made wonderful pots, and she made – she had a bowl in the first Civic Center craft show – she won an honorable mention. In the "Young American," she sent one of the early ones and had an honorable mention, so she really did make wonderful pots. And after the children were out and going to college and so on, she was thinking about going – getting a job or something, and she said, "Well, I could work in the studio with you," and I said, "That would be great."

So we made many – most of the pots that were in the early shows in your gallery [Helen Drutt Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania], Cate had worked on them with me, and she really didn't want to have authorship because she said she didn't design them or they weren't her idea, but her touch is in the pots immensely and also her judgments. As a critic coming downstairs in the evening to look at the work and see how it was going, if Cate would give me a crit – I mean, sometimes I would not listen and make something horrible, but most of the time she would really be able to see what I was trying to get at better than I could, being in the middle of it. So in a way both her judgment and her touch and her ability to finish work coming down on it. It's really hard for me.

I love generating it and I like the beginnings enormously because it's so risky and it's so exciting knowing

whether you are going to make anything that matters or not. But the idea of then finishing it properly so that when you touch it, it feels great or you reach under the rim and you run your fingers under there. In some ways, Cate's attentiveness to that aspect of the pots – I learned so much watching her do it, and now she has arthritis in her hands and doesn't help in that way anymore. And in the early days, if she didn't like what I was making, she wouldn't work on it. So I would immediately be willing to change it so that she liked it. But she would go out to the garden and work in the garden.

So in a way I think that our – much of my doing is totally in the middle of her sensibilities, and in a bigger sense, no one gets to be an artist without being enabled by people. And in a way Cate has really made a kind of space psychically in terms of being rigorous about what I do and how I do it and also by encouraging and being able to make it possible to keep doing it, and she is still doing it. So in a way, I had a show out in the west and I had Cate's name – I wanted Cate's name on the title, and the person didn't want the name on the title and we didn't do that.

In some sense, I think it's a naïve thing to just think of the pots as having authorship on one person, although I must say, if someone else told me what I had to do with a pot when I was making it, it would be a very difficult time for both of us.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: So Cate would never say, do this, or do that, but she would say, you know, this bothers me, or that bothers me, or what do you think about this? So that negotiating, that partnership is fascinating.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I can sense her presence at times, and especially when I walk into the garden, I see that same kind of commitment to a certain kind of order –

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: A unique attention to detail –

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and everything is very pristine and ordered in the way the flower beds are arranged and in which even the geometry of the shapes and the colors of the flowers are arranged –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and it's there, and it becomes a pervasive part of your entire life and your studio.

DALEY: That's right. That's part of the legacy of it all – of the house and the objects in the house –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely.

DALEY: That's true.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Have you, Bill, had any involvement with alternative educational institutions like Penland School of Crafts [Penland School of Crafts, Penland, North Carolina] and Haystack Mountain School of Crafts [Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, Maine] or Arrowmont [Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Gatlinburg, Tennessee], Pilchuck [Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, Washington] or the Archie Bray [Archie Bray Foundation, Helena, Montana]? Actually, I do know that you have been involved with them.

DALEY: [Laughs.] Well, as a – when I retired – well, when I was – the last 10 years of my teaching I had a residency program at the school, and I really would – and I was – finally gotten to the place where I could teach three days in a row from 8 to 7, and then I had the two days off. So I didn't teach Thursday, Friday, and I would do workshops. And I had Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, come home Sunday, teach Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. So I have done workshops in every major summer school place that there is – Penland, Archie – no, I have never been to Archie Bray, but they don't have classes there per se, but Haystack and Penland and Anderson Ranch [Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass Village, Colorado] and Appalachian School [Appalachian Center for Craft, Smithville, Tennessee], and so on, and so on, and so on.

I think it's a marvelous kind of occasion because the teachers come from all over and the students come from all over, so it's a kind of way of switching, or making connection points between – it's like you are the roundhouse of some kind of a rail system. And I think that it's a great way to find things out. It also is totally dependent on the regular education system, and you could not be well educated by going from one summer class to another. There is something consistent about that kind of maturation that is false about these other schools, that you can make or to get some kind of inspiration, but the rhythm of learning and maturation of learning and being with a teacher in a community of students where there is an exchange going on that you can build on – you don't get

at those places. So I think that they are fantastic, but it – that it's a marvelous auxiliary thing, or an extra thing, or an incrementally improving thing, but it's not really a sound kind of education.

I love doing workshops around the country with students, but the idea that a teacher can leave and the student leaves has some merit, but it also has a tremendous difficulty about it because sometimes when your working time day-in, day-out together in some kind of rhythm, the things you are learning you don't even know you are finding out. And even the things you are teaching, you don't even know that you have taught. There is something about being a community as – in a group – with a group of people over time, where you build a kind of trust and a kind of insight that helps you be able to be the mediator if you are the teacher. And you can't get that in these other places.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: The dynamics of the way in which you teach are different –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – in that situation in which you are a visiting artist.

DALEY: And they also – those places, for the most part you are working on the premise that it's so special that you are coming there to get something special, and the teachers usually are able to respond in some sense where they are not accountable over a long period of time, which permits them to take kinds of risks which are good. But they also have found the things that they are sharing are the things they are most successful at. And most teachers learn the most when they do their worst teaching, and most students – I shouldn't say most, it's not right, but students often learn the most when they don't want to learn something, or when they are having the most difficulty, or when the things are really not good. And good teachers can know the temperature of their people that they are helping, trying to mediate what the students are trying to get at, and work with that.

So I think that is one of the things – it's not about skills. Information and formation are different things, and the main reason for thought is to gain trust and have belief. So the main reason for thought is to have belief, and then the belief is to gain trust. And your belief in yourself and trust in yourself and belief in your community and trust in your community, and that is what happens if you are in a good school over a period of time, so that you can grow in developing that, so you can practice.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Like family.

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: The academic community is like family.

I know that in recent years, you have begun to travel much more than you had in earlier decades, other than the time, of course, when you were in the Second World War. But in the last 20 or 30 years, you have begun to explore different possibilities in different continents, and I know that you finally made a journey to Ireland, which was extremely important to you. And you went to the Orient. I would like to know if you would speak about your travels and if they have had any kind of impact on your work and your life.

DALEY: Well, I think that's true, that I started to do late. I think I really started traveling early, only I didn't go anyplace. I mean –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You went to Arizona and New Mexico. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, that's true, but when I was a boy, I had a half-interest in a little sailboat and we would go up and down the Hudson River, and, like, at 13, I sailed for four days from Hastings to WestPoint in a little teeny open boat along the Palisades. And really, I was both Leif Erikson and Columbus and Magellan, with this other paperboy, William – Billy Shields and I. And in a way, that sense of traveling – I think that is sort of the essence of it.

And another place that I traveled a lot is – I was a very bad – poor at reading because I learned to read by sight and seeing, not by phonics. And I suspect that I was, and still am, dyslexic in some ways. I mean, so I had a terrible time reading and I was lip reader and slow, but once I got into sailboats and started reading sea stories like Nordhoff and Hall and Horatio Hornblower, Forester and Rafael Sabatini, and so on. I just started reading up a storm about boats and sailing and traveling and the Three Musketeers and so on. And so in a way, I think my interest in journeying is much more than going the places and interior thing – that's not – now, it's true that when I – going back, going to Ireland, it was a great experience for me, in two weeks. But what was the greatest about it was that I spent a week at the School of Art and Design in Dublin with students doing a workshop, and I spent a week in Ulster at the University of Ulster doing a workshop. So the real journey was with these kids, and I did get to go to the Giant's Causeway.

So in a way – like, when I went to Korea, it was amazing, but it was scary to me. I couldn't understand what anyone was saying, I couldn't read anything, I would – when I would go out into the city, I would buy things because I would see a sign that had an orange on it and I knew they had fruit in there. And then when I would get some, I had to hold out my money and so on, so on. I think, maybe, I'm a much better kind of traveler when I have a task or when I'm doing something as opposed to – I don't know, it sounds insular in a way, but – [audio break, tape change] – travel in that sense becomes confusing, and it was great being in Ireland – like, even just walking around Dublin and going in churches. I found that very exciting. I don't know if you ever read [Hermann] Hesse's *Steppenwolf* about the person that is a journeyman that is estranged – the stranger. So a lot of times when I have traveled, I felt like I was a stranger.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I remember when we went to the Netherlands –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – just the sound of the Dutch language sparked that memory of the war in you.

DALEY: Yes, I know, that was difficult. And I did, I had this feeling of being an Auslander –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: – you know, an outsider. So I guess I like my traveling kind of digested in some sense. I –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Need to be comfortable.

DALEY: Yes, right – being at home –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: – to journey.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you think that going to Ireland has any effect upon your work?

DALEY: Yes, I do. I thought – you know, when I was a boy, I thought most of the Irish were alcoholics or policemen, or like my father – poet talkers or whatever. But I didn't know anything about the *Book of Kells*, I didn't know that we were marvelous jewelers; I didn't know we had this heritage. I did know about – as writers, I knew about Yeats and, you know, James Joyce and art school and read *Dubliners* [1914] and so on. So it was a great thrill to – when these things came to Philadelphia. When the *Book of Kells* came to Philadelphia, I followed it to New York and then I saw it again in Boston. But to see it at Trinity College [Dublin, Ireland] was a great thrill.

So to be in that thing – so when I came back, I made a pot and put a Celtic meander on it that I thought, well, I had a right to it then. I never – I didn't feel that being – my own heritage was one of a kind of self-discovery, and that was a culmination of it by being able go there and seeing how – seeing it there.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You know, the carving that you did on that pot, which was like the Irish interlace carving, had the same continuous line – no ending, no beginning.

DALEY: Yes, yes, the meander –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And it just keeps dissolving and finding itself. It is like the Celtic consciousness – it's the way in which you teach, the way in which you verbally explore in the classroom. There is this incredible magnetic tie between that symbol, and the Celtic consciousness and your presence as an artist, in our community.

DALEY: Well, I think that is true, that I really like not knowing. I don't like certainty, and in fact, if I know the answer before I start, I get bored and I can't do it anyway. So I love it when I can make my way and find it and have things come out as I am in it or of it. And I love it when I can teach and I can help people get to have trust in themselves, where they will listen to their own interior temperature and proceed with it not knowing – having certainty about outcome.

Most people think that learning is about having certainty about outcome. Learning is really a matter of learning how to overcome resistance. It's how to overcome your own resistance, and how to suspend your disbeliefs so that you can venture, and then being willing to venture and maybe stand at least a 50 percent chance of not having it work, so that you have to – but I think maybe that's – I think it's true in everything that is really creative. If you don't have that, you are not going to be really creative, or you don't learn how to trust that. I think everybody has it, but we usually get it trained out of us.

And from my – I just was lucky of being slow as a kid and so on, and sort of always being third or fourth or – you know, I always had a place to incubate and hide and be inside, and giving that permission to other people as a

teacher. So I think that is part of the gift of a heritage in a way, that at least it's a kind of aspect of Celtic being that I am susceptible to, and that the romance of the quest is not where you end up, it's the journey. And so I like that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Has Catherine's ancestry in any way invaded you or influenced you?

DALEY: Oh, I think so. I think Cate's – I was interested to go to Dublin, that Dublin was the headquarters of the Vikings for 600 years. And really, in some ways, that Cate and I drove to a monument out in the middle of Iowa, which is a monument to the Norwegians – we went 200 miles out of our way, and when we – there were two farmers there – Norske farmers – and we said, "We came to see the monument" – it was just a big stone. But they looked at Cate and they said – the guy said to me, "Are you a Norwegian?" And I said, "No, I'm Irish," and Catherine said, "I'm Norwegian," and they said, "Oh, no, you must French or Italian."

So I realized after I got to Dublin that I was – I'm really probably Norwegian – one of the Vikings at 600 years of the headquarters in Dublin. But the sense of order or the sense of system, or rhythm of system of the kind of geometry of plan is something that I think that – that at least I see as part of a Norwegian heritage, but if you think about the Celtic guys that did those interweaves and so on, the plan below those are unbelievable. Geometries of those are unbelievable, except they don't end up in any decipherable absolute reality. They end up in an enigma.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I find it also interesting that though your family has been here for several generations –

DALEY: Yes, four.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – four – that you are still Irish. [Laughs.] I mean, for decades, you have always presented yourself as Irish, and I find that very interesting.

DALEY: Well, I guess, in a way, one of the good things is that the children are Norwegian, French and Irish, but I grew up in an enclave that the whole – you know, all the people that were associates in that community were Irish. So I guess in that sense – although, I have never – I, in some strange way, became interested in the culture, in terms of learning about it, awfully late. Although, I have always had a real pride in the fact that when I was a boy, my father would let me – I would go to the wakes with him because I was his son – oldest son – and I had to go, and they would let me sit in the kitchen and hear the stories. If I didn't say anything, I would be all right. If I said anything, they would chase me out. But I listened, and the stories were fantastic. And I – oftentimes, I would never know they were talking about the man that was out – buried out – was in the living room in the casket, because they were all amazing stories about this person. Probably most of them were apocryphal. [Laughs.]

So in that sense, I think that even as a boy, I realized that I was part of something that was pretty special – totally unbelievable, but special.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, Maurice felt that way.

DALEY: Did he?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: He was fiercely Irish.

DALEY: Yes, right, right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And he loved the word "fiercely" next to being Irish. [Laughs.] So that was important.

Do you think of yourself as part of an international tradition, or one that is specifically an American tradition?

DALEY: I think I'm part of some really universal tradition. I mean, I really think that the people that have been trying to give a form to spirit – it has nothing to do with national boundaries. Everybody that has tried to become an artist – and by that, I mean a maker, and the intent of the making was to give a shape to something that was about a feeling or a thought or a necessity or whatever – they are all the same. They all deal with the same primary questions, they all overcome the limits of materials, they all become enamored of material, they all learn that your hands direct your mind, not that your mind directs your hands. People that become scholars think that their minds are the central thing, people that become artists know that the wedding between the touch of their fingers and their head is the thing, and material.

So you are part of a three-way thing, so I don't – in terms of who we are, I think that we really belong to a tremendously big, universal thing. And I don't think that – I think it's neat that – I'm glad we are not part of any real national tradition. When I went to England to lecture at the museum there, Victoria and Albert –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: – I was amazed several people had said that they found that being in the Victoria and Albert Museum was such a drag for them, that it bound their possibilities so deeply that they couldn't – they were locked up in the history of their own people's past. And I went in there with my – I took, like, 2,000 slides in two weeks. I couldn't believe all this stuff. For me, it was just sort of stuff to see and glory in. So one of the things that is great about the craft movement since the war was that most of us really didn't even realized there was any tradition, and there wasn't because we were ignorant.

And I think when you asked earlier about the difference between an art school person and an artisan – an artisan are all trained in the history of the touch and the automaticity of their teacher's touch, and they transferred it to someone else. All the people that went to art schools or whatever after the war were coming from other directions and saw all of this as something without tradition. So, you know, when I first found out about Picasso and Archipenko – I saw Archipenko's things at the old Whitney [Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY]in 8th grade going down on the school bus. You know, it was just unbelievably exciting and interesting, but it wasn't about a ceramic tradition of anything, it was really about finding out about how to make art.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But in the past, let's say, four decades, there has been kind of a ceramic movement in America that has been very forceful and energetic, which is under this larger umbrella that you speak about.

DALEY: Yes, and you know, you know yourself that when you started with the PCPC [Philadelphia Council of Professional Craftsmen], you know what that consisted of were a whole bunch of strangely maverick human beings in very dispersed places across the country, all pursuing very myopically on one level that there was something inside them that needed to get out or that they had some desire to make something that had not happened yet, and that is what they were at. They weren't – it wasn't a movement.

Charles Abbott never showed us one slide of anything that anyone else had ever made. He would bring in a Mary Scheier pot once in a while and we would go and see the Syracuse show [Ceramic National, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York] and see that this guy up there in RIT [Rochester Institute of Technology, New York], you know – who am I trying to think of that was the teacher there for so many years and his wife [Marguerite Wildenhain] was at Pond Farm [California] –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Oh, Wildenhain. Frans Wildenhain.

DALEY: Yes, Frans Wildenhain.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: You know, when I first saw a Wildenhain pot, I just about climbed up the walls because it was so exciting to me. So I think we were really a bunch of individuals that I think it really – to call it a movement, no one was writing any canons of anything. You know, so many people in that 50-year anniversary issue of *American Craft* cited the fact that when they read Bernard Leach's *A Potters Book* [1940] that it meant so much to them. But none of us had that in our being.

Now there are a few people that studied with him who really studied to become studio potters, but I think a tremendous number of the potters were iconoclasts. I think I was one, I think [Peter] Voulkos was one. You know, there were people who came, like the Natzlers [Gertrud and Otto], who bought from Europe a tradition, and I think we bought into it to some extent. But I think what happened was really a responsive something coming out of art movements. I think we owe much more to modernism as artists than we owe to the craft tradition as craftsmen. I don't know if that makes sense.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It does make a lot of sense.

Does the function of objects play a part in the meaning of your work?

DALEY: Sure. My pots are really pots, and a pot is something you fill up with something and none comes out until it gets to the top, you know? So that is a vessel, and it has to stand up right for that to be true, and all my pots are vessels. Now if you say to me – and also, they all have enormous necessity that they have to be able to get made. So when you make something out of a sheet of clay, which is like uncooked liver, and you make it stand up and resist gravity, it's very hard to do well. And then when you get so you can make the most volume with the least amount of material, that is even more difficult. And then when you can make a pot that has the least amount of material that is a true vessel and enjoys geometries so that it is engaging – totally engaging – around and in and over and through, that is even harder.

And then if you can make those geometries speak about you – I – in some really special way, that where the things that are engaging to me as a person can be personified in the work and meet all those demands – see, that is a wonderful thing I think that all artists have that nobody ever talks about is that the necessity of the constraints that they make in their own spirit about what they will not do, what they want to do. And making that

become extraordinarily clear is the great joy. It's the great joy for the artist and the great joy for the perceiver – that they can feel it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How do you feel when you see your pots being used in a functional manner?

DALEY: Oh, I love it. I love it if somebody wants to do that. The pot I made that they bought out at St. Charles Seminary on Good Friday when they took that animal pot and they bought it out of your gallery, and they put a big thorn tree in the middle of it – a black thorn bush with no green on it, standing in front of the altar. It was a really a powerful – what a functional use for that pot.

When Charlotte got married, we had one of my pots in the living room and I had a bushel of Granny apples – green apples – in it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How would you feel if umbrellas were in it?

DALEY: Oh, I wouldn't care a bit. In fact, a great pot will lend itself to anything and still be happy. You know what I mean? I don't mean – you know, I think that if you make a pot that is going to pour cream, it has to do that. So I think that most utilitarian pots – really great, functional pots – are truly great pots because they have met all three of those requirements. They meet all their own necessities. And art – most art, if it's totally open, doesn't do that – doesn't have that need. But all art – all the arts that address that – the necessity of meeting your own constraints – [Henri] Cartier-Bresson just died, and I heard his – was reading about him, that he would say that some kind of thing about discernment of realizing the geometry, how the geometry of something had to be perfect and the story had to be perfect, and he called it this decisive moment. Well, when you get to the end of making something and you have really accounted for all those things and you can feel it inside yourself – you can't kid yourself about it – it's a marvelous feeling.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And then if it is communicated to an audience, then it is even –

DALEY: Well, you know, it's amazing – you know, it's amazing. Everybody that I have met that is passionate about pots – they don't have to be makers of pots – they all – we all call it having a good eye, you know. And of course, your eyes are the least of it in a way, but the kinds of things that – I'm amazed that when somebody comes to a show, that the persons that I know who will come up and rub the best pot there and smile at me and nod, or whatever they do – they are affirming that they know what I know and I know what they know. It's a marvelous thing that someone that is a real aficionado or a really discerning person about entering the world that you have spent so much time working in, you know. Like, I just spent 250 hours making a big pot that I blew a whole in, although that the persons that came to the show in Chicago and looked at that big tall pot, which is it's sister, and nodded at me, and it was a great joy. When Dan Dailey came up and rubbed that pot and just started smiling, it was just like –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Because he knew and you knew that he knew.

DALEY: That's right, that's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, right. There was –

DALEY: And there was a communication.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, absolutely.

DALEY: Yes, that's right. And all the people that – like Edna Beron, when she went to that symposium that Garth [Clark] gave, and the art historian that was asking the questions.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Philip Rawson?

DALEY: No, it wasn't Rawson. It was –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Clement [Greenberg]?

DALEY: No, no, it wasn't Clement. But anyway – I can't think of his name right at the moment – but they asked Edna what it was, and she said, "I know immediately in my stomach."

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.] I remember that.

DALEY: "I get a tremendously strong feeling, like a cramp in my stomach."

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: – and it's absolutely immediate, and when it happens I know that it is absolutely true. And, you know, years later, reading, I found out – reading in *Scientific American* or something – that you really do have brain cells in your stomach, and it's the flight instinct. They really discovered that there are – there is a thing there that goes off, for instance, when you are – and it was in your mind because – in that part of your system so that when you were terribly frightened, you would learn to run away before you thought. And I thought, that is what Edna had about art. So having that connection.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right. But it is true, you do get an amazing feeling in your abdomen when you –

DALEY: That's right. Well, you have that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And you can't sleep and you think about it and try to come to terms with – it's like love. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's passion.

DALEY: Yes, it is passion, but in a way, it's very unpopular to make your discerning judgments. I always used to tell students that intuition is the most complete kind of knowing as opposed to analytical thought or reason or didactic thought, or whatever. And that is what they were working on developing – that sense where everything came together to make them have real certainty about their judgments.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I agree. [They laugh.] I totally agree.

DALEY: Yes, we are speaking to the choir.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, totally.

DALEY: I have to think about Kuspit. That is who it is.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Oh, right, Donald Kuspit.

DALEY: Donald Kuspit.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Donald Kuspit, right.

DALEY: And he was erudite to the eyeballs, and when Edna said that, it gave me great joy, but there was no answer to it, you know?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: There was no rejoinder to the – and you remember when – I remember when we went to Edna's funeral, and seeing her work in her house, in her home – she had the most diverse, impeccable insight into recognizing the voices that had a kind of clarity.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: She was the only person I knew who could buy a William Daley and a Rebecca Horn in the same day.

DALEY: Okay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.] I mean –

DALEY: Yes. She was uncanny.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I mean, she knew.

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And the essence of each of those works and the essence of those artists, as different as they were, spoke to her –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and she understood.

DALEY: And she also – they spoke to her not by some sense of logic, but through –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right there.

DALEY: Yes, right. Well, anyway, we agree about that. [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It was her famous story about her husband giving her money for a fur coat and she came home –

DALEY: And she bought an Evergood.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Philip Evergood. [Laughs.]

DALEY: That's right. Yes, it was a marvelous painting.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And then she bought a Louise Nevelson wall –

DALEY: Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And he said never again would he fund an acquisition of a fur coat, or the possibility of that.

Does religion, or a sense of spirituality, play a role in your art? What would you say?

DALEY: I say yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Or in your life even?

DALEY: I think that the big rub comes in how you define religion. I think every artist that gets to the bottom of something or managed to isolate something and offer it back to – in community, with great clarity or sensitivity or wit or feeling so that other people can communicate to him back in this connection that we were just talking about between the work and the maker and the audience or the owner, or whatever. Everyone that does that – that in itself is a spiritual journey. You can't do that without – now whether that means you are Orthodox in some faith or whatever, I'm not – I don't – to me spirituality and being religious is not about that.

Now, I was lucky that I grew up with a father that, you know, adored Franklin Roosevelt, but if he wasn't talking about Roosevelt, he thought J.C. was – that Jesus was a pretty hot property. And so in a way, his religious life in terms of – was a very real powerful thing in his thing, and I think growing up in that – but in a way, he was also unorthodox. I mean, he believed in the canons of the Catholic Church in lots of ways, but he despised more priests than he liked, okay? So I thought of him as being a very spiritual man, and also in terms of his actions.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But also, Bill, you were also very spiritual, and you were also very strong in the way which you addressed the accoutrements of the church, and I remember the baptismal fonts that you made. You were –

DALEY: Oh, well, that's a great –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, but you are drawn to that and you find a strength in responding to those ceremonies and making work that responds to it. Or perhaps even last December, the wreaths that you made for the cemetery, and each one was a work of art.

DALEY: Yes, but all of those – every symbolic act that is done to give a form to the ineffable, okay – to spirit – is art, and it' a religious act – I mean, that is how I'm trying to describe it. So if I can make a Baptismal font and somebody says, yes, and it's eight-sided and all these guys have made it because it stood for the eight day – the first day of new life – might be a good Monday teaching instead of the hereafter, and that is – and if that geometry can signify that, and then to be able to use that and make a Baptismal font for a community of worshippers who by – whose faith, tradition embodies that symbolization – it's a great treat to do.

And every time I have had a chance to do that, I just adore doing it because I'm really inside something. And all of the art that comes out of that – a lot of it is dead, you know. I mean, a lot of people make ritualistic art and think that the symbols are – if you use a triangle you are talking about the Trinity, and if you put that in a vestment or something. But unless you embody that triangle, it's part of yourself that you have dug up out of somewhere that makes it done in a way that where it's singular, peculiar to either there or the people there or the place or the time or your own aberrations.

And when I made the font at St. – for my church – I made it for Akaru Amachi (ph), who was a Nigerian veterinarian who had a booming heart attack at 50. But when I made the tunnel through the thing so that the kids could look at each other through the bottom of the font, I got it out of Hindu mythology of Nandi the bull – or the sacred cow – being in the center of the cross, but being looked at down the tunnels of the temple. So anyway – or looking at it through the idea of Janus – Janus is the god – Celtic god of the doors who the Romans turned into January. But it meant that you could – if you were in the doorway looking forward or looking backwards, so

he was a kind of time god, but also he is a perfect thing for baptism because it's looking forward and backward to live a life that is blessed. So I didn't have any qualms about putting a tunnel through there. I didn't care if the Episcopalians liked it or not. It wasn't an issue.

Can you see – I mean, in other words, I added something to the font. I made a circle of animals around the font because Akaru was a veterinarian, and I would make a chain of things. Later on, I found out that the first baptism of the world was the flood in the Old Testament – cleansing the world by water. But when I made the circle, I made it for my – I made a wheel of animals as continuousness. But later on, I was able to say, "Yes, I really was loading the ark," but I didn't have that in my mind because I didn't know it. So the story and the form can be different, and the artist needs to add to the form if he is a sculptor or a form-maker, or add to the story, or both. So each time an artist brings himself to making something and adds to the traditions – if it's part of a tradition – he is involved in a sacred quest.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How would you define religion?

DALEY: I would define religion as people who are engaged in that deeply, and I don't care what it is. It can be what they do when they work. If somebody really can invest – like, if a baker can really, deeply be invested in making magnificent bread – now you can say, "Well, he is really an artist." I would say, "He really is a religious person," okay, so that people that can have enough avidity in the days to live them with the kind of intensity that one would romantically ascribe to an artist, maybe – one of the things that artists do is learn how to overcome resistance enough so that they can keep having a sense of wonder about the days. It's very hard to do now with all the terrible things that's happening to us.

So I really think, in a way, defining religion is always too – way too parochial – way too parochial. But the real wonder of being here, you know, is that, like, consciousness is such an unbelievable gift that anybody that isn't religious is crazy. I mean – well, they are if they are grateful for it and they use it well. You could say, well, is that ethical or not? I'm not worried about that. I don't know if that makes sense, what I'm saying, that – so that I think there are a lot of irreligious people in church all the time, and there are a lot of marvelously religious persons who don't go.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So we are really talking about commitment and passion –

DALEY: Yep.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – you know, integrity.

DALEY: And trying to be accountable for those feelings.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, right. Those are the real issues, and those are the issues that are central to your teaching, your life with your family, your work, your relationship with your students.

DALEY: Well, the worst part about it is that probably maybe the religious part is coming is that you can't do it. You can't succeed at it. You can aspire to it, but you can't really pull it off, you know? And sometimes in art, you can pull off the illusion that that is possible, you know? But in some ways, almost everybody really – you know, it sounds terribly wonkish but we really are all maggots. You know what I mean? Our best efforts are pretty paltry. I mean, I keep thinking about that about art all the time. When I see guys that I think are really the unbelievable artists, I always say to myself, "Boy, Daley, what are you doing?" You know?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: When I saw those pots in Crete two years ago –

DALEY: Yes, yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I wondered, why? [Laughs.]

DALEY: Yes, yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I thought, why? Why am I even looking or caring about contemporary pots?

DALEY: That's right. So in a way, you can't – in other words, failing isn't part of it. Trying to make it happen is what is part of it, you know. And when you get even the corners of it going, it's a great joy, you know.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's true.

DALEY: You are really trying to give it some kind of shape to possibility. I don't know who said it. Some guy said that he was looking for the place where temperament and possibility intersected as an aspiration, and to me, that is the religious quest. I mean, that is the spiritual quest of finding the places where your own temperament and the possibility of being deeply in community meet each other, or cross or join so that you are in exchange or

you are part of a chain or you are part of a continuance. Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: This has nothing to do with that conversation, but I went to church with the Earle's [James and Barbara Earle] last Sunday in Mantoloking [New Jersey] – an old church made of wood, and the interior was like an old Norwegian stave church –

DALEY: Oh, right. Oh, yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – with scallops of wood from 1856 –

DALEY: Oh, nice.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – or 1860, and it was the children's – it was their day, and they were singing and they were reading from the text, and the rains outside were torrential and pouring, and –

DALEY: It was a really moving experience.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I had an amazing time. I don't think I had such a good time in years. It was amazing.

DALEY: Well, I go to church every Sunday and –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But I don't. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, you know, I don't always tune in either, but every once in a while, things – I really realize that I have another way of making connection.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You know, I'm not Christian, and they were singing, "Let My People Go" – [laughs] – and there I was in the midst of this amazing, amazing experience. I wanted to go back.

DALEY: When they were saying that, those were the people that were trying to get out of Egypt.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right. [Laughs.]

DALEY: So you were right in your own faith tradition.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: As I left the church, I walked out in a torrential rainstorm, I turned to Barbara Earle and I said, "I haven't had such a good time in years."

DALEY: Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It was very special, just the connecting, the communication among all of the celebrants that were there, and it's what you're talking about.

DALEY: Well, I find a lot of – I belong to a group at church of a kind of search for new Christianity – I mean, of modern readings of the gospels and discerning who wrote them and when they happened and what their agenda was for having written them and so on. But so much of what we are talking about in terms of formalized religion really has – over time, and in history – is tremendously divisive. I mean, you think of the Islamic thing and Christian right at the present moment. You know, they are not forces for unity; they are forces for isolation, and it's just kind of a shame.

So I think you can make – I guess William James wrote a book about religion that was – I can't remember the name of it now, but an awful lot – he claimed that most of the great things that happened in the name of religious thought. You could also make an argument for an awful lot of the things that are most troublesome are centered in the wrong kind of religious thought. So I like the generalization that all artists that are really good are religious. They are spiritual beings, and that is good enough.

[Audio break.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: This is tape number three.

How has the market for American craft changed in your lifetime?

DALEY: Well, this is the first boring question that we have had. I mean, the other ones were pretty interesting, but –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: This could be a question that gives you a point of departure to really discuss the amazing change in patronage as well as the market.

DALEY: I think that the awareness of what it is that people do when they make things has shifted enormously, and that the number of discerning people who appreciate and enjoy it has increased enormously. I think that, you know, the education efforts of so many people since the war have brought that about. And when I think of Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb, you know, giving her whole fortune to making people in America aware of what we are interested in.

There is a whole – I mean, and a lot of people when I think about people like Victor D'Amico at the Museum of Modern Art in the '40s having classes for children, and people a Greenwich House [New York, NY] doing the same kind of thing, people at Penland having courses and so on. So this has been going on for a long time, and I think since the war it has accelerated enormously that the notion of the – again, the GI Bill – of the number of persons who wished to do something with their lives, and had an opportunity through education. The increase in the number of schools that let people learn how to make things in order to become artists instead of, say, in the industrial arts attitude where you were being trained to work – do a specific task and be useful – that you could use in other ways.

Then a number of people have gone, or turned around, and that is where I happen to be in a way, and my having opportunity to teach and continue doing it. That has happened over and over again, and I think – well, when I started, the kind of store, whatever you want – the co-op at Woodstock, New York, was the only place you could take a pot to offer it in community – either that or you could go down to see Florence Eastman at America House [New York, NY].

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: Then in New York City, there was one gallery that handled work, or you could go to Bonnier's occasionally at – and –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: See some Scandinavian work.

DALEY: – see some Scandinavian – but it just wasn't – there wasn't any place that you could even offer it, and there wasn't any place that you could see it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH : Until Shop One in Rochester was opened.

DALEY: Yes, in Rochester. But anyway, so the – and then what you have done, and Alice Westphal's efforts and, you know.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But just think of the difference of craft fairs, when you think of Mount Snow [Vermont] in the '60s, when craft fairs were rather small and intimate and drew major figures of the field as part of the fair, and think of the craft fair today, and think of how that has altered along the way.

DALEY: Oh, I think that the – I think the scale of it has changed enormously, and the work has changed. Well, you know, the – if making work – if the purpose of making work is to sell it, then we have succeeded enormously. If the purpose of making work is to make art, which people are going to take pleasure in or gain sustenance from or whatever, then that maybe is another question.

One of the things that I felt that as the craft fair thing emerge and kept growing, that it really would make a chance for a whole kind of community of makers to – [audio break, tape change] – do really good work and be useful and make beautiful things that would give – embody spirit and people would enjoy much more widely. And I think in a lot of ways that has happened, but I also think along with it the emphasis has shifted. But it's not only shifted in terms of the fairs, it's – on all levels the idea of a person making something to have a market, it's different.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But if that market was controlled by a small community and they could satisfy the community, then the aesthetics would remain constant. When the market becomes national and there are orders to be filled, something happens, because it does become something else.

DALEY: I don't know if that's why it happens. You know, I know a lot of people that are making marvelous pots and people want to have them, and the people that are making the pots are doing what they think is important; they're doing it with real conviction and real quality, and they're quite successful, I think. It's just I think there are a lot of other people, though, who are making things, and the purpose of their making them is different. It's really to have a market. And I don't know what the answer to it is, but it's an interior thing to me that – how you get so you make things that – I think the biggest part of it is educational, that one can develop a discernment on the part of an audience more deeply, and that's what we're not doing. Everything is getting to be sound bites and superficial. And our grade school programs and – you know, we don't have – craft programs in schools are not increasing; they're diminishing. And the idea of the visual arts being part of the life of everyone's education is very, very unusual.

You know, visual arts are crafts or the making – being discerning about things that are made by people is not keeping up with the way in which one can promote or present their information. Maybe the Internet will help change that; I don't know. I don't think there's – you need to have larger and larger discerning audiences to have larger and larger numbers of persons making objects that merit the sermon. And we're not putting our energies into that in terms of education. Arts education is educating people in the ways that they think. The way your mind works is the way artists are. And we're not doing that, for the most part. We're really dealing with information all the time; we're not dealing with formation. So I don't think we have – we're not getting more and more people who are in on it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: If you think about the so-called market for American craft, you think about the late '60s and the '70s. There was a generation at that time that was really being educated.

DALEY: Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And that generation is now retiring and many of those people are discussing the fact that the generation that follows them doesn't have the same kind of commitment to the work.

DALEY: That's right. But the – well, we can take you as a case in point. When you did 1625 Spruce Street you had a gallery. But when you're a gallery – maybe you'll disagree with me – it wasn't about selling things.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's correct.

DALEY: Your gallery was really an educational outpost, and people came down Spruce Street and went in there, and you shared with them the things that were exciting to you, and you spoke to that, and I think some people acquired things. But what you were about, the central purpose of it, was not that you were marketing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It wasn't a shop.

DALEY: Okay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No. It was a commitment to a group of artists and their work –

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and to their ideas.

DALEY: But in terms of the craft movement I think all of the people were doing that too, the people that had shops. A person that had a shop didn't have – wasn't able to deal with the merchandising techniques that have got a lot of mass kind of appeal. I mean, it was really for a small group. And in some ways they were educating their customers to be responsive to what it was they offered.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely.

DALEY: And I think maybe that changed.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How has it changed?

DALEY: I don't know, because I think in some ways that the kind of media exposure it involves, in some ways, early on in the '60s there were maybe feature articles in the paper in the cultural section or something of this sort, but there weren't ads on TV or on radio about the scale of something. For an artist now to be a participant in Baltimore and how much it costs to go there and do that, for the booth fees and all the rest of it, and the advertising for the people that are traveling, for the people – the advertising to get the word out, to get the people to come in, it gets bigger and bigger and bigger, but it's not about the – the jury system is much more open in a way, and the values that it espouses are not as clear.

So I think that that's one of the things that happened and there's no longer the education of a discerning group about what the real wondrous work is.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: There's also been a massive proliferation of artists.

DALEY: Oh, yes, absolutely.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Somebody once told me that the Museum of Modern Art gave a party for all the artists in New York in the late '40s and there were 50 people in attendance. Can you imagine if MOMA gave a party for the artists in New York today, what the attendance would be?

DALEY: It would be thousands.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: True.

DALEY: No, I think that's true. But in order for that to be – for that work to be vibrant and engaging and call for people to give themselves to it and to find a responsive chord that we were talking about earlier, you'd really have to do enormous amounts of education, so that when a kid was in first, second, third, fourth, right up through high school, this was part of their life.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And you have to have institutions that will have exhibitions that will also support the education of the audience.

DALEY: That's right. We're not giving priority to that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, not at all.

Would you like to describe your relationship with dealers?

DALEY: Oh, yes, that's simple.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's a word that I really don't like, but I would prefer to say with those people who have served you and supported you in a gallery situation.

DALEY: Well, the notion of a dealer is something that is a card person that's a skilled manipulator –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.] Right. When Allan Frumkin called me a dealer – I think it was in the early '80s he asked me how I liked being a dealer and I started to cry.

DALEY: Yes, well, I agree. You know –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: However, would you like to describe the relationship with dealers?

DALEY: Yes, the relationships with all the people that you have in your life as an artist need to have the same care and attention that all other human beings are supposed to have in your life if you're really trying to live a good life. I'd say you have people that are interested in what you're interested in, who care that you have mutual benefits to that activity, and that you serve each other well to bring those about. And in that sense you can speak about artists who don't honor the people that they are in a relationship with and you can speak about people who are – the persons that present that work to a public who don't honor the artists as they should.

So I just don't – I think in some ways that it's difficult because it's a very small number of persons that have this interest, as we've just said, and then finding – and the number of people who want to be participants keeps getting larger and larger. But I find that the persons that are in accord with the people that present their work over time, that there's a mutual thing going on that's beneficial.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you think the division of duties between the artist and the dealer is a good division?

DALEY: I think the person that has to present the work and make a case for that work and be persuasive with others because they're persuaded themselves, that that's one task. I think making the work and being engaged in that is another task, and they're different, and they compliment each other, and if you don't have all parts of it you don't have a complete system. They way institutions are short-stopping the gallery presenters, or whoever they are; the number of places that are having fundraisers and where the artists give their work and sell it through a fundraising thing and the persons that – their agents, if you wish to call them that, or their enablers – we call them enablers – that's the gallery persons – you know, the very institutions that are trying to make money or earn funds are doing it at the expense of the galleries.

So the thing all the way around is a whole bunch of people scrambling for a small piece of a small pie and not honoring each other. I don't know how many benefits – I really could take all the work that I can produce in any given year and do it to help out some organization that's supposedly helping art, but for the most part it's not about helping the artists, and oftentimes at the expense of the people who represent the artists.

So I think that in a way, that in the best possible of worlds, that you could have a lot of very critical kind of thought about how one ought to proceed in the world of the arts in terms of where everyone honors everyone else. I mean, it sounds Pollyannic, but you see it all the time. The person that has a show for artisans and lets a lot of people in more people in than can sell their work, and the artist goes in hoc to rent a space and all the rest of it, and the person that's renting the space makes their earning by the amount of spaces they sell, and the person that goes to the fair and sells nothing pays the same amount as the person that sells a lot, and that's okay – it's free enterprise. And in a way it's not fair.

The people that hold the show have a different goal than the artists that are in the show. So I'm not – no one can

take everyone into a gallery that wishes to be in it, but if somebody is in a gallery, it's the job of the person that's in the gallery, the person that's the enabler, to represent all those people equally and fairly.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely.

DALEY: That's right. And very often, taking a person's work on consignment and using it as merchandise and not giving people access to the things that will help them be perceived as an artist more clearly, that's not honorable.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I'm not quite sure I understood what you said.

DALEY: I mean, I know in my own past that people would take your work on consignment and not present it or not offer it with clarity or –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Not exhibit it appropriately.

DALEY: Not exhibit it, not speak to it, and just have it there, you know? They're not really serving the artist when they're doing that; they're really – the idea of buying something wholesale is not what that relationship is about.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's another one of my least favorite words.

DALEY: Yes, no, sure, of course.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: So what the arrangements are for transactions really depends on the honor of the people that are making it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: So the people that plan for it and the people that organize these things really have to think about whether their objectives – whether these various alliances, or whatever we call them – councils, alliances and so on – are they really about promoting art?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But the role of a good dealer or gallery person goes way beyond just selling art.

DALEY: Of course. It's representing the artist in a public forum –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's right.

DALEY: – to the artist's benefit, and if the artist is successful, so will the person presenting them be successful.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And also representing an artist, if you believe in them, even if they are not successful.

DALEY: Well, of course. Of course. One of the things that happens also is that the people having conviction about what they're doing, they can't be good artists unless they do, and the people that represent them have to have the same sense. Otherwise they shouldn't represent them.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely.

DALEY: So to me that's what it's about.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: In your own working environment, what are the qualities of your environment, and what is your studio like? What are the things that you find necessary for your personality in order to work?

DALEY: For me, the place that – you need to have a place that's safe to work. And you don't need much. You need light, you need water, you need to be warm, you need various tools. My whole career has been, you know, give me a rolling pin and a table and bag of clay and some time and I could make something. So I've never had a classy studio.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, but you've had a studio in your home.

DALEY: I've always – I've had no overhead. It's called a cellar.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Cellar door. [Laughs.]

DALEY: That's right. And now I have a special cellar door so that you can go in and out. But I've always had a safe place to be in. It's called a home. And when the kids were little they could come and get clay and I could

help put them to bed and Cate would come and help me – give me a crit. And so I've had the best possible kind of studio life, and most of the times – and it still is, I think – an extremely modest kind of space. But, really, it's very freeing because if I do any work it doesn't cost me any more than if I don't do any work. I don't have any overhead. I mean, I have overhead because I'm part of a family, but my art life, it's always begun by taking money out of the house money. I mean, my art life was subsidized by the house money, okay?

So I think I have a marvelous studio, quite frankly. It's not very fancy but it's grand.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And it's a fabulous studio and there's a wonderful visual sense of order in the studio –

DALEY: Well, yes. Thanks to Cate.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – that is an extension of the work itself.

DALEY: That's right. But, I mean, it's a working, workable place. And when Dan Dailey came and did an architectural commission with me and then 25 years later I went to visit Dan – he was teaching at Mass Art and I went to his studio and he took me down in the cellar. And stood at the cellar steps and started laughing. I mean, I was immensely pleased to see how much fantastic work that he was doing in this very modest place.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Is his studio still a cellar?

DALEY: Oh, no, it's a great big, huge barn up near Exeter Academy [Exeter, New Hampshire]–

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: – and it's – but at that time it really was. So for me, I've been tremendously advantaged by being able to make whatever I wanted, even when nobody wanted it, because I haven't had any expense to meet.

[Breaks to answer phone.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Rudolf] Staffel also worked in his cellar on East Oak Lane.

DALEY: Yes, right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I remember that.

DALEY: Absolutely. So in a way, to me, the idea – my studio has always been very close to home and maybe I could work two hours or go down after supper, whatever. Some of the best times of working in my studio used to be Sunday evenings. And I'd listen to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and be working on a pot in a one-car garage that I had in Feasterville [Pennsylvania]. It was celestial.

So the studio is psychic space. Like I don't like letting anybody into my studio. When the American Craft Council came to [Warren] Seelig's up around the corner, I wouldn't let anybody come down to my studio. I don't – I like my friends to come and I'm not trying to be exclusive, but I very seldom will let anybody see my workspace.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you know what, Bill? I feel –

DALEY: I think of it just like a bedroom.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I feel that way about my home.

DALEY: Okay, right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's like those whom I invite –

DALEY: Right. That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Not the tourists. [Laughs.]

DALEY: But a studio is a psychic space.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So is a home.

DALEY: Well, that's why I've always –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: A home is a psychic space.

DALEY: I've had the best studio in the world, and that's the cellar. When I put windows in it so I could see that –

my first studios I couldn't tell whether it was raining or spring or winter, because you couldn't see out the windows. They were cellar windows. When I got this house I put new windows in. I dug the bricks out and built bigger windows. So now, anyplace you look you can look out and see the garden.

Well, anyway, we answered that one fast.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.] That's true. That's true.

Is there a community that has been important to your development as an artist?

DALEY: Oh, I think there is, and that community for me has come about through my teaching, that I really became – learned how to be an artist by being around artists, and they were all – and they happened to be teachers. They were teachers, so that both informationally and socially and artistically being – having – being with them and among them and learning from them about all aspects of doing – being connected with the Philadelphia College of Art for 30 years, and each community I've been in, being the Iowa State Teacher's College and State University of New York at New Paltz and Fredonia – each time I've been in the community of artists, people aspiring to become artists who were teachers, this has been the community that has sustained me: learning, teaching with really great teachers who knew a lot about art, who were teaching me while we were both trying to teach, period, and that exchange over a long period of time of people being exemplars, like getting to know people like Morris Bird and Larry Day and see how they conducted themselves as artists: what they did and how they did it. It was just a – being with Bill Parry, you know, who I think is one of the greatest teachers I ever knew, and also just being in his presence and trying to address teaching every day with him – the same way with Dick Reinhardt. It was just a marvelous kind of experience.

And then Philadelphia, as you know well, that went beyond just a school that the students, the teachers in the other schools who were craftsmen – Bob Winokur and so on and so on and so on, we were all a community early on, and you were part of that community as well. And then it gradually got to be also so that the people who cared a lot about crafts, or what we did, were also part of it. So when you had your gallery at 1625 Spruce Street – that little paper I wrote about that, that you went to an opening and the discerning people who cared about what you did, the people – your colleagues in your school cared about it, your students and the people in the other schools that cared about it were all there. And that's – when we met that was the occasion, and that was a marvelously supportive kind of environment to be in. And I've always kind of had that. I mean, I think that's enormously important.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And they painted the stands.

DALEY: Yes, well, it wasn't the – it's kind of interesting; you talk about presenting your work. The first one-person show I had was at NYU and Jules Olitski gave me the show in the Education Gallery. So I had – I made the cases. I carried them to New York City from New Paltz. I painted the gallery and put up the show and had the opening. [Laughs.] And I loved it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But didn't you also exhibit with Arnold Glimcher?

DALEY: Well, I had a show at the Pace Gallery in Boston also –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: And I didn't have to do that. But what I'm saying is everyone really was enormously willing to do everything that needed to be done. You know, when you had an opening, the last thing you did were clean the toilets.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, and wash the floors.

DALEY: That's right. That's right. And somebody had to go and buy the jug wine and –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: But, I mean, it really was a communal effort of conviction that had – and it was extremely professional as well, but it was – in way it was about the beginnings of things.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I remember the first time somebody bought something and I didn't have any money in the gallery and I had to give them a check for $7 and change. [Laughs.]

DALEY: But I'm saying, that sense of being in a community –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, absolutely.

DALEY: – and the interconnectedness of all the parts of that community was very, very exciting and very satisfying, and very supportive.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, and it also brought the clients, the patrons, the students and the artists together as one family.

DALEY: That's right. That's right. That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And there was no division. Everybody was equal. Everybody spoke to each other; everybody discussed ideas with each other.

DALEY: Yes, there were no openings for the people that gave the most so they were patrons – special openings. [They laugh.] Every opening was special. Well, they were special because, you know, that was a great social occasion and you couldn't get anybody to go home. I remember at 1625 Spruce Street where in the middle of – you would have an opening in June or July just before school ended and the people would be lined up outside and the whole gallery would be loaded with people and just totally jammed.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How do we do that again? How does that – how do we create that kind of camaraderie and energy again?

DALEY: Well, in a way, for me I don't want it. I don't mean it – I see it nostalgically in some ways but –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, but I mean for this generation. How do you –

DALEY: Well, they have – they're doing it. They're doing it and we're just not part of it. It's happening.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Oh, all right.

DALEY: No, it's just like the *The Journey to the East* [1932]. Was it *The Journey to the East*? Yes, Hesse's story of – the journey is still going on but we're not –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: We're not there.

DALEY: We're not.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No.

DALEY: Like Nick Kripal has just bought a new building in the city for a co-op. But anyway.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's different.

DALEY: It is, it's just different, but it's still happening. So when Nick Kripal has his opening, I don't have a great need to be present. I mean, I just don't. I don't even want to use my energy doing that. So when things happen in the city and I say, "You know, I really should go to that," and oftentimes I say, "Yes, but I just feel like it," which I think is okay. I'm not sad about it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I understand. It's moving on.

DALEY: Yes, right. It's the "tired" in "retirement." [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Where does American craft, or American ceramics rank on an international scale? And is the field moving in any obvious direction or not?

DALEY: Oh, I think that, you know, in terms of – since the war that what happened in American crafts has been – had a really profound influence on the way crafts were perceived in the rest of the world. I think that's still going on.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I think in particular in ceramics, that the American position –

DALEY: Yes. I think in the United States that the ceramic edge of it has sort of been the leading edge all the time, but if you think of what's happening now in the wood-turning world, you know, Albert LeCoff's group – I mean, the last two weeks they've had people down at PCA this summer from all over the world having a symposium. So that the energies in it I think that are still being generated – you know, a lot of the – if you think of Haystack and Anderson Ranch and Penland and the number of people that come from Europe and all around the world to go to the summer sessions and so on, it's still a pretty amazing thing.

So I think that our leadership has been pretty profound in a way, organizationally, but I also think in terms of the work. I mean, when I think of that *Petrified Pizza* that is sitting over there – it's in the bedroom – apart from the

1950s and how strange it was for the time – an unbelievably ordinary pot now, but in terms of the way one looks at what ceramics can be about now as opposed to in 1955 or 1960, it's enormously – it's shifted enormously, and I think it's largely been due to what people have done here.

So I think we've contributed. Now, to say that – if I start thinking about really fantastic ceramic artists, I don't think that they're all here. You know, Korea and –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Korea – Asian –

DALEY: They're all right. And I think somebody like Jan van der Vaart and people in Holland, you know, people in France, people in England, I think they're amazing in the international kind of community of makers.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But the great diversity that exists in this continent is extraordinary, and the expansiveness in which the –

DALEY: No, that's true.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – medium has been explored has been extraordinary, just as in metals it has been extraordinary in Europe.

DALEY: Right. Well, I think the idea of the kind of multiplicity of precedents are very broad, but I think that comes out of what's happened because of collegiate education, if you want to talk about it. It's fostered that. It's also made for lots of strange apparitions too.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely. [Laughs.] We'll discuss that.

What are the most powerful influences in your career? And we're talking about people, art movements, technology.

DALEY: Well, I think books would have to be right up there at the beginning of it. And I think museums would have to be right up there in the beginning of it, over time. And then the next thing I'd do is kind of I'd say kind of colleagues, associates, people, a passion to be with that are inspired to me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And students.

DALEY: Well, I count them along with – I think that the – there's the passers and the receivers. If you think about that, there aren't any teachers. But the people that can catch passes are not just students and the people that throw passes are not just teachers. It's a kind of reciprocal thing that goes on all the time.

Like, I know when I was teaching experimental design classes, I learned way more than the students by seeing the scope of the ideas that they were willing to entertain and trying to internalize that and respond to it. And I'm the same way with fellow teachers. I learn probably more about form from watching Bill Parry as an artist and as a teacher, and [Marcus Aurelius] Renzetti and Rinehart and so on than I learned from my teacher teachers – you know, I learned from Abbott. So I think that the community thing, again, people.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But it's also because you allow certain individuals to become close to you and the dynamics of that exchange become greater.

DALEY: Well, I think in a way, if you're in school, that there's a set of conventions that you're all operating under that permit you to exchange things at very low risk, and if you're willing to venture, you have a very permissive and understanding climate that you're living in that allows you to find out what you don't know yet and learn from each other. That's the essence of what a school is about is lowering the level of risk so that you can venture, and being encourage to do that and to avoid failure by being intelligent and having insight and learning how to have insight and take chances and have good outcomes. I mean, there's some kind of strange reciprocity going on.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But you found, in [Richard] Reinhardt in particular, a soul mate, on so many different levels.

DALEY: Well, I did because he was like a big brother, you know. I mean, the thing about it, I never realized that he had a brother that was killed in the war and his name was Billy. So every once in a while over the years he would say, "Now, Billy" – in fact, I didn't realize it until after his death that in some ways I was his younger brother. So you're absolutely right –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That there was a greater attachment between the two of you even beyond that –

DALEY: Oh, I think so – I think so.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – you know, even in your intellectual thinking and your aesthetic sensibilities and how you taught and what those criteria for teaching were.

DALEY: Well, I think there were things that – you know, in some ways Bill Parry was my guru and Dick was my teacher in terms of my attitudes about duty and rightness and commitment and that kind of thing. It's an interesting thing. And Dick's attitudes about making and process were absolutely extraordinary, and he was such an unbelievable exemplar. I mean, when he would say, "Bill, do you like this better than making stuff?" And Renzetti of course was the same way. I mean, they were poets of making.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And Petras Vaskys.

DALEY: Oh, Petras.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes.

DALEY: But Petras was much more than just a marvelous maker too. Petras was a personification of a spirit on Earth that no one – there was no one like him. He was so wise and so smart and so contained in a way that he would know what was coming down weeks before it even dawned on me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And he was the most gentle of all human beings.

DALEY: That's right, and he would never speak to it until someone began to ask him about it. Yes, right. Absolutely.

Well, those are the biggest things, more than the books and more than the museums. But developing discernment is a big part of having a career, and associating with people who think that that's important is that – going in – PCA, in the early days, of going to the lunchroom and brown-bagging it and listening to the discourse and hearing people discussing something about art for the hour and a half that you could linger there was unbelievable. I thought, you know, unless somebody nails me to the stake I'll never say a word in this company. I mean, it really was so magnificent to be a listener. And it made any seminar that I was in at Columbia or any other place seem like Cream of Wheat. And discussions I had in taverns at art school as a veteran, drinking Pickwick Ale, about whether Picasso was better than Matisse, or whatever – you know, unbelievable kind of exchanges.

And that's what I think is so magnificent with having been part of – in a community.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And when the community has expanded beyond Philadelphia, for instance, the relationships that have developed with people like Yvonne Joris as a result of her attachment to your work, how do you perceive that?

DALEY: Well, I feel that like my going into that thing at the Renwick [Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.] and that there are people there that I have come to know over time who regard what I've done and I regard them, it makes you feel that you're part of some larger community, which is very confirming. I just got asked to make the closing remarks at NCECA [National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts] in Baltimore. It's very exciting to me to be invited. But when the wood people had the thing with Dan Jackson they asked me to give a lecture on what I thought about furniture.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: When is NCECA?

DALEY: March sometime – early March.

And in a way, if you go to these wood – this wood community and see also there people like Alphonse Mattia and students, but also know so many of these – like Jere Osgood and all these artists through my experiences with them, it's very confirming. I feel like I am an older person in a community of people where we have mutual regard and interest.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, and that media has nothing to do with it.

DALEY: No, no, it's not about media, but it's very much about discerning, being regarded as someone that's discerning and having professed by making as someone who is discerning. And that's the thing that you exchange and you like doing – workshops all over the country. I'm just amazed always when I see somebody that I don't know at all in a week and just by watching them work and seeing the moves that they're making – and sometimes it might be a workshop of all pros, or it might be a workshop of all students, or it might be all graduate students, or it might be all high school students. It's amazing how immediately you build in this sense of both trust and belief in what you're experiencing. And the quality of that spirit, as manifested in what's being done, is so clear that it makes you – well, it makes you relate to these persons much more deeply, and you're part of some kind of real esoteric society, and it's wonderful.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: What do you see as the place of universities in the American craft movement, and specifically for artists working in ceramics?

DALEY: Let's see, one kind of enormous worry, that it's getting so that the public education is being called into question again, so that it's only going to be for the elitist persons that can afford it. So that scares me.

The greatest thing that happened for crafts education is public education: community colleges. And that's not to say that there are – there are four-year places that are extraordinary and have an extraordinary history – a place like Alfred [New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, Alfred, New York], you know? The University of the Arts [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania], if you think of Edmund DeForest Curtis and the program that he had in the '20s, and it's a long history, it makes it extraordinary. [Audio break.] But I think in some ways, public access to this.

So in a lot of ways, the art centers, places like Cheltenham Art Center [Cheltenham, Pennsylvania] and places all over the country –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Wallingford.

DALEY: Wallingford [Wallingford Art Center, Wallingford, Pennsylvania] – and then a lot of them are commercial now. They're really clay houses that are selling supplies and giving workshops. But that kind of underlying energy I think is an amazing kind of thing that's a feeder for this. And having places where one can go and study intensely in a university setting I think is enormously important. I think a lot of times that they have it backwards. I think that the beginning part, they should – graduate school should be undergraduate, and then undergraduate school should be graduate. In other words, you ought to be able to go to undergraduate school and specialize – just do one thing until it comes out your ears. And then you ought to go to graduate school and diversify and go deeply and learn general things. Learn more academic things; learn all the connections and so on.

So that's another whole topic, but arts education – the idea of learning more and more about less and less at the end I think is very unsound.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's true. But also, in the university, the involvement in the crafts in studio work are always electives; they're never majors – in the university structures.

DALEY: Well, Penn now has a – Penn has a –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's not a major.

DALEY: Yes, I think it is. [Audio break, tape change.] I think you can major in it. Well in the real esoteric Ivy League places you can't even take it for credit.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Toshiko [Takaezu] taught at Princeton for years, but it was a studio.

DALEY: Yes, that's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But the main problem I have is with the academic section in the art history departments. They'll teach the history of video, they'll teach the history of film, but they will not allow the history of the craft movement to infiltrate into the history of 20th century art.

DALEY: Oh, I think that the politics of arts education, you know, are pretty entrenched. So you're right. Most of the people don't teach it because they don't know anything about it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: They have to begin –

DALEY: No, I understand.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: They have to have colloquiums in which they invite people –

DALEY: I agree – I agree.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – in to discuss these issues.

DALEY: I agree.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How has your work been received over time? In your opinion, who are the most significant writers in the field of American craft and why is their writing meaningful to you? Let's begin with how has your work been received over time?

DALEY: Well, my work – you know, I've been sort of a sleeper in a way. Over a long period of time I've just been working, and over a long period of time the perceptions about what I've done and I'm doing seems to, from my point of view, get clearer and become more convincing to both myself and the people who've supported what I've done. And I think people who have helped me – people like you and others who have leant their energies to being supportive of that are prevailing in terms of – so in that sense I have a very good feeling about – I also have a feeling of enormous kind of arrogance that I have real certainty – and I've had it for a long time – that what I'm doing is about something that's extremely primary. And I have deep belief that people that do that and manage it somehow will persist. Now, I guess that's having belief and having trust, and I really feel that. So, in a way I feel it doesn't even really matter. That's terrible to say.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But it does matter.

DALEY: Well, it does matter – it matters in the deepest sense that it gives me enormous joy when somebody whom I admire as being discerning makes judgments about what I do that confirm my life.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I remember the first thing –

DALEY: And, you know, it's very, very important to me – it's like everything, but it doesn't – it's not about a career thing in terms of – in a way I don't see any way that the work, if it's good, will live on its own as it goes – if it gets out in the world. And that's sort of my faith in it. Maybe that's naïve, but I think that politics of approval are much too complicated to be able to figure out by having a career. I mean, if you do it as though you're having a career, I think it's really that you're really living a life.

So, like after I had the traveling shows in some ways I thought, well, I said everything I wanted to say, and now I find that –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You didn't.

DALEY: No, I haven't.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You haven't.

DALEY: And maybe the things I might find out next might be the best things I'll find out ever. And I have a feeling that if I find them out and offer them, there will be someone to help present them, like what you're doing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Maybe those few years of just growing and just staying with the paper really were years of gestation for you, because what's happened now is sort of extraordinary; you've gone way beyond, you know, those forms that you did 10 years ago. They're much more robust, they're more adventuresome, they're taking chances with balance. You're cutting into surfaces.

DALEY: Well, it's not even a matter of what you're doing and what you're not, but in a way it's somehow how you're bottoming out in terms of what it is that you're about, and I think that's neat in a sense.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I'm suddenly thinking of the first time.

DALEY: Having that permission is an enormous permission, you know, that so few people get that permission. And I'm really – I went down to the Veterans' Hospital last week and I saw my peers there, people in my age group and, you know, I really came home and I thought, man, I'm so blessed. So in that sense I don't – I feel like I'm in some wonderful pool of water floating, or being held up and able to swim in any way I want, however I want, when I want, as much as I want. It's pretty amazing to just think about – just having health enough to be able to do that.

So I don't know about – but what it is in the work, in a way it's like all of the stuff that went before it. I mean, somehow you've really gone down a path that permits you to make sets of judgments that you've been privileged to be aware of through a long, long time of working and being connected up in all the ways that we've been discussing – you know, that the – and it's just such a neat time if you can just ward off becoming tired.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I was thinking before that the first time I saw your work was at Gallery 1015 –

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – in 1961.

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And even then your work was presented with such clarity. The work had clarity; the presentation had clarity. There was another basement situation on Greenwood Avenue – Gallery 1015.

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – in which your work was offered in a very –

DALEY: Gladys Myers –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Gladys Myers, that's right.

DALEY: Well, I think in terms of – like your work in my behalf through giving me permission is enormous because part of this chain is having people – if I think of all the things that Cate has done which have allowed me to do what I have tried to do – when I do that, then I can see people in many domains of my doing that have – given me the kind of benefit of the doubt or this – and it's a marvelous thing to have and I feel in a way that I do have that, and it gives you – it's a marvelous sense of people offering their energies to something.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And you, in return, giving yours.

DALEY: Well, it's reciprocal, hopefully.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: In your opinion, who are the most significant writers in the field of American craft, and why is their writing meaningful to you? And is criticism by artists more valuable to you?

DALEY: Well, I think that the most meaningful modern writer in my career is Philip Rawson, that when I read his book I felt that there was someone who was an historian that had a grasp of all the things that pots could – ceramics could be about, and elucidated it with a great clarity and style. And I've learned so much reading it, you know. I think there have been books in my life – I don't know of anybody writing now whom I read that fills me with wonder about what I'm trying to do, or informs it deeply. Now, I think – I read things that Wayne Higby writes; I read things that Stuart Kestenbaum writes, and I see them more as friends, but they write things that are moving to me. I mean, they have insight about what I care about. In terms of like criticism or awareness about what making things is really about, I just am not in touch with the – I don't read anything that feeds my psyche.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Even outside of the field?

DALEY: Oh, outside the field is different. I wasn't thinking about that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, I'm just curious about –

DALEY: Well, you know, for me, reading – like I've been reading about Charles Sanders Peirce, and I've just been reading an essay over and over about what he wrote about how to think clearly, and – he's a philosopher at the turn of the century and I just am totally whacked by his insight and the power of his arguments and his discussion. I find that reading it is very satisfying to me. I've been reading things over again, like rereading *Art As Experience* [John Dewey, New York: Minton, Balch & Co., 1934].

Yes, it's amazing to me – it's just amazing to me about this – it's like reading somebody that's didactic that's really thinks he's Walt Whitman about what might be possible.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Have you read Benjamin – Walter Benjamin?

DALEY: No, I have not.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Okay.

DALEY: So – no, I –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It doesn't really have to be within the field of – I mean, great writing and great thinking is there for us to grasp no matter where we are.

DALEY: Well, I read a – I can't remember who wrote it. It was *A Soldier of the Great War* [Mark Helprin; San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991]. I just finished reading it a couple of months ago – it's a novel. And I thought, oh, it's about an Italian aesthetician who had been a mountain trooper in the war – in World War I, and it was just absolutely thrilling to me, the book. I can't remember the author, but it was, you know –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, when you do, let me know.

DALEY: Yes, I – that's terrible. I should remember. But it's a fantastic book about someone's recollections.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Another great book about someone's recollection is *World of Yesterday* by Stefan Zweig

[1944].

DALEY: Okay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I'll write that down for you later.

DALEY: All right. A book that I think of as like pivotal in my own thing is when I read [Rainer Maria] Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Oh, yes.

DALEY: I was just transported, you know, in terms of – if I had to pick out things that had – reading [Henri] Focillon's *Life of Forms in Art*, a book that Bill Parry gave me, is like a book that I keep reading over and over again. And then on the back of it I write down on the pages where the things are that – like the phrases – the sound bites that really sunk down into my most deeply – you know.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: What role have specialized periodicals for the crafts, such as *American Craft,* formerly *Craft Horizons*, or *American Ceramics* and *Studio Potter* – played in your development as an artist?

DALEY: Well, when I first started, every issue of *Ceramic Monthly* to me was enormously useful and enormously important. The articles by [Dorothy Wilson] Perkins about decoration – you know, the articles about kiln loading and all – I was just riveted by them. And in *Craft Horizons*, seeing the work that was being done was very powerful for me to –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: In the beginning.

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: Now they are occasions for sadness. And I don't mean it in an elitist way, it's just that – now, I still find that when these magazines present things – when I read the thing about Viktor Schreckengost – you know, when I read the thing at *Studio Potter* about [David] Shaner and so on, and the article on Bob Turner and so on, I – it's not to say that I haven't found things that have real value to me, but I'm really kind of – well, I don't know that they've changed; I think it's just that I've changed, but I think that the numbers of times that I see work that is vibrant to me, I usually am looking at precedent – a reiteration of precedent.

So I'm really – I'm always saddened that I don't see what's really exciting. And I know it's being done because I find out about it in other ways but I'm not – I don't – for the most part I am not having a chance to see it.

Now, *American Craft* magazine I think is in such a tremendous bind in terms of paying for the paper and priorities for the space and the financing of it that I think that the amount of editorial work in it that can be extraordinary is limited by other necessities. I mean, the commercial – the ads are more important than the content because they occupy more space than the content.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Are you familiar with *Ceramic Art and Perception*?

DALEY: Yes, I am. I think it's a marvelous magazine. I don't know how to say it but I'm not often moved by it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It has no critical judgment.

DALEY: Okay, I don't know –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's it, I think.

DALEY: I don't know what it is, but – so, the most interesting magazine that I've come on I saw in your house and I immediately subscribed to it. And I can't remember the name of it now.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: *Nest*?

DALEY: *Nest*, yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.]

DALEY: No, no, but I mean, it was –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's amazing, isn't it?

DALEY: You know, and it's not a craft magazine –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No.

DALEY: – but it's a professional magazine.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No. It is absolutely –

DALEY: It's about design.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It is. And it's about history.

DALEY: And it's totally about design.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely.

DALEY: So when I was growing up I always saw –

DALEY: – *Interior* magazine. That was a big one at that time. *Mobila* was a design magazine that had great things for me. The Italian magazine – what was the – *Mobila* was Italian, too.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: *Domus*.

DALEY: *Domus*, you know? And then another one – I'm trying to think of it. I can't – you know, so to me the – it's interesting what's happening in the craft field now is being preempted by design again.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But craft –

DALEY: The design magazines were always more engaging than the craft magazines.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: British craft magazines –

DALEY: Yes, you know, I'm not familiar with that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But I'm glad that you responded to *Nest*. I think it's a fabulous publication.

DALEY: Yes, right, right, the kind of wit and energy and delight and vitality and in it is enormous. And so, it's not – but the periodicals don't play a big part in what I'm interested in.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I have often thought that if the periodicals didn't feel the pressure to publish so frequently that they could be better.

DALEY: Yes, well, that's probably true, because – I mean, the audience has a lot to do with it, what that audience is. I think it's getting more specialized all the time, these niche magazines –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: If you look at the early issues of *Craft Horizons* they are amazing.

DALEY: Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Totally amazing. I don't think they were appreciated for what they were at the time they were being published.

DALEY: Well, that's true. Yes, that's true. Well, I know they meant a lot to me in terms of seeing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: We're going to end this right here.

[Break.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: We're on tape number four.

William, could you discuss your views on the importance of clay as a means of expression, and what are the strengths or the limitations of that medium?

DALEY: Well, I obviously think it's a magnificent material for dealing with expression, and I think I have clear ideas about why. I think of it in relation to teaching. It's one of the few materials that's totally metamorphic. I mean, it really goes from dust to mud to pliable cheese to stone. I mean, you have a material that has no structure to it, and then when you wet it, it turns into a material that is like trying to work with uncooked liver. I mean, it has no – it seems to be totally aberrant for gravity to work with, to make form, and yet as it dries it

stiffens. So it goes through a set of changes. I think its like all – maybe all the primary materials have that, but to me metal and clay have it mostly because metal goes through the molten thing.

But the states in between are much more extended with clay, so that it gives you a chance to – you're really involved in creation, almost, in a primal sense, that you have nothing that becomes something that's totally permanent. So you're locked into the middle of a metaphor that's, I think, amazing. And also, it's amazingly seductive. Unless you're anal in some other way, when you touch clay, so many people, just the very sense of touching it is so wonderful. And I think that permeates the way people feel about it that use it.

Also, I think that it's also amazing in the sense that most material – metal is terrible. I love metal when I used it, but adding and subtracting to metal is very hard. Wood is the most difficult but metal is terribly hard, at least from my point of view, to add or subtract. And clay is very forgiving. You can cut a piece off and add a piece on and then cut a piece off later and add another piece on later, and so on. So it gives you a chance to go forward and backwards and be assertive and revisionist ultimately in a wonderful way. So it gives you ultimate options to take yourself on a path and have the greatest number of digressions without fatality. You can get –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Until you have to fire it. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, that is –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Until that moment –

DALEY: That is true, but I was going to continue. But another thing is that at any point where you do something that goes by the boundaries of what clay will do at that time, you will fail. So it's tremendously permissive and yet it's tremendously demanding in terms of being unforgiving. You let clay dry too fast it cracks. You make it too thin and too thick and in another place it cracks. You try to put it together before it's at the right dryness and it slumps. You try to join it together after it's too dry and it opens up, and so on. So there's no – if you don't listen to it it's an absolutely totally demanding material. So, within the dance in between these enormous permissions and these tremendous constraints it's as exciting as hell to use it, if you can stand it.

And also that if you work with it a long time it does something to the inside of your mind. It lets you know that everything is provisional, okay, that nothing is permanent necessarily, because you may lose it when you fire. And nothing is irretrievable because you may redeem it when you fire, okay? And no step is totally fatal if you get smart enough to know how to reverse it. So it gives you this feeling that you really have some of the attributes of God – I mean, that you can mediate something through knowledge very profoundly, from beginning to end, and that's a marvelous permission, and it's worth learning, and the satisfactions of it are so fantastic that they impel you, so that when you start to get it, it's very confirming.

So when kids learn how to do it, they learn how to make something out of nothing, as long as they listen to it and to themselves intensely. And if you're a big kid like I am – and an old kid – it's still an amazing thing. I showed you that pot in the studio before we started this interview and I just discovered a couple things at 79 that I didn't know before about how to make this stuff listen to me better, and that's very exciting.

So it's amazing material for learning and it's amazing material for form-giving. It has a lot of drawbacks too: it's lousy in compression, okay? It's fantastically plastic in the sense that you can make it – it's like a Pygmalion; you can make it assume shapes very easily if you do it at the right times in the right way so that it has no generic form. I mean, it's like metal: if you make a mold it'll cast into any shape. So to me it's a great tool for thought. It will manifest form better than any other nasty material that I know of.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I love that.

DALEY: It is, it's like having a totally mercurial mistress, or whatever. It's just – but it's amazing. So, as you can tell, I'm addicted to its graces.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: We're all very grateful that you're addicted to it. [Laughs.]

What are the most important commissioned works that you had?

DALEY: Well, the most important commission that I ever did was the one I did with my son, Tom, when I had a chance to design a baptismal font and a pulpit and a lectern and – well, that was it, I guess – and a pulpit – I mentioned that – for a church that was – whose heritage was Celtic. I mean, it was for a bunch of Scotchman who lived out in the Great Valley here who had a Presbyterian new church, and my son, Tom, was one of the major architects in it, and I got to work with him using imagery from my own faith tradition. So I had as a source the *Book of Kells* and so on and so forth, and it was very – and then I took the money that I got from it and gave it to my grandchildren for their education. So, I mean, I was using my own faith tradition to do a thing with my son, using my own skills and trying to update historic traditional forms and still make them – do them with

enough honor so that I could claim authorship for them, and then presenting them to the public.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But you've also done commissions for public spaces –

DALEY: I have.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and you've worked with architects other than your son.

DALEY: No, I've had a lot of marvelous experiences with making the wall for the – in New York for the African Airlines –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: The Portuguese Airlines.

DALEY: No, that was metal, but that ended up being melted down for bullets to get rid of Salazar, so I wasn't too happy with the end of that. But the one I did for African Airlines was – I brought back by the pound and then it was repurchased by a friend and then it ended up being in a museum. So, in the same way with the one that just went to Houston for a Japanese ship-leasing corporation. It was commissioned by a former student. I made it with my students in New Mexico. I installed it. It went to the Brooklyn Museum. They deaccessioned it, you guys [Helen Drutt English and Martin Miller] acquired it, and now it's at the Houston Museum [The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston].

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: So the life of what I did – every commission I did was only done in order to give me permission to use materials that I couldn't afford to use and to hire my students, which I couldn't afford to hire.

So every commission that I did was a gift, and every one of them has turned out to have an afterlife that's been much more useful, both economically and psychically in terms of having a place to live forever.

So I see doing the traditions – if you do commissions because you're doing something that's going to benefit you economically, you're making a big mistake, from my point of view. That's the way it's worked out for me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you think that the commissions differ from your other work?

DALEY: Absolutely. You can only do commissions about stuff that you know already. You can't do a commission about something that you don't know yet, because there's no way in the timetable for it, where you can fail. Now, I was lucky with Thomas. It took me two years to make the first tile of St. John in the Celtic tradition, because I couldn't get past the *Book of Kells*. And I made it over six times, so if somebody had to pay for the making of St. John, you know, that would have been the most important commission economically – it would have been in some book of records, okay? But nobody paid for it; nobody was in a hurry for it, and I had the joy of doing it.

So, commissions are not like your regular work; they're only about what you know already. Every form that was in the thing – in the Houston Museum is a form that had formerly lived in my pots up to the making of them. I don't mean that I didn't extend them; I did things with them I hadn't done before – I skewered them on pipes – but I didn't invent them in the sense that I didn't know what I was doing. When you make your own pots you're really – it's like diving in to an empty swimming pool that fills up while you're in the air, okay, even though you know what you're doing. Like if I have to make the same pot, I'm making Alfred's pot over, right? I've already – am only 50 hours into it and I've already changed three things that are much better than I made the last time. And it's exciting to me, but if I had to make Alfred's pot over just the way I made it the last time, I'd have to not accept this commission because I – well, I think I could do it but I'd hate doing it, and if I didn't like doing it –

You know, that doesn't mean – you know, I do lots of things I don't like. I mean, I spend hours down in the bottom of a pot smoothing up corners that no one is every going to see because I just have to do it. I don't like it, but it's very important and I do it. So I don't know if that makes sense.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, it does.

Did the circumstances of the commission have any impact on your work afterwards?

DALEY: Oh, yes, I just explained it that – I did a commission for a former student for a showroom on 5th Avenue in New York for African Airlines, who at that time was in the middle of apartheid, and I made this fantastic wall that was an *Ode to Negritude*, with blacks and tans and browns that were celestial, and I had a great time doing it. And I wrote stuff inside the modules that nobody saw –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, I remember that.

DALEY: – that were celebrating blackness. And then later on to buy that back before it went in the dumpster [it went to the Arrow International corporate headquarters in Reading, Pennsylvania after traveling in my retrospective show]. But conceptually it's – and don't misunderstand me; I think it's a powerful work –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, it is.

DALEY: – and I had a great time doing it, with students helping me, that permitted me to do something that was serial that was that big, okay? You could never do all that in a pot.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Did that wall go to Houston or did that wall go to Reading?

DALEY: No, that wall – the wall that I made in New Mexico went to Houston. The wall –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Houston, but the *Black is Beautiful* went to –

DALEY: That's up in Marlin [Millers]'s headquarters [Arrow International, Inc.], but that'll end up in the museum as well.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, it is a museum.

DALEY: Yes, right. The showroom's amazing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Absolutely.

DALEY: So, yes – so it has enormous consequence.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So what kind of difficulties do you find when you're doing commissions?

DALEY: Well, the hardest thing about doing a commission is to do something that you deeply like and that satisfies you and also satisfies the client. I don't want to make anything that doesn't satisfy the client. I won't make it if – if I like it like mad and they don't like it, I won't make it, because that's not what it's about; it's about mutuality.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: When I make a pot there's only one person in the world that I'm making it for – that's everybody and me – mostly me. I mean, I want everybody to love it, but if they don't love it that's their problem, not mine. But if I make a commission and don't please my client as deeply as I can, if I don't meet the constraints of what the needs are for that person to have that thing that I'm doing, then I've failed, and that's hard to do. That means you have to do many drawings, you have to keep changing your idea around. If you're lucky they like it when they see it and they say go ahead, and if you're really lucky the guy says, "Bill, I don't care what you make; whatever you make I'll love it." Now, that's a great client, but a lot of times if you have an intermediary, like these agents that get you commissions and they handle it, I would never work that way ever, because that's not the exchange that's going on.

When I did a commission for Raymond Posel for the Ritz Theatre [on 2nd Street, Philadelphia, Pa.] wall.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I was going to ask you about that.

DALEY: Well, the first drawings I made for that he came here with his brother and he didn't like one thing that I did. And then he dissolutely kind of said, "Well, you know" – and I said, "Well, I'm sorry, I won't do it for you; I just can't do it for you." So he said, "Why not?" I said, "Well, I don't want to do it if you don't like it. If you don't really like it I'm not going to spend four months, five months, six months, eight months doing it." And he said, "Well, let me think about it." Then he called me up later and he said he just gave up smoking and he was a nervous wreck; he couldn't think about anything except having a cigarette.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And that was a difficult commission, to have that piece hang in mid-air and –

DALEY: Well, but I changed – I didn't want it to be up in midair. Geddes, Qualls, and Brecher –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And Cunningham was –

DALEY: Yes, were the three names. They wanted it up in that space. I wanted it to be down on the ground. But then we decided that somebody could break all the pieces by throwing something at them and smash them, and so on. So it ended up – it was the last choice in the world that I wanted to make something that went up in the air – up in that space, but by figuring out how to make it work I learned so much that I can't tell you.

So, even though you're not inventing stuff, you learn things on the edge of everything you know when you take on a commission because it stretches out kinds of things that you have to work out with a client, like how much would that expand and contract between 101 degrees in the Philadelphia heat to 10 below zero in our extreme things? If it was in there, I had to have rubber bumpers between the clay so it could get bigger and smaller, okay, and I never would have had to figure it out if it was a pot.

So the mechanical things that you learn doing commissions are marvelous. So I don't know where that takes us but there are thing that are very useful that you learn about solving problems when you have constraints that are other than what you usually entertain, and every time that happens you either learn or fail. It's one of the reasons I don't like doing commissions now, because I don't like – I don't want to have to please a whole lot of people before I start and I don't want to solve a lot of problems that I don't know the answers to that aren't in my own mind. I mean, whether something expands or contracts, or whether the clay, when it's on top of each other that high, will be strong enough, and how thick you should make the bottoms.

I had a commission for Marlin Miller to do a thing for his showroom.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I remember that.

DALEY: And it was a hugely expensive – I mean, it would have been very rewarding to me economically. And I made a pot three times, and in order to make them work I could have made them look beautiful from the outside but I could not make them beautiful inside and outside with my method of working. Now, 30 years before I had that commission I would have figured out a way to do it. I mean, I would have put ribs in there or something; I would have changed my thesis. But I was at a stage where I couldn't go there, and I had to turn it down, and it killed me. It would have been fantastic to work on it.

I tried hard. I'd made one pot three times –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I remember that.

DALEY: So there was a case where I was up against something of either succeeding or failing and I failed.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You didn't fail; you just didn't pursue. You didn't fail.

DALEY: Well, I didn't get to carry out the thing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You didn't fail; you just chose not to pursue it.

DALEY: No, no, I did fail, because you know what I should have done if I didn't want to fail? I should've invented another way to make them and not been locked up in my own constraints and my own pre-convictions, my own orthodoxies. I should have ventured to fail.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But that has to do with pursuit again.

DALEY: That's right. I should have designed double wall pots or something.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So what are the similarities and differences between your early work and your recent work?

DALEY: They were all made by hand. Well, they were all made by clay that I make. I don't buy ready-made clay; I do down to the school or I get a big pan out in the back yard and dump all the junk in and mix it all up. They were all made by me, and Cate helps me – not so much anymore. They were all brown. None of them are glazed. So, really, nothing's changed. [Laughs.] Well –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And they're neither decorative or beautiful, right? [Laughs.] Is that what she [Aileen O. Webb] said?

DALEY: No, no, we're not going to tell that story –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: All right.

DALEY: – in this outing. But I would say this: you know what's fascinating to me? And this is a terribly conceited thing, is I have been privileged by either being a cooperative contrary or having a kind of stubbornness or a lack of vision to keep pursuing something. It's in my mind somehow, or whatever. I don't know what it is. And I keep understanding it more and more clearly as I keep getting older. And every time I think I have a corner on it, I find out new things that present another set of possibilities that make me think like I've gone on a hike as a child and come out into a clearing and the sun is shining and it's a beautiful place.

So that to have that happen in what you're doing, that you've accepted such a narrow place to occupy your

mind, like making a pot, whatever that is, with a material that you know so well after 40 or 50 years of using it – which is an illusion because it's still – I just blew a hole in a 200-hour pot and I just misfired another pot right after it that was unsuccessful but may end up being amazingly successful, because something happened that I didn't control that intrigues my perverse mind.

So that in a way, here I am finding out things that I can add to this thing that keep – [audio break, tape change] – successful because something happened that I didn't control that intrigues my perverse mind. So then in a way, here I am finding out things that I can add to this thing that keep making the dance more wonderful, or the dish or the thing that I can enjoy. So that is an amazing – and in that sense, they – I think, and I'm not the person to judge in a way, you know, this is my, like – I think I was privileged to make peculiar things at the point where they were neither beautiful nor decorative, okay?

And I went through to the point where they became useful as objects for decoration for homes, and I made things that served people's functions as I worked as a designer to make commissions. And then I had a chance to pursue ideas that emerged in my mind about "Inside outside," about residence, about things changing and as they went up in the air or they went around. And now, I have learned about making things that denote feelings about place, habitations, and I'm not finding out things that I can – about location of place where I can make, like – it sounds enormously conceited – but I can make sacred places. I'm not making models of things; I'm making geometries that denote the feelings or whatever about that. So that is fantastic.

And like the pot I just showed you – for me, at 79, to discover – I really discovered that I could make the inside of a pot even more engaging than the outside. So in a way, I think I'm learning – I have been privileged to find out things about pots that no one has ever found out before. Now, that is terrible to even say -- it's so arrogant!

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, it's –

DALEY: – but I think it's true, and I think I have been on that vector for a long time. And I'm just thrilled that here I am working and I'm finding out things that have the possibility of taking me to a new place that I have been to already anyway.

When I went to New Mexico and I saw what the Indians did, I had already done it. I don't mean it in a – I mean, when I looked in the cave, I had been in them, metaphorically, through a journey that I was on, not knowing anything about it. I thought Indian pots were dumb. The people, they made zigzags and they made bad blankets. That is – you know, I'm ashamed to say that now that I know more about it, but in a way – so I keep getting this parallel sense that I'm on – I'm really near the place where temperament and possibility intersect to give a form to spirit.

You know, when [Bruce] Metcalf really diminished me by talking about my cheaply playing the spiritual card – I really am at a point in my own inner conviction now that that was a travail of absolutely unsayable pain, totally refuting his statement without having said a word about it except through the work, you know? And I don't mean that is why, but I have that sense of gratitude that what I am pursuing in terms of pots is unbelievably important to me, and it's something that if I'm – if it's true – can be shared, and is being shared, and it's being shared through you and through other people who are their keepers and by Cate enabling me to be able to, and I just have to see if it's so.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, they have transferred values that take you to the places that you have never been.

DALEY: Well that – okay, well, that is a good way to see it. That is the hope for them, and whether they do it or not is anybody's guess. I mean, you know, and mine, too.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I went to Sienna this afternoon.

DALEY: Pardon?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I went to Sienna this afternoon in that pot.

DALEY: Well, okay. Well, you are an addicted journeyer in these pots, Helen. You are totally co-opted. [Laughs.] And I'm grateful. I'm grateful.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: When did you begin exhibiting, and can you recall the character of those early exhibitions? I think you sort of –

DALEY: Yes. The most thrilling exhibitions – you know, and I keep going back to the old days because I think maybe it's part of nostalgia of A, when you are aging and keep thinking bout the past, but when I had a pot – when I had a painting that was so Gustonesque when I look back on it now, of a kid with a sailor hat on, done in gouache – liquid gouache – and it was accepted by the Institute of Contemporary Art on Newbury Street

[Boston], and I was – you know, to me, that was cosmic. When the yearbook that came out, which when I look at it now, I think, God, you couldn't be a more terrible graphic designer than we were in that book because we didn't care about what we were exhibiting. We only cared about showing off our ideas, and then, you know, we had no feeling for the content at all, but it was a great feeling.

But, you know, when I first sold a pot – the first pot that I ever sold was – that anybody wanted, I should say – up in Woodstock in the cooperative, and I took these three little green pots – one of them is downstairs – and somebody wanted one of them, and it was $12. The notion that someone wanted something that I had made that wasn't a relative, who didn't want it either, and wanted it in the sense that they would acquire it – it's different than – you know, people thought I was gifted and all that, and they loved having me give them presents and so on. And I thought if I gave somebody something and they wanted it, it's still a marvelous reward. I still loved doing it. But that was an amazing thing, and it sent me to want to make more – sort of, I could do this over and over and over again. So that was amazing.

And I think having a first show in your gallery, you know. Having a show that Jules Olitsky gave me at NYU was all of those pots that I was making at that time.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right. And Gladys Myers.

DALEY: Well, Gladys was interesting to me, that – it was wonderful, but that wasn't like having a one-person show or whatever. I felt, like, at Gladys', I was kind of like an aside. Do you know what I mean? I didn't feel that I was central to it. I felt that the most central thing that happened there was that I met you. Do you know what I mean, that you were responsive to what I was doing. But the show – the first show that I had – you know, I was upset that [Wayne] Higby – that we had work along one wall that had to be there, otherwise you wouldn't have been able to pay the rent. But other than that, it was the first time that I had been in this place with what I thought was really my mature work.

When I showed at NYU, which was very exciting to me, it was like an experiment.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And the Art Alliance, also.

DALEY: Well, the first PCPC show at the Art Alliance.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: Well, in some ways, maybe that was the most important show that I have ever had. Do you know what I mean, because I thought that was a body of work that came out of a particular time where I worked over a summer, night and day, and produced a whole series of things – 10 things that all fit together, that were about some very coherent ideas that were very clear to me. You know, when I made those green things, I was really – I thought I was making Shang bronzes in some ways, much more than I thought I was playing any games. But in those pots that you – we had at the Art Alliance at the show that, you know, you were instrumental in engineering that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes.

DALEY: You know, that was about "Inside Outside," and it was clear as hell that it was about "Inside Outside."

So I have been showing my work -- presenting in your space, I think, is a marvelous – it's daunting to do because it's like we are naked, but it's really a neat thing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How did you feel when you saw your work in the Netherlands, for instance, when it was presented in "Who's Afraid of American pottery?" Was it the first time that American pottery was shown at museum Het Kruithuis in Den Bosch?

DALEY: That whole experience was so terrible for me that I can't speak to it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You can't speak to it.

DALEY: I mean, the fact that my slides burned out – that I worked so hard to talk about American ceramics and they went on fire right in front of the audience. And I'm speaking in English and they are hearing –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I'm going to quickly change the subject. [Laughs.]

DALEY: No, no, no. I mean, the whole thing was like a nightmare, you know – beyond sane. It's like a Gethsemane. That's good. I endured it, and I did the best I could. It just happened to be lousy, so I couldn't savor the pots at all. But then, I mean, too bad.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Are there any group exhibitions that stand out in your mind as being celebratory?

DALEY: Oh, yes, being in the Syracuse show – that last one before they stopped all together. Having a pot in that, I thought it was, you know, Ed Lebow thought nothing happened in that show that was worth mentioning, but I knew I had the best pot in the show. And then when I ended up going to the Renwick, you know, and you negotiated that, I thought, this is great, you know. So that was an enormous satisfaction. I knew that pot that I had made for that show was better than anybody's pot that was being made at that time.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Except for the one that is in the basement right now. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, no, but I mean, that wasn't conceit, but I mean, it was an earned – because I had been rejected from the Syracuse many, many times – you know, more than normal. And when Bill Wyman was going from triumph to triumph, I was in the cellar. So in a way, it was like a validation of a journey that – which was marvelous to me. It meant a lot. And I was very angry at Ed Lebow's review, and Ed wrote a marvelous thing in that SOFA [Sculpture Objects & Functional Art Exposition] catalogue, I thought. I liked it very much –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: – and when he came, I told him about that. And he said, "Well, Bill, we all make mistakes."

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.] It's true.

Where do you get your ideas for your work, and have your sources of inspiration changed over the years?

DALEY: [Laughs.] My ideas for my work come directly from God.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Not from Furness? [Laughs.]

DALEY: And I also admire an enormous number of persons who also have gotten their ideas directly from God, so that I have a bunch of heroes who are extraordinarily holy men, and I would count them that I worship all that they have made, and I have consumed it and I have internalized it and I have mixed it all together. And I have mixed it up with food that I have eaten, I have mixed it up with, you know, people I have loved, I have mixed it up with music I have heard, and I use clay as the catalyst for it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I wish that this was the last question because it's so great.

DALEY: No, but do you know what I'm saying?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I do!

DALEY: It's the kind of question there is no answer to, but I think becoming a very avid student of form – like, what I know about Antonio Gaudi is a lot, okay? What I know about the tessellations in the Alhambra is a lot, okay? You know? What I know about Frank Furness is a lot, okay? And I can name you 25 others. What I know about Mimbres pots is a lot. What I know about Brancusi is a lot. So then in some ways, I'm constantly excited by what it is that is possible to see if you are attuned to looking for the geometry of it, or the structure of it. You can look below what you are looking at, how fantastic it is. Like, today, coming up here, you said, "Look at those clouds." Well, you were looking at a structure, you know, and it was fantastic. And it wasn't just nature looking either. Well, anyway, so I'm glad that God is with me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I am, too. [Laughs.] In what ways do political and social commentary figure into your work?

DALEY: Well, I think they do, although I have never – when I was a boy, I liked Siqueiros, Rothko, Diego Rivera. When I was in high school, they were my absolute heroes. When I saw "Lust for Life," you know, that movie about van Gogh, I made paintings by Diego Rivera, okay? I made hands like he did, and sombreros like, you know, and I made paintings of people eating corn ravenously with big eyes and so on. So I – Lynn Ward, the communist printmaker – when I was in high school I had his style down to a gnat's eyelash. Do you know what I mean? I could do a block print a la Lynn Ward. He would do Fascist American cops clubbing poor – beating workmen down into the ground, and I would do muscle guys just like that.

So I must say, the whole social thing – I grew up in a working class family. My father believed in unions. Franklin Delano – we had two pictures in the house – Jesus and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the highest. Jesus, with his heart on the outside was just below him, so I had great passion about the social things in some ways, but they are not what have interested me artistically, except that I can't stand people that are liars in art. I can't stand people that make stuff that looks just like art and there is no art in it. A lot of those people are craftsmen.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: They missed the boat. They have all the skills, they have all the tools, they have all the mastery of all the techniques, and they can't make anything that comes out of their guts. And I either weep for them, or I despise them. So the same way of people that are connoisseurs. I hate "collectors," okay? Anybody that is collecting stuff – that is what they call it when you collect something. I like it when people have things that they must have, and they know why they want them and they treasure them because they want them so much, and they have made such sacrifices to get them. But if they have just collected them, they don't speak to my heart. So in that sense, I have very strong social views about the politics of what I care about. And, you know, there is no need to go into it more.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, I'm right there, you know?

DALEY: We all have that if we are passionate about what we do.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I absolutely support those –

DALEY: You know, I have the same feeling about students. You know, some of the people that I admired most through my whole life are the people who have been the most marvelous students.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Or the most difficult. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, being marvelous has nothing to do with being difficult.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: In fact, if you are really marvelous, you are almost bound to be difficult, okay? But if you are a teacher and you have negotiated beyond difficult with a really fantastic student, you have been privileged. But anyway –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I absolutely –

DALEY: So I don't think of it just as –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, no.

DALEY: – collectors or students or other artists. I feel the same way. Go ahead.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: What involvement have you had with national craft organizations, for instance, like the American Craft Council?

DALEY: Well, I spent six years on the American Craft Council, I was on the board of NCECA at one point, I spent nine years on the board of the Haystack School of Crafts, I taught 30-some odd years in an art school – I mean, a very prestigious one – a good one. So I think I have been fairly – I have written a lot of stuff for a lot of publications of various kinds about what I thought. I have written reviews and things. I have written articles on national shows and things of that sort, so I think I have been engaged in the public domain in a fairly decent way. I offered my work every year for 15 years in a public venue. I have been honored by – you know, becoming a person on the Short List that is seen as someone that merits acknowledgement.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, the highest honor that the nation can give, really, which is the gold medal in our field. It is true. I think you have really answered the next question, which is, describe your working process. I think that you have, unless you would like to add to that, how it has changed over time.

DALEY: Well, I would add to it only in a sense that I think that I have some basic precepts that formation is more important than information, okay? In other words, information is something you use. Formation is something that you do that calls on all your abilities. So that is a kind of canon of mine, if you want to. [Laughs.] And another one is that I like that I got from – so much – that I got from Peirce is that the reason for thought is to gain belief, and the reason for belief is to have trust, and the reason to have trust is so you can practice.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That is amazing.

DALEY: And, you know, and that is in that essay on how to think clearly, and I'm just always working at trying to learn how to think clearly, and when I heard – I really, deeply believe that now. I'm not saying I can do it, but that is a precept about my doing. And the other thing is an ultimate arrogance – but, I can't help it, I have it and, you know, I guess I shouldn't be confessing it. But the really thing that I, like, pray for or yearn for or would want is that I really could be a person who was acclaimed to have made things that have the property of firstness, okay, that when you see them, you know it. And I have a whole list of heroes who I'm totally positive, you know, occupy that pantheon, and if by any means that I could sneak in through what I do, what I make, that would persuade me of that, deeply, is what I would want – what I want. And having the permission to pursue that is an enormous kind of gift, which I'm, you know, personally grateful to all – everybody. It's amazing that somebody

will allow you that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I think you did sneak in in many ways.

DALEY: Well, I don't know how –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I have been –

DALEY: I know a lot of guys that are knocking at the door but the person's – I just found out a couple of years ago that "guys" was not pejorative. Did you know that?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No.

DALEY: – that "guys" means women and men; it means people. It doesn't mean males.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Really?

DALEY: Yes. I thought that was good because I keep – can't get over just saying guys.

But anyway, I don't know – you know, the way – despite everything, the way time responds to offering is not discernable by the present. Do you know what I'm saying? It's not. We can't know.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Say that again. The way that –

DALEY: Well, the way time understands achievement can't be discerned in the present. I mean, people can make their – they speak to their own persuasions about it. I think you have deep convictions about it and I have deep convictions about it. Other people have it. But what the – so, you know, that horse didn't win the Triple Crown and now they're going to let him screw around out in the paddock with his weak ankles, but he's never going to win it. He's not going to get to race it anymore, you know?

So what the shape of it is – but you know what? What's really neat, it doesn't matter because what really matters is in the present, with what we have, how you can make the connection, whether it's through all the chance of it and all the materialness. You know, the fact that the smallest animals are the ones that didn't become extinct. The ones – the biggest animals that got to be the most developed, like Tyrannosaurus Rex, when the climate changed he couldn't shift with it.

So in a way, like how things evolve – if the persons dealing with it aren't dealing with things that are essential enough, they're not going to persist, no matter what happens. So – and we can even see that. Like, some of the things that I thought were magnificent 20 years ago don't hold my concerns deeply now. And some things which were almost invisible to me 20 years ago, you know, I'm just knocked out when I'll be experiencing them. And when I try to think about what it is, there's something that's so primary and essential and that you begin to get a glimpse of that you can't locate it, like somebody like Bill Parry who has died and we went to his funeral, and I have things in this house that are better than most every ceramic guy in the country has made, and they're still totally invisible, okay?

Now, I somehow believe that before this is all over –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You mean invisible in the public forum?

DALEY: Well, regarded by the aficionados, thought well of by the people who know the most, by the curatorial persons whose ignorance can't let them see what it is that is going on by the politics of it, you know?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, the politics –

DALEY: Yes, of approval.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, right.

DALEY: And so in a way, you know, my yearning for firstness could be in a remarkable fantasy but, you know, you just go with it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But is the desire for firstness so important in your life?

DALEY: Well –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I mean, is it –

DALEY: Yes, I think it is. I think it is. You know why I think it is? I keep – one of the things I have in religion now

that is a real cross for me is being nonjudgmental, okay, that I know that the idea of being judgmental is a tremendous kind of limitation to dwell on, okay? But I know from learning, from teaching, from being an artist to not be really, deeply judgmental is a fatal mistake about becoming discerning because if you get any kind of a glimmer that something that is going on that you are appalled by, or whatever, but if you can see in that the edges of something that speak to you in some way – if you don't move toward that, you are a goner. So being critical or judgmental is part of the core for me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: So that means that you need to be judgmental about it, that you better have this ways of hearing the signals that led you. So in a way, I think it's enormously important to be judgmental in the right way, and I don't pretend to have a notion to understand how one does that.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, I wish you could read the letter that I wrote this morning, but I don't want to put it on tape.

DALEY: Yes, right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You once stated that you were a teacher first and an artist second.

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you still feel that way?

DALEY: Yes. Yes, I do think that way. I think everybody that is in love with something and wants to share it is a teacher. It's the only way to teach. Expounding – you know, Edna [Bern]'s idea about having that thing in your gut is a much truer talisman than erudition.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But yet, when you wanted to be celebrated as a teacher – when they wanted to celebrate you as an educator instead of an artist this year you were not pleased.

DALEY: Oh, that made me furious.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.] Yes.

DALEY: I'm still against it. I think it's wrong.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I understand, it's a one thing, but it's not the same – wanting to be a teacher first and an artist second.

DALEY: Well, let me say this. I didn't do this to be a teacher. I went into art education because it was the best program in the school, it was the only way that you could get a degree, and I wanted to have a degree because I felt I wanted to be validated and – you know, I didn't get shot at and all of that. The government didn't give me the thing for me to just indulge myself.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: I wanted to do things. But I went to art school to become an artist, okay? I didn't decide to be a teacher until the last minute, and I loved it, and when I went to teachers college I went to a – I think I went to a fantastic school. I mean it. When it was – and I went with a bunch of colleagues that were fantastic – they came with me. So I feel very much that if someone is a real artist, that they are a great teacher. It can be William Hopper or it can be somebody like Esherick who proclaimed that he was self-educated. You know, Wharton Esherick was a student of structure and stuff that he had got from every place. He re-synthesized it in an interesting way.

And so I think people that say that – but at the same time, he was an artist and to me that is – you know, to me, being – when they make a separate award for the people that are teachers, they are trivializing the people who are artists that teach, or teachers that are artists. I think it is one thing and I don't think – and I think it's pejorative. Do you know what I'm saying?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I do.

DALEY: Now I think by my wanting to teach and by teaching that in a way, I may have used up a lot of time, but there is no guarantee that I would have found out things that I found out that are valuable any other way than the way I found them out. I mean, in other words, maybe in my dumb way, having been a teacher, trying to be a teacher, trying to become a teacher was the smartest way to become an artist.

Now I'm – that is probably a rationalization, but in another way, I think it's – I just lucked out. It's just like Lloyd

Long being in prison camp when I got there, okay?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, right.

DALEY: You know? It's just like, you know –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Or Catherine being at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and you got –

DALEY: Yes, in Massachusetts School of Art.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Of art, rather.

DALEY: That's right, that's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Sorry.

DALEY: Absolutely.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: Well, you know, so in that sense of all along – it's amazing. So we are not driving, we are passengers and –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Where do you hope this journey is going to take you next?

DALEY: I don't know. I would hope that for enough to see my grandchildren come into adulthood all of apiece. I would hope to have enough hope that we can remain reasonably healthy. I would hope that we could both find a way to die really well. I would hope that I'm given the permission to have the wit, and – you know, I think of somebody like Bill Parry, who just gets all his tracks erased.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right.

DALEY: So, you know, I told somebody the other day that I'm really having a run that people wanting what I make, and thanks to you, but I told him – I said, "You know, really, I think I have been telling everybody secretly that each thing I make may be my last one."

DRUTT-ENGLISH: [Laughs.]

DALEY: – in terms of – we are talking about marketing. I think that it's a very interesting thing, but it could also be true. I'm not saying that in any mawkish way, but, you know, that if I'm going to 80 in March – if I get five more years of doing this, it will be remarkable. It's not possible. I really have, like, two years of doing this. I'm not saying this to you in the sense that I'm betting on it in one way or the other, but it is amazing. It's not even a crapshoot. It's amazing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But Cartier-Bresson, when he stopped –

DALEY: Ninety-three.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, but when he stopped taking photographs –

DALEY: He drew pictures.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – he started to draw pictures.

DALEY: Yes. No, I know.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So you can be doing what you are doing forever.

DALEY: Well, this may be.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You can't put a time limit on it.

DALEY: Well, it may be. It may be, but it –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You might draw pictures. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Yes. Did I ever show you those pictures that I drew?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes.

DALEY: Okay, good.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I did see them – we spent hours looking at them – at first you were hesitant to show them some.

DALEY: Well, you are right. Well, I'm talking about playing with clay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I understand that, but I'm also talking about the fact that the creative spirit doesn't stop when it changes medium or material?

DALEY: No, it doesn't, but the notion that a voice is transferable or that being an artist is not here is absolutely not true. I mean, do you know what I mean, that you can skip over, or that you can find the place where possibility and permission – temperament – meet is an indices of all the things that make it up. And whether you can step sideways and dodge the bullet and do anything that – you know, Cartier-Bresson became an artist and drew pictures, but I bet you a buck he hasn't made a great picture – drawing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I don't know, but I bet you something else.

DALEY: Well, I'll be judgmental. I'll bet you all the money that you have right now, and I'll equal it. [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: After knowing you for four decades, I would like to say that I would perhaps like to see you preach.

DALEY: Like to what?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Like to see you preach and have a congregation.

DALEY: You don't want to force that on me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, I could see coming to hear you once a week to talk about whatever is on your mind.

DALEY: [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – anything.

DALEY: Well, Helen, you are so far gone that there is no helping you. [Laughs.] No, no, but what I'm saying is that I really mean it, that you don't know that. We don't know.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, of course we don't, and we don't want to know either.

DALEY: Well, I don't think so.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No. Before we close this –

DALEY: Well, it certainly ended with marvelous pontification. [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Thank you, William Daley, very, very much. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, thank you for submitting to this and getting the machine so it works.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: This is Helen Drutt English, interviewing William Daley for our second session. We are presently sitting in my dining room at 2220 Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is the second day of December in the year 2004, and this interview is a continuation for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, which is part of the Nanette Laitman Project.

William, in addition to your studio life, your career has been central to education and teaching. It has been a dominant part of your life, would you like to address this?

DALEY: Well, thanks, Helen, for doing all this with me. I really can't think of anybody that has more connection to my doing over time, other than my family, other than you.

But I think in terms of after the war all of us went to – had a chance to go to school, and in the process of going to school we somehow realized that we wanted to be teachers. I started out wanting to be a painter, but the only program in the school that had a degree connected with it was art education. And many of us, the best students, I thought, all wanted to be part of that program. And in the process of doing practice teaching and studying about the theory of teaching, reading things like *Art as Experience* by John Dewey [New York: Minton, Balch & Company, 1934] and *Education Through Art* by Herbert Read [1943] and so on and so on, many books and much theory, we were all pretty enamored of the notion that after being shot at that a real good quest for

our future doing would be to teach.

And so I had an undergraduate degree in art education and went on to Columbia [University, New York], where John Dewey held forth, long before I got there, about education, and it was a very exciting and stimulating kind of activity. And from there I got my first teaching job in Iowa [Iowa State Teacher's College] as a teacher of education in ceramics and design and drawing. And I really loved it and still do.

And I think in some ways the connection between information and formation and transformation is at the core of what education's about.

And over a long period of time, I found out it was at the core of what becoming an artist was about, because I really learned to become an artist by learning from people that I – who were my peers, that I was teaching with. And also from learning by being invited into the minds of pretty creative students to share what it was that they were concerned about, to further their impulses to wish to express themselves deeply.

So in a way being connected to teaching, I've seen as a kind of seamless activity between colleagues and teachers. I recently gave a workshop to a bunch of art teachers and we had them invite two of their students to the workshop. And then the teachers and the students were all students, and we made big pots using tar paper. But in my introductory remarks I said, "You know, you guys, this is a different deal. There are no teachers in this outfit, there are passers and receivers. And today I'm the passer and you're the receivers."

And that idea about a teacher being an enabler of sharing the sense of being about doing something, mutually, that's important; it's what teaching's about. And it doesn't involve information, but more than that, it involves transformation. And for me that's the connection between a studio as the classroom and the studio as the private place in which you work and do your thing.

So I also feel in a way that teaching is about – the reason why people ought to think is so that they can attain or acquire belief. And I mentioned this before, but the reason for belief is to have trust, and the reason for trust is to do practice. So in a way teaching studio or teaching people or helping them become artists, enabling them, if you will, is really the other way around. Is that you learn how to practice so that you can have trust in both yourself and what you're aspiring to and what it takes as means to be able to do that.

That's what you're practicing. And when you get it, you start to trust both yourself and your medium and your intentions and what you're trying to move toward even though you don't know it. And when you get there you really have a sense that you have belief about it to the point where you can give it a form and offer it in community and submit it and be submissive to it.

And to me that's where education and studio life really meet each other. So I'm not teaching now, but I really am in the process of making big brown pots. And it's my deepest hope that they get down to the bottom of what it is that I believe that I can offer to someone else with deep conviction that has meaning. And I'm really delighted with it in the sense that people seem to be responsive that that's going on.

And when I have occasion to teach now I have that same feeling. I'm always absolutely amazed by what students do when they give themselves to suspending their disbelief, and practice openly enough so that they can enter a domain where they are not worried about outcome, they're not worried about success or failure, they're not worried at all. They're pursuing their own intuition about what it means to give a shape to what their concerned with at the time or who they are.

And I think it's magnificent that the teaching and making in that sense share this threshold between belief, trust and practice, and back the other way. So you might say it's a circle. If you start with belief you end up with practice. If you start with practice you end up with belief. So that as both an artist and a teacher, you're in this kind of cycle. And I know that my learning to become an artist, in terms of process, really is more of an outgrowth of what I learned trying to teach from great teachers while I was being paid to teach.

So that working with Aurelius Renzetti, working with Olaf Skoogfors, Dan Jackson and William Parry – there's just a whole chain of people in Iowa: Paul Smith, David Driesbach, Robert von Neumann, the jeweler, Jules Olitski at New Paltz [State University of New York at New Paltz]. I could go on and on, but always seeing as exemplars people who were in the process of finding out what they were about while they were teaching. And it's just been a grand kind of journey.

So I don't know if that answers that, but I see that as the connection between my teaching and my colleagues and my becoming an artist.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You've had amazing relationships with people throughout the decades. You've had an amazing relationship with Petras Vaskys, and amazing relationship with Wayne Bates, and you've kept a very close, almost family-like identity with these individuals that's even gone beyond the teaching and the creating. I mean,

the way in which you've sat vigil for Richard Reinhardt and Petras is really beyond an academic friendship.

I'd love to have you speak about these relationships and their meaning in your life.

DALEY: Well, it's an interesting thing, and if you have occasion to be with someone else and a task you share together is to help somebody else get on with what you care about, your passion is your craft, your skill, your intent, then when you do that day in and day out you really have to trust each other. And you also have to be open enough to realize that you're fortunate to have someone with you that knows more about it than you do, in a way.

And the mutuality of what your strengths and weaknesses are in your own community with someone else, like a closely knit faculty or whatever, is just an amazing thing to share. And you're right, they're not just people that you're doing a three credit course with, they become a real part of your life. And also in your making – when you bring what you're making into school and your colleagues speak to you about it or you see your colleagues doing something that you have real admiration for, I mean, you just are insanely both delighted and jealous and zealous about their invention and the nature of their spirit.

That when you get into those exchanges and people confirm your doing and you confirm theirs and you also can speak clearly about the limitations and, if I did this I might do that, and if you did this you did that, and that's wonderful and how amazingly different we are or how similar we are or whatever. That whole discourse is – well, to me that's what it's about to be an artist in community. And so most of what you do – like I felt a while back I wrote something when I got this gold medal thing, and I wrote that most of the feelings about the touch in the work and the ideas in the work are notions that I shared with people and their voices are silent.

So now that my hands and my voice is the only one that's attributable in that work, but I feel that so deeply and so strongly that I don't see a separation. And so the things that I learned from Petras and Bill Parry and Dick Reinhardt about how to offer what it is that I cared about – and it's not just about technique and process – it's about the whole nature of the discourse, of you with yourself, and a kind of honesty about what it is you're attempting and why.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's also about family.

DALEY: Yes, it is about family, and I hope we're going to talk about that as a – but in some extended family as your colleagues.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, but in the sense that they are part of your family. Maybe not though blood, but –

DALEY: Well, that's true. Well, that's true anyway, I remember going to 1625 Spruce Street in the afternoon after my classes, and the sun would be coming in the windows of that place, and there wouldn't be a soul in the gallery except you and I. And we'd have a long discussion about whether, you know, Richard DeVore was doing this or that or Robert Turner, if it was his show of Olaf's beltbuckles, which one was best and why. And in some sense internalizing that discourse is amazing. So in that sense the gallery is an extension of that same kind of learning process.

And that goes on all the time when you're teaching. Some day you go in to teach and you think you're so ready, and you're prepared with your colleagues to be so ready, and the whole thing turns out to be a real bummer. Bad. It doesn't click – nobody's – maybe because somebody's tired or whatever. And another day when it's all over you sit down and you think, good God, how did we miss so clearly our goal when we thought we planned so carefully to have a triumph on our hands?

And then another time you'd go in and you'd say, oh, boy, I'm terrified about this crit, you know, it's going to be dross, and you get in there and the work is vibrant and the kids are alive and the discourse is moving from height to height. And when you leave, you know, to go for lunch, you're just high as a kite, because you're riding on this sense of people having – I don't know, a kind of epiphany or a kind of transformation about what they were about.

So in a way, sharing that is just like being in a family. You don't know when it's going to work and when it's not, but you're always there and ready. I feel that way about going to church. I don't go for – I go to church hoping something will happen. And whether it happens or not, I don't ever know. But a lot of times it's totally unpredictable, that if I can have some sense of the ineffable through my presence in that sanctuary, I really know that it has nothing to do with me. It has something to do with "other." And I think teaching and learning is like that. Well, anyway.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, it's true, I also remember when I first began teaching and I would get nauseous , and I'd call you at 8:00 in the morning, and you'd say, "That's a good sign, go in, you'll really knock them today."

DALEY: Yes, right. Well, the first –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It's a very good sign. [Laughs.]

DALEY: Well, I think it's true. The first month that I taught in Iowa, I was so terrified – I mean it – totally terrified, that I would get up in the morning and I would throw up. And then I got so I did it after breakfast, then I did it – we lived in the Army barracks very near where the pot shop was – and I would do it on the way. And then I did it so I did it entering the building. And a month later, I finally, my last urping was standing in front of the class, white knuckle against the back of a chair and looking at the class, and I said to them, "Please excuse me." And I did my morning ablation and went back in and talked. And from that day forward I was okay.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Oh, great. You have been really blessed with a great family life: wife, children, grandchildren. And I'd just like to know, how does your family life relate to and embrace your work?

DALEY: Well, I guess in some sense that the core of it – you know, Cate – my spouse, significant other, partner, the whole works – and I met in art school, and we were both engaged in the same enterprise of trying to find out how to make art and we also pursued the same goal of wishing that we could teach. And in the beginning of the process, I think, we didn't like each other at all. I mean, Cate was very quiet, but she was so extraordinary at everything that it really bothered me.

And I think she felt that I was such a gregarious loudmouth-Irishman that I'd be best to be avoided. But for some reason over time we got to be attracted to each other. And when we got to our senior thing of practice teaching we were elected by our teachers to be part of a small group of students who would get to teach kids from all the high schools around Boston. The most talented art students would come to the Massachusetts School of Art to be confused on Saturday morning.

Joe Carreiro was part of it and Robert Gersin, who became a big designer in New York. And anyway, it was a pretty – looking background on it – a pretty hot outfit. And Cate had one of these classes and I had one, but we'd spend our whole week planning on what it was that we were going to do to knock these students out of the block, that they'd have such a good time.

And then when it would be over we'd spend a couple of days talking about how fantastic it all was. And I think that's when, in one way, the time in which we really fell in love. So in a way all of Cate's doing on my behalf has been enabling that beginning thing. And her thing of mothering and being in a family and making it all work, in large measure, my permissions have been with her permission. And that I could never have done it to the point where when I was having a show every year for 15 years while I was teaching. You know, Cate was working with me, refused authorship, got so that in all my doing in the studio, helping put the kids to bed, and then going down to look at the work, to work an hour or so, and then Cate coming down with a cup of tea to see how I was doing, and her giving me a crit or being in a discourse about the work.

So the notion of any sense of singularity about it is absurd on one level. I mean, I do have authorship. Cate used to say to me, "Well, Bill, if you didn't draw your pictures or start something, I simply would not do it, that's all."

But which part of that becoming of something that doesn't exist before you start and what parts are primary and what's not? All of it's primary. And your family in the middle of that, that the kids coming in on Saturday morning to get some clay to give to their friends to make some kind of a jellybean pot is just as much a part of it as someone helping you or – the whole process is one of being – I've never had a studio that was separate from my house.

And I've been invited to go places to work, and I don't go because I can't work there. To me, the cellar is my studio and I have no overhead. It's my family. And when I first started the money came out of the house money. You know, if ever you needed something for your supplies, you really literally took it out of the house money because nobody wanted what you were making. And if you think of extended family, it really is true that when my relatives used to say to me, "Billy, do you think you'll ever buy us a present?" I mean, that's how low in regard what I was making was held. [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How lucky they were.

DALEY: Well, you know, it's interesting, that a lot of times now, if I have occasion to visit them and I've come upon any of those things I take them home with me and hit them with a hammer. Sounds terrible, but – because most of them, they were right, they didn't merit being sustained. But that sense of being in an enterprise where you get a permission to pursue something over a long period of time is because there are a whole bunch of other things.

Now the kids, every summer in Elkins Park, everyone went away. The only kids that didn't go to camp were our kids and maybe one or two – the Semless boy and the Goodman boy would not go away. So that Camp Daley

was Camp Daley. Everything instead of going – we might go to the shore by the day, but we never went to the shore for a week. So the making of the work in the summer was my Eden. But also the kids, in a sense, made it part of their lives in a way that it was okay. So not only did Cate enable me but my whole clan enabled me.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, you have three children. Are they all involved in the arts?

DALEY: Yes, one's an architect and one's an illustrator and one's a graphic designer. And we have two grandchildren now, they're just started art school.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: What are the names of your children?

DALEY: Well, the three children are – Barabara's the oldest, she's the graphic designer, she lives in Jenkintown very near us. And Charlotte lives in Florida, and Barbara has one son, Andrew, who's just started art school at the University of the Arts and loves it. Keeps calling me and we talk about his freshman problems, and it's just a joy. Charlotte has three children. Edward is the youngest and then Catie and then Ezekiel. And Catie's at Mass Art now as a freshman, where we went to school.

So that cycle's started again, and that's amazing, and she adores Boston, and she has a cell phone where she can talk for nothing on Sundays, and she's giving us a blow by blow reinvention of our days at Mass Art calling around the – she said, "I went to Faneuil Hall, or I went to – you know, I went here, or I went to the – anyway, I went to Cambridge, and I saw Harvard Yard." So anyway.

And Edward's still in high school. And Sarah Jane – Tom's, my son's children are Liam and Sarah Jane. Liam's a sophomore at Washington College and wants to be a writer, either that or an actor. We don't know what will happen. I hope he opts for writing, but we'll see. And Sarah Jane's pretty precocious, and so is Edward. They're the youngest and they're still in high school.

So that's the clan at the present time.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: During the past two years I've noticed that Tom has joined you in your journeys – your professional journeys. He came to Chicago with you and went out again this year when you gave a lecture in Chicago.

DALEY: He went to Washington with me, right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So there seems to be a very special bond that has developed between the two of you.

DALEY: Well, you know, we've sort of really always been close in a way, but not in terms of – I think part of now he's coming with me is that, you know, Cate doesn't like traveling and she really does not want to fly unless it's so urgent that you have to overcome all your things. And so part of it is to, you know, Tom's dutiful thing as a son on one level is kind of watching out for the geriatric old one as he proceeds out of the domain that I'm comfortable with.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You don't seem very geriatric to me, Bill Daley. [Laughs.]

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I mean, I find that very difficult to comprehend.

DALEY: Well, it's really a marvelous thing to have in common, you know? And we went to SOFA this time and we went around and looked at all the work and then we'd talk about it and then we'd go back the next day. And the next time he came to me he said, "Dad, I want you to see something." And we went to see a thing, and he'd bought a Mark Shapiro pot that was a beauty. And I thought, you know, this is nuts. I mean, he shouldn't be doing – he can't afford that with a kid in college and all the rest of it, but here he is acquiring something, and I thought, this is magnificent.

And now he – that's the same kid that when he got his first job bought a Wayne Higby from you for Cate and I as a present to express his joy at having work and earning his own way. So there is a marvelous kind of sense of confirmation that, you know how lucky with the children all working and they're out of jail. But they're, you know, they're also attuned and excited by what we care about a lot.

And to see Tom getting stuff and so on, acquiring things, is really great. And we went to Chicago and saw the Anish Kapoor sculpture at the New Millennia Gardens there. And both of us – it's the greatest piece of public art I've ever seen. And Tom, we went there at eight in the morning on a Sunday morning, windy, cold, beautiful, sunny day. And the sun and the whole Chicago skyline was reflected in this curved surface of this big, huge stainless steel peanut-like form in the middle of this huge space. And it was unbelievable.

And to see that with Tom and walk under it and around it and, you know, it was just – it was magnificent. So being able to journey, venture with somebody that's – and he took me around, showed me all the buildings in

Chicago. I'd seen Carson, Pirie & Scott and some of the obvious ones, but since he had the history of architecture, of becoming an architect, he was aware of a whole bunch of buildings in Chicago that I simply would have passed by. So we went into the foyers of them and I got a kind of course in architectural history that was just a joy.

So you're right, it's a grand thing to be connected back to your clan.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right, and to have that continuum in your life.

DALEY: Yes, right, and you your sense of part of what you're about, it must make some kind of sense or other people would have more brains than to pursue it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Now that you're about to reach your eighth decade – [laughs] – complete your eighth decade and you look back upon the extraordinary decades that you have, you know, been blessed with, where are those moments in your life that have been most meaningful and significant for you?

DALEY: Oh, my. Well, I don't know. I'd say the most amazing or most complete or most profound kind of thing is being with Cate.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's really wonderful. I have to tell you that last week –

DALEY: It's true, you know?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, last week my mother is about to be 100, and at Thanksgiving we asked her what was the most important event in her century, and she said her marriage.

DALEY: Well, okay, well, I feel, you know, in that sense that if I don't think of it as some idyllic thing. I think that the venture that we put ourselves on, in a way – well, it was a kind of – it was the only venture open, but at the same time it was a dicey venture. And to have made it stick together or be all the things that it's been and is, over time, and all of the vicissitudes and everything's that part of it, and the joys of it, that's the great watershed, you know. I think that everything's, you know, BC and AD and whatever. That's the great point that everything else hinges on.

And I think in terms of a kind of knowing, it sounds arrogant to say it, but I think I've learned more things about becoming an artist in a family, that if I had to choose between family in an intimate sense – I don't mean extended family – and art making, in retrospect I would choose – I know there's no need to do that – but I would choose being in a family every time. All the dimensions of the exchanges that come about unfolding and transforming in life seem to be centered around that.

And, you know, the kids coming of age and going to school and that whole journey is unbelievably amazing. And, you know, I can think about like with Tom being a Boy Scout, and he was an absolute avid Boy Scout. I mean, there was never a Boy Scout that was a bigger – and I don't mean he went for the medals and merit badges, but he liked hiking and camping and all this stuff.

So when I was a boy, if you were a Boy Scout you got beat up. Where I grew up in the town we were also jealous, I guess, but no Boy Scout would walk through the part of the town that we lived in for fear of preserving his life and limb, less we might undress him and take his uniform away. We were pretty bad, I think. It was mostly jealousy.

But then I got to be a Boy Scout. I mean, I went down to Delaware for a week in a canoe and did all these amazing things. And so – and that's happened with all my kids. That when Barbara was becoming a graphic design person I was teaching ID [Industrial Design], but I was learning more about graphic design from Barbara than – you know what I mean? I've had all these things fall back into my life connected with my kids and their lives. And now it's starting again with the grandchildren, and it's unbelievable.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: In closing, I would like to say that your AD has been amazingly robust. And in the past two years you have probably produced the most extraordinary work of your career. And I wonder if you can explain what has happened within you to be able to expand and to be able to enlarge upon all the ideas that have become constant over the last 10 years?

DALEY: Well, I don't know. I mean, it's a strange thing. After I had that retrospective show ["William Daley: Ceramic Works and Drawings," Smithsonian Institution, Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1994], I really went into the dumps, and had like a two year period where I thought, well, I've done everything and there's no sense being a parody on yourself. I can't stand that idea. I don't mind that I deal with ideas that I've dealt with before, but I can't – if all I can do is make over what I made, I'm not interested in it. I never have been. So I don't mean that everything I make is different, but I don't want to go over the same thing twice.

And so in a way I stopped for two years and just drew, and I made, like, 50 drawings which I've never shared with anybody, but I think I showed them to you.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You did.

DALEY: – and one or two other people. But it's a strange thing. And somehow after that I kind of got the feeling that there were some things that I wanted to do. And in a strange way they have stuff to do with what I did 30, 40 years ago. I mean, some of the forms, like the tuberous forms that I first used at the Art Alliance before the PCPC [Philadelphia Council of Professional Craftsmen] Show, bulbous forms, tubes turning into bulbous forms and so on, really seemed to reemerge as a way of going at things.

And then I've sort of found that – and in a way I don't have to have shows any more, and when I'm not working, I don't have to prove to my students that I am really an artist, that I'm not just a talking head. And I don't have to do it if I don't want to, and I won't miss any meals until the end no matter what. So a lot of the kinds of necessities that partly propelled me to be an artist in a professional sense are just not there.

And I feel relaxed and it doesn't really matter. I make something that's a fantastic turkey, it doesn't matter because I can simply take it apart or hit it with a hammer or paint it blue or put it in a garden. I can do whatever I want. In a way, I'm just free of a kind of sets of necessities, and in a way it's a little scary to have this because you can be so open-minded that your brains fall out. That's one of Cate's sayings that I think is so smart.

But in a way it's amazing, and I have a kind of certainty now – it sounds arrogant as hell – but I have a certain kind of certainty that when I'm in it things will come to me that I need to know to get to the next part without thinking, now that's strange. It's a strange kind of awareness, but it's very powerful. And part of it is making me sloppy, like technically I can't do that, I just blew a pot up that I did 200 hours of work on, and I blew it up because I turned the switch to the right instead of the left which is, you know, put it on high instead of low.

So when you start getting that kind of certainty that you can do that kind of strangeness, you're really asking for it. And of course I lost 200 hours of work. And I must admit I grieved severely about the loss. But you know what happened, in remaking the pot, the one I'd just shipped off yesterday to California, the pot's twice as good as what I had before. And I didn't set about to do anything to it other than what, you know, I was going to do. And then I thought, this is one time, Daley, that you'd better not change your mind in mid-process and screw it up. You'd better just efficiently get about remaking this thing that you were stupid enough to wreck. And as I kept working on it, I kept seeing this move or that move, you know, things just kept happening.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That pot had the history of every Italian town I've ever seen.

DALEY: Well, it – I must say, it's a pot that gives me great joy to have made. And I think, well, why did that happen? Not just the blowing up of it. Well, the blowing up of it was a kind of hubris that comes with having a kind of prideful arrogance that you're not where you're really at. Do you know what I mean? In a way, part of my learning over years and years was really learning that I learn everything very slow because I'm not too smart.

But I usually learn things my way, I don't learn things the way people say you should learn things. So in my youth, until I learned to read because I liked it – because I was reading about the ocean and sailing boats and I became an avid reader of everything that nobody wanted me to read – but prior to that time I was such a bad reader as a lip reader and a pointer and so on, that I was deemed to be – I just escaping a special class, which I really would love to have been in because they made potholders and they wove stuff and it was a better place than where I was in grade school.

What I'm saying is that by learning stuff by going across the grain, by being a kind of cooperative contrary, I could learn how to do things that other people didn't want to find out about. So in a way, when my relatives didn't want my pots, most of them were so weird because I was fooling around with ideas that weren't part of what pot making was supposed to be about anyway, at that time. And so in a way that's been a really great feeling for me, so I really have a great reliance on some other – being guided by some other forces, as strange as it may sound – [laughs] – that lead me toward the light or lead me toward having insight or that I'll be – so I have that feeling now, very strongly, that if I just stay stuck together and stay healthy, that I can make things that have a sense of wonder about them coming out of where I've been.

And a lot of it is that I can revisit stuff, but it's not the same. I'm not looking in a closet. I'm just recalling things that are in the past, but they can also be in the future. It's an interesting place to get. It's like you just came over a waterfall and you're in the water below you're the waterfall and you're just floating. Anyway, I don't know if that makes sense.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It makes a great deal of sense. I'm also thinking that we have sat in this room for 40 years.

DALEY: Quite a long time.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Quite a long time. And before we close, is there anything that you would like to discuss that we have not discussed?

DALEY: Well –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I would like to maybe talk about your reverence to nature and your commitment to the understanding of your friends and your colleagues who are no longer here. I'm always amazed at what happens during the holiday season and how you have this extraordinary reverence for those who have found their way under the ground. And I find it a very, very special part of your personality – the making of the wreaths.

DALEY: Yes, it's interesting that you ask me about that now, because I'm not going to do that this year. And it's the first time in 15 or 18 years that I haven't done that. And the idea of making memorial sprays for all the people – not all the people, but a lot of the people in that cemetery, some of them are colleagues, like Larry Day, and others are parishioners that I did know, and other ones are the Robber Barons like the Wideners and the Cookes and the Elkins and so on. So here I am in the middle of this place making these sprays.

But it's like I've had an invitation to be Cristo's understudy or something, I can adorn this little teeny graveyard and all the parishioners make the sprays in which you acquired from them last year. But I'm not going to do it this year. But that sense of being connected to – I really feel that sense of wanting deeply to be connected to the past. And the more I learn about everything, I really get the feeling that the past and the future are near each other in some ways. That the possibility is the future.

I don't believe in this, if you don't know history you have to relive it. I think if you don't know history you're denying yourself the chance to relive it, I mean.

So I like the sense of connection between – like, I never found out about what Celtic culture was about till I was 50. I grew up in an Irish enclave, but it wasn't part of the life of the people. But now that I know we're masters of geometry and that I got onto geometry by myself by failing algebra three times and being a wizard at geometry, but not being able to do the algebraic equations that would solve the problem, but I was a wicked man with a compass and string and all that stuff.

When I found out that that could be central to my life, but when I found out that a hexagon or an octagon stood for the eighth day or the first day of new life and paradise, I made my first baptismal font, I thought, you know, this is fantastic. Look at how that fit with this. So in a way I really have this feeling that all the same things were – like most of what I've learned about gardens or plants I really learned from my father, who – my father never paid for a plant, there was just no money to buy anything.

But in this factory that he worked in as the boss painter, these people were all trading tomato plants and different kinds of ajuga, you know, and whatever there was, all kinds of really interesting flowering plants and edible plants. And my father would go around with me all the time, and he had an uncle who was one of the Hopkins, I guess he must have been related to Gerard Manley Hopkins in some remote way. He was a priest in Staten Island.

And my father would always tell me all these far out stories about what this priest did when he first became a priest and blessed orchards and things, and that year the orchards would be all breaking fruit – [laughs]. But I mean, this whole thing of being connected to things that were growing and that were part of his culture, in a way, because a lot of the Irish people were really gardeners out on these big estates along the river and so on.

So when I would deliver papers I would have a thing in my paper bag which was like a long thing for digging up the suckers on plants. So I was walking on my paper route at five o'clock in the morning, and I would go through the Draper estate, which overlooked the Hudson, and there was a French lilac bush in bloom, I would get a sucker off it. I mean, I didn't take anything, the gardeners would cut it off anyway when the next pruning came, and I'd give it to my father.

Well, the first time the French lilac bush bloomed was when I was a prisoner. And my father said, "William's fine."

DRUTT-ENGLISH: The Celtic consciousness.

DALEY: Yes, right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: It really is the Celtic consciousness.

DALEY: That's right. But when I see these reconnections of nature in the past to nature in the present. In sixth grade we had a science project on trees, okay? Well, the teacher gave me a tree book, you know, where you could tell the bark and the leaves of all these things. Well, my sister and brother and I went ape with it. You

know, we went into the woods and found – the poor teacher finally had to stop and tell us, “William, this project is over. No more leaves, no more bark. You can’t keep doing this, you know.”

So later on when I found out that the druids were bonkers, I read Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* [Sir James George Frazer; New York: Macmillan, 1922] – did you read that? Well, anyway, it’s almost a mythological – the guy made up most of it, I understand now – but about the history of the druids and the role of mistletoe and oak trees and so on and the rites of – when I read Robert Graves’ *The White Goddess* [1948] and – you know. So later on when I found out about all these things I really found out that I really knew about them anyway. I mean, I had this connection to nature from going into the woods at the behest of my father.

When my father would go every fall to cut a big tree down – [tape change] – it would become our firewood for the winter. And if there was no big tree, we’d all freeze our duff off, because we had a wood stove. So, but being with him in the woods on the weekends, he and his brothers would share some big monster tree and cut it up and saw it up – the smell of it all and the fun of it and all the kids being around, being screamed at to stay out of the way and all – you know, it was just a magnificent thing. So that all mixes into it, I think.

When I read the *Life of Forms* by Focillon at 62 or when I read what’s his name at Cranbrook, the head of Cranbrook who’s son was the architect?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Saarinen. Not Sarrinen –

DALEY: Yes, right, Eliel Saarinen.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Saarinen.

DALEY: His *Search for Form* [New York, Reinhold Pub. Corp., 1948], was one of the books that I read in graduate school that was, like, revelatory to me. But the notion that his father had been a preacher, but the whole first half of the book is a celebration of the great source for all making, is using nature as a precedent. Now, I don’t believe that, because morphology of form – Lancelot Whyte and some of these other guys that talked about the [Karl] Blossfeldt book of structured images, of ferns and so on, all see –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Botanical book by Blossfeldt.

DALEY: That’s right, that’s right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes.

DALEY: But the idea of form in nature as a metaphor for things becoming, not just as a source to be imitated like the guys did at the turn of the century. I mean, they just drew pretty pictures of plants and weavings. The Celts, though, when they did the meanders and their geometric things invented the foliation of forest through a geometric system of arithmetic and plotting points, and built a complexity that was an infinity to God, and was different than – what’s the guy – William Morris, was it? – who drew – no, who drew the wonderful drawings of the wallpapers?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: William Morris.

DALEY: Okay, it was William Morris.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: William Morris.

DALEY: Well, those are – I love those drawings, but they’re only drawings of the outside, they’re not about the inside.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No.

DALEY: So but finding out –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: They’re patterns.

DALEY: Yes, that’s right, they were patterns.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: They’re patterns.

DALEY: But finding out about the core of the inside being a geometry, as opposed to being a source, to me it’s amazing. And pots are about the tube. And all plants are about tubes, about a cylindrical thing that juice comes up through, and there was a hole in the middle of it to make flowers become the sex organs of plants, actually. So in a way the – I don’t know, this thing – way nature comes in to what making’s about, is about structure. It’s

not about appearances.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Do you realize that you're teaching this very moment? [Laughs.]

DALEY: Good God, let's change the subject – [laughs]. I don't know. Well, it's fascinating. But to me what nature is about is really a really wonderful thing. And the more I – I gave a talk for the Episcopalians. Sharon Church got me in it over at St. Martin's, the yuppie Episcopal church, on our spirituality in art. And I showed all my hero slides, and I got talking about this sense of firstness – the idea of something being effable, evanescent, immediate, fresh, reborn, new. And this is what Peirce called "firstness," and this was what great art was about.

And so I was trying to make slides tell that story about, you know. And afterward the lady priest – who's like third in command – comes in – she stayed for this talk and she was smiling all the way through it, so I guess she liked it. But she went and got me a book by a scientist of pictures of supernovas and stars and dealing with cosmology. If I was still teaching I would make a slide out of every page.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You are still teaching.

DALEY: Well, if I was I'd make a slide out of every page and I'd show these to my students, and the kids would go right up the walls looking at form becoming in an astronomical or in that domain. And all of the writing of this was – this book was about a scientist who was a total rationalist trying to make a brief for the presence of God in our spirits.

So he was trying to explain spirituality in nature. And so it was a great present to get after blathering about the. So, later some guy in Westchester called me up and asked me if I would teach a course on spirituality and I said, "Absolutely not." [Laughs.] I don't think anybody knows what it is – well, it's amazing.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes. Well, I would like to thank you for your –

DALEY: Well, that's good that we are all on the stout right of the guard – that we are on the right side of the ground.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, we are. I wanted to tell you that, you know, we had a fig tree that my father had given to me many, many years ago, he's been dead 20 years. And the fig tree died and I left the stick in the dirt.

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And seven years after my father's death, it emerged again and began to grow. And I never forgot that.

DALEY: Yes, that's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So it was very special. And if you tell that to someone they don't really want to hear it, nor do they believe it, but it does happen.

DALEY: Well, you know, my aberrant notions about what God's presence is, is so subject to suspicions by my upbringing, but I have a total sense that, you know, we're not driving, that we're passengers somehow. And that we're part of some unfolding thing that really makes me deeply feel that whatever there is about humanists in us that makes us aspire toward the future, toward light or whatever you want to call that, is an absolutely clear thing. And to me, like, learning and art making are very strong indices of that, of how you can live in a way where you can make that part of your life.

In some ways a good life is not about some esoteric kind of expression, it's some kind of way of relating that feeling of wishing to always be in a state where things are unfolding for you in a way that promised the future. Like, I think of – like Zeke now has just quit school and is working in a ski resort as a guy that helps arrange bedrooms and stuff, moving stuff in and out. So it's just a schlock job, but he's having a kind of burnout in a way and – but my worrying about him returning back to wherever it is that he's going to go is a source of anxiety for me, but in a way I have such a strong feeling that, you know, he's going to be okay. He's going to find – he's going to right himself or he's going to be okay.

So that feeling of faith about the nature of the future, well, I feel it especially now. It's so central to what we need to be about. You know, what's going on in the world with the war and all the rest of it. I just found out that I'm experiencing post-traumatic stress syndrome 60 years after the war, that this war is causing my dream life and my past to totally flood over my present.

And it's a really amazing, strange sensation to be experiencing. And the notion of getting the cork back in the bottle has something to do with the belief in the faith of the future that's central. And it's fascinating to try to monitor how your mind lives in your spirit so that you can proceed with an assurance to practice, to have trust.

And it's interesting how past trauma has to always be enveloped in hope and belief and trust. And in a way I think that's what this having this archive is about.

We're done. Are we done?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I think that's an amazing note on which to end.

DALEY: Well, that's a strange place to be viewing the future from, I'll tell you. I probably shouldn't have put that on the tape.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No, I think that – you know, the only hope that we have is the continuation of the creative spirit.

DALEY: That's right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And I think that –

DALEY: And there are forces that are trying to do it in.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right. And Maurice [English] often said that the symbol of the hand is a symbol of the continuation of the creative spirit within an industrial or mechanized society –

DALEY: Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And the –

DALEY: – of the connection between the mind and the spirit.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes, the mind and the spirit, and that very notion of working and being creative and having a continuum within your family life is the only hope of salvation we have in the midst of the terror that exists around us today.

DALEY: Wow. Let's hope we prevail.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Let's hope. And we shall. We're still here.

DALEY: Yes. No, no, I have that feeling too. I just feel that we're not going to whimper into a hole, you know.

Well, I don't know. I thought the last time we were at the edge of this kind of brink, I was just a boy. I was 18 instead of 80. But looking back on it, I think that the dimensions of the dilemma were so much clearer. They were easier to deal with. I mean, it was – do you know what I mean, with Hitler and the whole thing about the challenge to our life was so clear and absolute that it made everything – what one needed to do seem very decisive. I don't feel that now. After our election, you know, what with where we're at, I think we're drifting.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And you were 18 and you were a prisoner of war?

DALEY: Yes.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Where were you?

DALEY: Well, I got shot down over Yugoslavia and I went to a prison in Budapest. Then I went from Budapest to northeastern Germany up near Stetine in a boxcar. And then in the middle of winter I left there and walked 300 miles south of Berlin – 300 kilometers. Anyway, I walked from Statine to south of Berlin, with a short train ride in on that – I can't remember how long that was – but it was a long walk in the middle of the winter with no food to a camp that I finally escaped from, and then I got caught and taken back to the same camp from which I was liberated. But, then I had my 19th birthday in the camp.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: How many years were you incarcerated?

DALEY: Only 10 months. But it's interesting in talking to these people about the nature of that experience and the recollection of that now so late in my life. It's interesting that they talk to me about that it's not a matter of the duration of it, it's a matter of the nature of the disruption or the anxiety caused to your psyche by such trauma, which is interesting.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: You've had a very full life, and you're about to have an even fuller life. If your work is any indication of what the future holds, it's rather amazing.

DALEY: Well, I have to get back, I'm turning down people wanting me to do stuff. I'm not going to do it now. I'm

not going to make the sprays, I got goodbye to the teacher of PCA at Wayne this summer and they want me to go out to Minneapolis to teach teachers, and I'm just backing away from it all. I'm just not going to – I'm either going to be in the studio or I'm going to be in the backyard, cutting the grass or doing something like that. I'm just not – so I just have to really – in a way it would be great if I can also get so I could start to sit down and write.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, I think if you – you know, think if you can –

DALEY: It's not natural for me to do.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: No. But, you know, it's certainly natural for you to speak, and if you just –

DALEY: Well, that's different.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – and if you speak into a recorder and then have it transcribed, I think that would be a really good way for you to express your ideas.

DALEY: Oh, okay. Right. Yes, you mean that they might be coherent.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, you're very verbal and you can – then you can transcribe the tapes and edit the tapes. And that would be –

DALEY: A way to get it down.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – a way to get it down.

DALEY: Well, it's a neat thing for me to – that this invitation is a wonderful invitation to somebody.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And I'm quite pleased that I've been able to participate.

DALEY: Yes, well, I'm pleased that you were too, that you're pleased, and I'm pleased that you did it. I sometimes think I should talk sometime about the actual making of a pot, or what it's like to make a pot, or the process of making a pot. I guess that's a fairly known kind of experience to people that make stuff.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I would say that the making of a pot differs with each artist. I mean –

DALEY: Yes. No, that's true.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – even though the technical –

DALEY: That's true.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: – aspect might be similar, but the actual making has to differ with each individual.

DALEY: Yes. No, I think that's true. Well, my making comes out of a process that's not very normative. I mean, the way I evolve making a pot isn't the way pots were made. I'm using like Styrofoam and tar paper and materials that are not part of the traditional making thing. So doing workshops with kids with this has really been kind of fun because even though they made coil pots or thrown on the wheel or whatever, they're really fooling around with a way of getting a form to come out that's different. That's fun.

Well, Catie's going to be a film director. Catie wants to major in film. She got into art school by making two movies in high school that were pretty amazing. I mean, I was impressed, I must admit. And now she has this freshman program and two of the things she's answered her problems with is with films, which is not normal for a freshman to do. So I thought, well, you know, maybe one of the things that I'll do, when Catie gets to be about a junior, I'll sort of hire her to make a film on making a pot, the way I make a pot. And that would be fantastic to have your grandchild be the editor of a film of you making a pot.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I wouldn't wait till she's a junior. I would start now.

DALEY: Well, I don't want to – it's really wrong. I don't want to misdirect her intentions by having her focus on the specifics of a certain kind of task, as that would be. It's not time for that. It's not even good for her to do that. Professionally, it's not. I mean, in terms of learning, what she wants now is everything to be open. She doesn't want to be doing this, she wants to be doing that.

And so, do you know what I mean? That's one of the lousy things about design education, gets this vocational intention too early. In the old days people learned how – like I didn't know what I was going to play with clay really seriously until I was – I didn't even know it in graduate school, in a way. I mean, I did it, but I had no idea

that anybody was going to let me do it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I don't believe that you have to wait for things like this. I think the concept of observing your grandfather making a pot can be a very exciting challenge to a filmmaker –

DALEY: No, no, no. I think that's true.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And she can do chapter two in two years when she's a junior, but I think the invitation to think about it could be extended to her at this time.

DALEY: Yes, probably. Probably.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And could be, I think, something quite exciting.

DALEY: Well, and one way, like in terms of the doing of something, would be neat to do it with her. Like this last pot that I just sent out, you know who made all the slabs for it? Liam.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Liam.

DALEY: So I put William and L. Daley – [laughs] – they'll say, "Who's L. Daley?" So, you know, I couldn't put slab making by Liam. He was fantastic. You know, he brought all his favorite CDs to play on the tape thing while he was working, and I was amazed that two or three of the things that were his favorites were favorites of mine, and I didn't even know it. And uh, anyway –

DRUTT-ENGLISH: But that's just the same kind of continuum as the Celtic consciousness.

DALEY: That's right. Right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: With not knowing until you were 50 that there was this incredible sense of being Irish and having that connection.

DALEY: That's right. What the heritage of it was that backed up the other part.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: So there's that connection.

DALEY: Yes, it's interesting. Well, in a way it's an interesting thing. It's one of the reasons why it's important to have a past.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: And a present, and a future.

DALEY: And you can't have a future without a past in a way.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: That's true.

DALEY: Well, we're at a long sense finished with that, aren't we?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: I think we are right now. Right.

DALEY: Well, we must have gone past it, haven't we? This hasn't all been on the tape, I don't think. Didn't we use our minutes up?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes.

DALEY: Well, why don't we use it up? Well, Helen, I want to say that I do thank you for this permission, and for your benign sense of tolerance in relation to it.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Well, it's a great privilege, as you well know, for me to participate with you in this project, and you've been an important part of my life for forty years.

DALEY: Yes, we've been at this quite a long time, haven't we?

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Yes.

DALEY: Well, that's good, that's good. We still have a chance to get it right.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: Right – [laughs].

Okay, thank you. There.

DALEY: Very good.

DRUTT-ENGLISH: We have a chance to get it right.

DALEY: Well, you know, that’s one of the things that I always thought about teaching.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

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