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Oral history interview with Ken Shores, 2007 November 13-14

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Contact Information
Reference Department
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington. D.C. 20560
www.aaa.si.edu/askus

Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Ken Shores on November 13 and 14, 2007. The interview took place in Portland, Oregon, and was conducted by Mija Riedel 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.

Ken Shores has reviewed the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

MIJA RIEDEL: This is Mija Riedel interviewing Ken Shores at the artist's home and studio in Portland, Oregon, on November 13, 2007, for the Archives for American Art, Smithsonian Institution. And this is disc number one.

And we've decided, given the many different ways that you've been involved with craft and art fields over the years as a teacher and director on artists, that's easiest just to start at the very beginning and work our way through.

KEN SHORES: Okay.

MS. RIEDEL: You were born in Lebanon?

MR. SHORES: I was born in Lebanon, Oregon, August 16, 1928. Just in a sense, I was a child of the Depression because that happened at about the same time, and in a small town like Lebanon, Oregon — I think it was true all over the country as it hit everyone very hard because there were just no jobs. I remember hearing stories and my mother talking about people trading food for clothes and small town people would do that, and they rallied around and supported each other.

MS. RIEDEL: What was your mother's name?

MR. SHORES: My mother's name was Ruth.

MS. RIEDEL: Ruth.

MR. SHORES: It was Ruth.

MS. RIEDEL: And your father?

MR. SHORES: Louis.

MS. RIEDEL: And what did he — what was he doing at the time? Was he employed?

MR. SHORES: He was — had worked as a foreman at a local cannery. And my mother had been a schoolteacher and she wasn't teaching when she started having children. So it was really hard; and they were not alone. Everybody in town was — pretty much faced the same problems.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have siblings?

MR. SHORES: But I just thought everybody had that type of — same kind of upbringing. I found out later that wasn't true, but it was a nice childhood. I mean, I can't complain about it — is that we were really poor, as everyone else was, so it didn't seem so bad. I think I was the only one — I have pictures of myself in the first grade. I used to wear bib overalls. I think I was the only one who that did that, but it was okay because I didn't know any better and they actually were very functional — [Riedel laughs] — but we had a goat and I was raised on goat's milk; I never knew about cows and cow's milk. But it was a nice time, a warm time. My grandparents lived outside about a mile and we used to visit them. They had a farm. So my early childhood was a typical small town upbringing.

MS. RIEDEL: How many people in Lebanon, do you remember?

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: How many people in Lebanon?

MR. SHORES: I'm not sure at that time; it was very small, maybe 5,000, 6,000.

MS. RIEDEL: Really small. And was it — is it at all a farming community still?

MR. SHORES: Farming and agricultural community. Strawberries were a big item at that time. It was kind of the strawberry capital of the Northwest. We had a strawberry festival. It was the world's largest shortcake that used to be in the parade on the back of a truck.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, that's great.

MR. SHORES: That was a big, big holiday for us in childhood time. But that was an interesting place, one of the oldest cities in Oregon, when they came over the pass — the settlers, they came down into the valley and they saw cedar trees and it reminded the leader, Jeremiah Ralston, of the cedars of Lebanon.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. And was that the Siskiyou Pass?

MR. SHORES: Is it —?

MS. RIEDEL: The Siskiyou Pass that they came over?

MR. SHORES: The Santiam Pass.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And it — interesting it was called that because of that, and I think it was formed way back in 1840 or something like that. It was an early, early little town. Never grew much, it still isn't very big, but it's a charming place and has a beautiful landscape. The Willamette Valley is still a gorgeous area.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely, a lot of vineyards now, yes?

MR. SHORES: Yeah. Now vineyards are becoming — you know, are happening and unfortunately a lot of industry is happening too, but it's still a very — a very pretty place. So that was my early childhood.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have many brothers and sisters?

MR. SHORES: I have two brothers, an older brother, five years older, Robert and my younger brother, Richard. He was five and a half years younger. So we were spread out quite a bit. I became closer to my younger brother than the elder because he got into high school. He was in another — another category, another class. But from the first grade, I remember we lived fairly close to the Queen Anne School, it was called, and I started drawing pictures in the first grade, Indians and cowboys. And actually, I wished I had some. They were — I'd seen some of a few years later and they were not bad. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: I bet.

MR. SHORES: So I became sort of the class artist because of these silly little pictures. So from then on, I remember that I was always going to be an artist. It just never occurred to me that it was going to be anything else.

MS. RIEDEL: And how were your parents with that idea?

MR. SHORES: Oh, they thought it was just a childhood thing and everything, but that was fine. My older brother, I think, remember once said, you can't be an artist — and I think he was seven or eight then — because you should be drawing and painting like — and he showed me a calendar picture of a scene — he said, you should be doing that now. [Riedel laughs.] And I was so under-whelmed by that, thinking that maybe he's right, but then I forgot that. But that's how it all sort of began.

MS. RIEDEL: Were there art classes in elementary school, or was this something you were just doing on your own?

MR. SHORES: It was just something I was doing on my own. Our instruction as they were — was in those days that they did hectograph, line pictures that's mass-produced and passed them out to the class. And then you had to color within the lines — within the lines. They were just — it was just a disciplined way of trying to apply color throughout a already-made drawing. But that was the way they instructed those days, an easy way, and most of the teachers had no art background anyway.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Did that change at all in junior high or high school?

MR. SHORES: Yes, it did begin to break down in that time and there was more — then we had the art instructors in elementary or in junior high. My first art teacher in high school was a — her first year of teaching. She was a graduate of the University of Oregon [Eugene], fascinating, dynamic woman, Isabel Schmier. And after the first month of teaching she arrived in the class one morning and wrote on the blackboard "Katrina". She has just married and — [inaudible] — the war was on then. And Camp Adair was nearby and she'd been going with this Greek fellow, Mr. Katrina, Dimitrios Katrina [ph]. But she was my first introduction to a professional artist. And I first touched a clay because we didn't have facilities in our small high school, so she brought clay in and we made little bits of jewelry and panels, then she took them out and had them fired.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MR. SHORES: And I still have one of those pieces downstairs in the studio, a little pin.

MS. RIEDEL: That seems pretty unusual.

MR. SHORES: And I was fascinated with the idea that clay was such a practical, malleable material that was spontaneous and instantaneous. And I was fascinated, but I didn't have much chance to work in clay in high school because of that, you know, lack of facilities. But she was the first to introduce that to me.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you painting in high school?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, painting and illustrations, and we did posters for Veterans' Day and posters for various things, and there were contests and things like that. Then after Isabel Katrina left, a very charming lady — Lovedy Burkholder was her name — was the second teacher I had in high school. She sort of left us to our own. She just sort of guided us and with criticism. And she was very helpful and encouraging, but the most important part was a woman named Ellen Wilshire, who was an English teacher. And she had just moved to town with her husband. He was a lawyer. And had a wonderful background, had studied in Europe and — I believe — and — anyway, she was the most sophisticated person I'd met up to date.

I think I was a freshman in high school and as we, for instance, studied *A Tale of Two Cities* [Charles Dickens, 1859], rather than for me to do a term paper, like the rest did, I did drawings of each character and she hung them on the walls — and all the characters from *A Tale of Two Cities*. And they were not so bad. They were amateur in a way, but she allowed me to do things like that and —

MS. RIEDEL: Did you propose it or was that her idea?

MR. SHORES: No, she did because she'd seen some of my work, and she said, why don't you do that as a project? And so throughout the years that I had with her in English and lit classes, I learned — not only learned a lot about literature from her, but she was encouraging my art too, and anything in the arts.

Interesting enough, at that point, when I look back on it now, it's kind of shocking that it didn't shock me or didn't my mother either, but she would have me over in the evening and I was just a freshman or sophomore and we'd have a little glass of wine and we had candlelight. And we'd talk about the arts and history. And there was no — no suggestion of anything else. Today, it would have been considered very suspect, but she — she was kind of lonely for creative people in a small town. She sort of turned to me as a mentor, as I look back on it now.

MS. RIEDEL: But she — she was not married?

MR. SHORES: She was married.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MR. SHORES: Her husband — he was a lawyer and he would work in the evenings occasionally.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah.

MR. SHORES: So it was a very innocent time and a very rewarding time. And I played in the dance band at that time.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah. What did you play?

MR. SHORES: Camp Adair — saxophone and clarinet. And there were times we used to take a bus to Portland, come up for the ballet, or something was happening in Portland, some art show. It was the only way to get up here, because it was like four hours. At that time there was not a freeway. And there were times there'd be a conflict. I should be playing in the dance band and Ellen would say, don't do that. You would never have a chance to see the ballet all the time. You can always play in the dance band. She was always encouraging to do

these things and see more, get out, and experience the world.

So she was my first real mentor in encouraging me in the arts and I am very grateful to her. She was a long time friend. She since has died and has gone, but all throughout my live, I would come back to Lebanon and visit her. She was always interested in what was going on. She collected art, to some extent, and books. She was a very sophisticated woman for a small town.

MS. RIEDEL: So it really opened a whole new world for you in many ways.

MR. SHORES: Exactly. I moved to San Francisco briefly and she came down and went to Mills one summer, and that same summer invited me over there constantly for things that were going on. And it was — because they had lots of — Darius Milhaud, the conductor was there at that time and so I was able to hear music there directed by him.

MS. RIEDEL: This was when you were — not when you were in high school — this was after college?

MR. SHORES: This was later on after I —

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, okay.

MR. SHORES: — about a year after I've been to college. I'd gone there, moved down there. So she — she remained a long-time, lifetime friend, and introduced me to lots of interesting people at the University of Oregon where she'd gone. She had introductions to everyone I finally went onto college. So I must give Ellen a lot of credit for my early upbringing because in a small town, there wasn't much sophistication. And my parents were grateful to her and she was — they were friends, and so it was —

MS. RIEDEL: So she was the first in a long line of strong women mentors?

MR. SHORES: Yes, that's right. [Laughs.] Because when I first got to the university, I was awarded a state scholarship from high school, which at that time, amazingly so, it was $22 a term. That doesn't even buy a cup of coffee now.

[They laugh.]

MS. RIEDEL: No.

MR. SHORES: — but — so that was very impressive to my parents and everyone. It's what they offered to all high school students at that time on scholarship.

MS. RIEDEL: It was the University of Oregon at Portland?

MR. SHORES: The University of Oregon at Eugene.

MS. RIEDEL: At Eugene, okay. This was in 1940 —

MR. SHORES: Five [1945].

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: I graduated a year early because I — the war was still on and they — there were a number of us who skipped our senior year. We had enough credits, so that we'd have a year of college and before we were drafted. In the meantime, the war ended — and then the draft was ended, but I went — young. I was only 16 when I graduated, just turned 17 as I entered college, actually far too young because at that time all the veterans were coming back. It was a much older group of people and I was — it was a difficult time in that respect, but it was rewarding too.

MS. RIEDEL: And were you going to college specifically to study art?

MR. SHORES: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. RIEDEL: And how — were your parents okay with this by now?

MR. SHORES: Yes, they were just glad I was going on to college. I think they thought still I will be doing something more professional in their mind, but they never quarreled with it. And actually, I had very little help from them because they didn't have the finances. So they decided whatever I decided because I was doing it on my own it was all right. They didn't really demand that I sit back and listen to them or anything. It was pretty much up to me.

MS. RIEDEL: And was there anyone else in your community, besides Ellen, any other fellow students that were interested in arts? Did you have at all a small community of people, or was it pretty much one or two people there?

MR. SHORES: Yes, there was a fellow named Brian Connley, who was two years ahead of me in school and we had some classes in high school together, art department class. He went on into the navy and — but he'd been in the University of Oregon one year. So he — he told me who to contact and who to see in the art department and was a great help.

MS. RIEDEL: Great.

MR. SHORES: So when I got to Eugene, I would mention his name and they remembered him. He went on to become quite a famous artist and illustrator. He was the one I mentioned that did the — [inaudible] — portraits and doing a lot of commercial ads, had worked at the Metropolitan and the Modern. But yes, he was a great help getting me established at the University of Oregon and introduced me — said to be sure to go see Vic Avakian, Victoria Avakian, who was one of the leaders of ceramics in the West Coast. When she started at the university, I think, in 1925, she was a student of —

MS. RIEDEL: Glen Lukens?

MR. SHORES: Glen Lukens, yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And one of the first kilns in the Northwest. People from Seattle came down because no one teaching ceramics at that time. Boniface — I think it started later up in Seattle. So she was quite an addition to the Northwest. And later on, she and Lydia [Herrick] Hodges, who was the founder of the ceramic studio, were great friends. And she became — went on the board and she helped found the Oregon Ceramics Studio. Anyway, Vic became a lifetime friend from that time on, and I spent a year — my first year at the University of Oregon working with her. I was going to be a painter.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And she quickly persuaded me that, you know, clay was my material. And I began to realize, through her eyes too — and I still maintain it's true — that most people either respond and see things three-dimensionally or two-dimensionally because I've had a lot of painting students that really had a hard time with three dimensions and vice-versa, some of the three dimensional people, some draw and paint well, but most of them really think three-dimensionally.

MS. RIEDEL: But you've gone back and forth between all your life.

MR. SHORES: Yes, I have. I think there're a lot of people that do that, but the strength usually lies in one area. Primarily, like [Pablo] Picasso — to go to one extreme, primarily a painter, a great draftsman, but he did some sculpture and wonderful things —

MS. RIEDEL: Ceramics.

MR. SHORES: — the great sheep and the goats, and then of course, his ceramics, but he didn't do those, he just painted them.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: But — he understood — I think the really, really great artist can jump from one thing to another, even into dance and things like that. Some of them — but there's just that creative spirit that knows no bounds of materials. But generally speaking, though, I think people find their niche, whether it's three-dimensional or two-dimensional.

MS. RIEDEL: So you started with painting and then — but pretty quickly moved into clay.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I moved into —

MS. RIEDEL: And what sort of projects were you working on? Was it sculptural or functional, were you doing —

MR. SHORES: With Victoria, it was practical. We did press molds and plates with slip trail decorating, glaze decorating — it was an interesting time because it was the only time I did that work. Later on, it was all finished, but that's all she taught at the time.

MS. RIEDEL: Was there any slab work?

MR. SHORES: Slab — some slab work, but the sculpture — no clay sculpture, interesting.

MS. RIEDEL: Wheels at all? Were there potter's wheels?

MR. SHORES: There were some, but they were really rustic wheels, like stand-up treadle wheels —

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: — made out of sewing machines and things like that, which a lot of the schools had. And she really — had some wheel work, but she didn't — she didn't really know how to throw very well at the time. And she admitted it too. She said concentrated on her hand-built work, and professionally had been showing at the city of Paris and San Francisco and other places. So she — she was not just a teacher. She was also showing her work. And that was kind of unheard of, especially for a woman potter at that time. So it was the first beginnings. And the painting teachers I had were really extraordinary painters.

And I worked with a woman named Maude Kerns, who was an internationally known painter. She was a charming gray-haired grandmother-looking lady, wore long dresses, but she did the most unbelievable non-objective paintings. Most of them are at the [Solomon R.] Guggenheim [Museum, New York City] now, in their collection. She was well-known for her non-objective art, but you would look at her and think she might paint little kittens and little children — [laughs] — but nothing like that.

And I had the good fortune to work with her a year. We did very traditional work. We worked from models. But her eye was so keen and her teaching was so great, I learned a lot from her and we became quite good friends. In fact, I think I have a few letters from her too somewhere. I'm sure I have them somewhere. So she was an extraordinary person and then there were some painters, Andrew Vincent, who was important, and David McCosh, and Jack Wilkinson. So these were people that were all beginning to make impressions on me, but unfortunately, that one year in school, I really didn't have the money to go long.

MS. RIEDEL: The scholarship was just for a year?

MR. SHORES: Yes, just for a year. And I came to Portland and got a job at our local retail store Meier & Frank's, which was a big store at the time in — and doing windows and interiors. And I was — hadn't turned 18 yet, and I — I don't know — they didn't even ask me — but anyway they hired me, and a week later they fired me because they said, you're not — you can't work until you're 18.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah.

MR. SHORES: I was to be 18 the next week and so they hired me back the week after I turned 18. [Laughs.] And I really enjoyed working in the display department and I saved up enough money that I went back winter term, but in the meantime, I enjoyed being in the big city of Portland, and I bought my first painting — first collectible that I ever had at that time.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MR. SHORES: Louis Bunce, who was a well-known Portland painter, had been in New York, and had made a lot of friends here, and moved down here and started teaching. He and his wife — at that time Eda Bunce — opened a gallery called Kharouba Gallery and they had this — I walked by one day and I just was — just dazzled by the show. It was Ann Ryan — R-Y-A-N — who's probably the most famous collage artist in the United States. And they had been friends of hers and she'd sent these little collages, which was quite small, maybe four by six, six by eight, knotted between two sheets of glass and simply framed, but they were exquisite. They had little bits of gold leaf and threads and wonderful color. And I just — they were just — they were magic.

And I talked to Louis — I knew him slightly — and I said, oh, I wished I could buy one, but it is out of the question. I think they were $40 and that was a lot of money.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MR. SHORES: And he said, well, you can pay $5 a month on it or whatever you can pay. So I bought it and he kept it and I finally got it paid off, and I kept it for years. And unfortunately, I sold it at Sotheby's not — maybe ten years ago. I shouldn't have done it because it was — but I'd kind of lost interest in it. I think I — I think it sold for $6,000 or $8,000 — [laughs] — so it was a good investment, if nothing else. That was my first collectible piece.

MS. RIEDEL: And you've been collecting ever since, very actively.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, and it started then. So when they had a 100th anniversary birthday party this year for Louis at the Laura Russo Gallery, who carries his work — and we each wrote a little story about Louis that we knew and I wrote the story about my first, how he started my collecting, my first addiction. And it was quite successful, as a little story because it was true. It was the first one that — that I've bought.

So that was — then I went back to the University of Oregon that winter term. Then I couldn't make it financially in the spring term. So I went back to Lebanon and Lovedy Burkholder, my high school teacher was still there; and she hired me to work on the 18 — that it would be 1846 — it was the 100th anniversary of Lebanon. They did a big outdoor pageant and we did this huge canvas panorama of the Santiam Pass that was put up on pillars on the football field as a background for the pageant. And we worked on it all that spring. It was a great experience. Had it stretched out on the floor of the auditorium and had —

MS. RIEDEL: This was paint on canvas?

MR. SHORES: On canvas. And it was — today it would be an astronomical project, but she and I plunged into it and —

MS. RIEDEL: Just the two of you?

MR. SHORES: Just the two of us and then we hired a few students to kind of paint trees — [laughs] — things like that. But it was — it was — it was really pretty amateur, but it was very effective because it was the background for the covered wagons coming over the pass.

MS. RIEDEL: How big was it, do you remember?

MR. SHORES: Well, it stretched — I don't know — maybe 50 feet or — it was big.

MS. RIEDEL: Very large, and was it tacked up then?

MR. SHORES: It was put on telephone poles and scaffolding, and it was high too, as I remember it. It filled the football field pretty well. It was a major project.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: It took all that term to do it. So then from the money from that, I decided I just didn't need to go back to school. I was wanting to go on and get more sophistication, I guess. So I went to San Francisco. A friend of mine was living there, from Portland — from Lebanon —

MS. RIEDEL: This would have been '47 or '48?

MR. SHORES: That would be the summer of '46.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: No, it was summer of '47 — that's right, yeah, it would be.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And so my first plane flight was down to San Francisco, and I knew just this one friend from high school —

MS. RIEDEL: Was that Brian Connley? [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: No, he had moved on to New York.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: He was Daren Pierce. He'd been in the Navy and was working for Dorothy Liebes as a weaver.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: And so he introduced to a number of people and Dorothy Liebes too, and I got to know her somewhat. And it was very exciting. It was a nice time.

MS. RIEDEL: I imagine.

MR. SHORES: And I did some — some part-time work for some stores around, friends of Daren's, for Joseph Magnin, I did things for them. And my fulltime job was selling magazines under the stairway at the Emporium

Department Store on Market Street. And it was there that I met this wonderful woman. Her name was Wilkenson and — I forgot her first name now. I think it might have been Marianne Wilkenson [Vivian Wilkenson] — I'm not sure. But she was across the aisle from me in the literary guild section and we became friends. And she introduced to the Vedanta. First, I'd never heard of such a thing: the Vedanta Society. She was a Vedantist.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah.

MR. SHORES: I was intrigued by our discussions about the philosophy. And it was just opening new thought waves in my mind and —

MS. RIEDEL: You'd grown up with a sort of pretty traditional Christian background, right?

MR. SHORES: Very traditional.

MS. RIEDEL: In Lebanon, going to church and —

MR. SHORES: I went to church and summer bible school in summer school and church Sunday morning, Sunday night, sometimes during the week. It was a pretty rigorous fundamentalist. My mother was quite — my father wasn't involved in religion at all. [Laughs.] It was my mother. And she'd already — that was — and she'd always hope that I'd be a minister. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MR. SHORES: Yeah. And of course, that was the furthest thing from my mind — it played around — but anyway, it was an interesting break, because I've never had the opportunity or time to look into other philosophies and religions.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, what was it — about it that appealed to you or interested you so?

MR. SHORES: Well, the ecumenical quality, that it was — it was based on Hinduism, but it was assembling all the religions of the world, assuming that they were all going up the same mountain, but in different pathways and they're all struggling to achieve the same — the same ending, which is the peak of the mountain, or enlightenment, or salvation, or whatever one might call it.

And that just intrigued me to think — because it used to bother me to think Christianity was so exclusive. What about all the people that weren't exposed to Christianity? Are they lost? Are they — are they presumed damned forever, have no — no opportunity? And it just — somehow it didn't seem right, even though Christianity proposes equality amongst the world. It was exclusive too.

So that appealed to me that there was — that there were thoughts about the same thing only in a different vein. So out of that whole period of a year or so in San Francisco, that was the most — probably important thing that happened. I went to some night classes at the San Francisco Art Institute and things like that.

MS. RIEDEL: Who was teaching, do you remember?

MR. SHORES: The teacher?

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MR. SHORES: I don't remember. There were just — there was night sketch classes and things.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you go to the meetings of the Vedanta Society or did you —?

MR. SHORES: I went to a few, yes, with her, but it was mostly talking with her. And then one day she'd arrived at work and said, I'm leaving. And I was just — almost heartbroken. I said, how come? We didn't socialize much. We would spend our lunch hour together, running across town to some little health store that she found, but she said, I've decided to go into a retreat. I'm going somewhere in the Caribbean and meditate. And she just left. And she'd given me a couple of little books and — Vivian Wilkenson was her name.

MS. RIEDEL: Was she your age, Ken?

MR. SHORES: No, she was quite a bit older.

MS. RIEDEL: Considerably older, mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: She was probably — at that time, she must have been in her 40s maybe.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: But I really am very thankful to her just — it was like I was destined to meet someone like that. So — I'd spent some time there and then I moved on down — I managed to save a little money. I moved on down to Los Angeles. I went to the Art Center for one term. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Ah, for one term.

MR. SHORES: It was one semester. And it was wonderful, but I just didn't have — that was very expensive.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, it was.

MR. SHORES: And it introduced to me a whole idea of illustration that I found that was something I didn't really want to do, but great discipline, doing one- and two- and three-point perspectives and lots of figure drawing. It was a great fundamentalist. I would like to have gone there longer, but it just didn't work out.

MS. RIEDEL: Who was teaching there then? This was '47,'48?

MR. SHORES: This would be '47,'48 and I don't — I've got — I've got some early catalogue somewhere —

MS. RIEDEL: Nobody that was as impressive —

MR. SHORES: — but nobody that I remember, or nobody that I followed up with either.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Did you meet anybody working in — teaching in any of the other schools while you were down there?

MR. SHORES: No, unfortunately, I just — somehow that was a kind of a lost period, except for that. I really didn't really meet very many people. I was busy going to school and —

MS. RIEDEL: And focusing on drawing and two-dimensional, mostly painting?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, uh-huh, uh-huh. And I still have a few projects on that tucked away somewhere. And then I moved back to Portland and got a job at the Lipman-Wolfe Department Store as color consultant in the drapery department. And I did renderings and things for people's homes and I'd go out and pick out drapery material and fabrics. It was fascinating. It wasn't my field, but it was a good job, and I met a lot of interesting people. And they liked me there, and I happened to get drafted in the middle of all that. And they said, well, when you come back from the army, your job is here waiting and just continue on with it. Anyway, I went into the army.

MS. RIEDEL: And you went to Germany?

MR. SHORES: Yes, stationed in Germany for a year and a half. It was a two-year session. We were set to go to Korea and somehow they — by magic, it was changed. We went to Germany because the Russians were expected to — it was the Cold War. They were expected to attack Europe at any time and so we were always out in the field, living in pup tents.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MR. SHORES: I just hated it. It was so — and I was the head of supply, the supply sergeant, and so I had the job to furnish tents and equipment that were mostly in the field. And I had the opportunity to — I had a month's leave. So I had a great first tour of Italy. I spent it all in Italy — a wonderful tour.

MS. RIEDEL: Where did you go?

MR. SHORES: It was Rome — at that time, it was so cheap, and I could afford it. It was Rome and Naples and Sorrento, Florence, Venice. It was almost — it was like a 30-day trip around. It was a wonderful, wonderful new experience. And in the meantime, I had weekends in Paris, or up to Holland and stayed with a family there. I was placed into a family. It was a minister and his wife and children, and got to know the young fellows who were my age, their sons. And so it was a nice — in that respect, it was a nice time to see Europe.

MS. RIEDEL: And did you see much art?

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you go to museums?

MR. SHORES: Lots of art in Paris and a lot of churches and went to the opera in Wiesbaden, which was across the Rhine from where we were stationed. So it was my first chance of seeing lots of opera, so — when we were in the barracks — I sometimes went two or three times a week to the opera, and a couple, few people would go

with me and have dinner and go to the opera.

So it was kind of good time and a bad time too. It certainly cured me of camping. [They laugh.] After that when anybody says, let's go camping, it's just: I've done my share.

MS. RIEDEL: I can understand that.

MR. SHORES: So when I got out of the army, in '53, I didn't know what to do and I — I had friends in L.A. at that time — they had just — lived in Portland and were working down there and they had a big house in Laurel Canyon. And they said, well, why don't you come down here and get a job, maybe go to art school? And so I —

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have the GI Bill?

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. SHORES: So I'd decided to do that and started for Caro Upright, a fabric house downtown L.A., and again it was with — dealing with fabrics. It was a good job and it was fun. And I was sort of searching out classes and things like that. It was that whole summer — spring and summer I was there, and then they'd move me to Beverly Hills office. And that was fun because I met a lot of movie people who came to us wanting fabric, swatches — George Montgomery, and all kinds of people like that.

MS. RIEDEL: This would have been in '52 or so, yes?

MR. SHORES: Pardon me?

MS. RIEDEL: Fifty-two — 1952, '53?

MR. SHORES: Fifty-three.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And I was enjoying it a lot, but I somehow — I was sensible enough and had been thinking this is not really where it's at and I shouldn't be doing this. So I told Mr. Caro and Mr. Upright that I was leaving and they were furious. And they said, well, we've been gearing you, we've trained you to take over the Houston or the Honolulu office and we want you to do that. You shouldn't do — you shouldn't be leaving. And that was so tempting, you know, moving to Honolulu.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: But some common sense, which is not common anymore — [they laugh] — said to stick to it, then I went back to the University of Oregon.

MS. RIEDEL: And you decided to go to Oregon, rather than any place in L.A.?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I don't know why. Well, I guess I was being practical. That's probably — again, I was going — I went back to go into art education —

MS. RIEDEL: Ah, okay.

MR. SHORES: — and thinking that I'd better get some security in the art world. And much to the furor of Mr. Caro and Mr. Upright — I'd never heard from them since —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MR. SHORES: — and I often wondered what happened. They'd since died, but it was a big fabric firm and — I probably could have led on, but I would have been doing fabrics in Hawaii the rest of my life —

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MR. SHORES: — and I think of all the things I would have missed, but then there were things — who knows, but anyway, I started back to the University of Oregon.

MS. RIEDEL: And Vic was still there, Vic Avakian?

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: She was still teaching?

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, and when I saw her at registration day and I'd signed up for art history or art education, she said, what in the world? Why are you doing that? And I said, well, it's too late, I'm an art education major. She said, well, we'll fix that. [Riedel laughs.] But she — she wasn't my advisor. It was the art education guy Dr. Paul Ballinger.

And anyway, we've got a ceramics class going that term. And then of course, back in class, I realized that's really what it was all about. And I was taking painting from all of these wonderful instructors, Jack Wilkinson and Dave McCosh. So after fall term, she said, "Now you'll change your major back. She said you're not an art teacher." Well, Dr. Ballinger was — he was furious. In fact, he was going to vote against me for — at the senior year for a big Ellen Pernell scholarship, which was a lot of money, and turned out later he voted against me, but he was voted down because he would — never forgave me for changing my major.

MS. RIEDEL: From art education to art. He didn't —

MR. SHORES: Yes, because he said to me — he said, "Why are you doing that? You'll just end up teaching evening classes to faculty wives and things like that." He said, "You'll never make it in the art world." And he said — you know — and with art education, you'll have at least — you'll have — you could be teaching and have a guarantee of a job. He tried to be very persuasive, but Vic won out. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Well, he was completely wrong.

MR. SHORES: Yes, he was completely wrong, because I don't know what happened. I guess he finally retired. But he never forgave me for it and he was never very friendly after that. And I never had classes from him because there was no need to. So that started my career at the university. And I was fulltime and — about three straight years and summer sessions and all. I just — it was a wonderful time of work.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, one, you were working on undergrad? Is this when you went to Pond Farm?

MR. SHORES: And during this time that Vic had invited Marguerite [Wildenhain] to come up and do a show of hers — at the school gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: And so she was — she was — how did she — was she even aware of her down in —

MR. SHORES: I don't know how she happened to know about her. I guess she'd been reading about her and she was well known down in Pond Farm [CA], and I had never heard of her, but she brought this wonderful show of her work up and did a workshop.

MS. RIEDEL: At the university? And Marguerite came up and did, but it wasn't — came up and did a workshop at the university.

MR. SHORES: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] And — well, it was fascinating to see somebody throw so — it was like — you know, like a dance. And she — to watch Marguerite throw was just — it was like watching a dancer. She was so fluid and so very verbal too, talking about what she was doing. And we were all —

MS. RIEDEL: She was throwing all functional ware, yes — all functional ware?

MR. SHORES: All functional ware, yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm [affirmative], tableware, dinnerware.

MR. SHORES: And that's all she taught. Yeah, functional ware, and that's all we were taught — when we were at Pond Farm. But it didn't matter, it was just so exciting and Vic was caught up in it too. So we all decided — the four of us — five of us — to go to Pond Farm that summer and, of course, Marguerite was very encouraging and she was thrilled to see someone as old as Vic coming with her students to class. And you know, it's — other people wouldn't want to be — to humble themselves that much, but not Vic; she was interested in learning. And so we drove down in her car, but that was — that was — those two sessions, those two summer sessions had a big impact.

MS. RIEDEL: What was it like? Who else was there? How was the day structured?

MR. SHORES: Her classes were so structured, and the first week, we did nothing but learn how to set a clay over and over and over again. People — in most places, students would say, well, I'm going to throw something, I want to make something. She was very, very disciplined and then you did what she said, or you got out.

And then the second week, we would throw cylinders, dozens and dozens of cylinders as high as we could get

from the same amount of clay and as thin as we could get. Well, that sounds easy, but it was — it was hard because most of us hadn't thrown, and hadn't —

MS. RIEDEL: Would she have you cut them in half and check for consistency?

MR. SHORES: And check with the thickness, yes. So that went — it would be a six-hour days of just throwing —

MS. RIEDEL: Just throwing cylinders.

MR. SHORES: Just — yeah. And then squashing them up and we'd have wooden planks in front of our wheels and have four or five dozens cylinders. And she'd come by and we'd cut them with the wire. And that went on for at least — I guess it was a week. And then the next step was changing that cylinder into a mug form by — she used an inside tool and an outside tool. They were extensions of the fingers. It was like a rib — they were ribs.

And that was her way, her technique. That was a wonderful technique that we all learned. Of course, she had to —

MS. RIEDEL: Did she use them simultaneously: an inside rib and an outside rib?

MR. SHORES: Yes, so the inside would push out into the bend, outside — and we'd bend the outside, it was flexible. And so you'd form the shape and it would thin the walls.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And so we did these same little cylinders with a bulging little bellies on them and then forming a lip. And we did just hundreds of those. We would have just planks and planks and planks. And she'd come by and we — she'd cut them all open, and people got very possessive and she'd, no, we're not saving anything.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah. Nothing? Nothing was saved?

MR. SHORES: No, not that time. At the very end, we started to, but — and then I think the next —

MS. RIEDEL: Was she teaching you then to pull handles as well?

MR. SHORES: And we did handles after that. And then I went on into pitchers, which were the same shape but taller, and then saucers and cups and plates, vases, necked bottles, bottles —

MS. RIEDEL: And each week was a different form?

MR. SHORES: And it was very disciplined. Each week would be that and nothing else. We couldn't go back and do some more mugs or some more of these or these. She was very watchful. And then once in a while, she'd say, well, let's finish this one up and save it. She pulled up one or two and we trimmed them and then quite often, those would get broken up too. But once in a while, she'd have a space and she'd put somebody's piece up there. And it turned out these were the ones she fired at the end of the term. And most of us left with — was five or six pieces, sometimes small, sometimes larger, but —

MS. RIEDEL: Did you ever get to teapots? Did it get that far?

MR. SHORES: Yes, we got to teapots. Yes, that was — and they were all the Bauhaus form, pretty much Bauhaus. The unfortunate thing about Marguerite's classes, not because you learned to throw and you learned to throw well and you learned to be disciplined, but you learned to make Marguerite pots. And some of the students that had come back eight, 10, 12 years in a row, were doing pots exactly like her, beautifully made. But you couldn't tell them. They just could not break away. It was just so instilled in them that they would maybe in their own — form their owned glazes in their own studios, but their work was just very definitely part of her work. And of course, she liked that because it was kind of spreading the gospel and —

MS. RIEDEL: Was she teaching glaze calculation at all?

MR. SHORES: No, she never did.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: She didn't talk about glazes until the last week of school. She took the pots and fired them on one of the nights before we left, she'd fired all night, glaze, fired and opened the next day and passed out the pots to people. So it was like Christmas at the end of the term.

MS. RIEDEL: And was it six weeks, eight weeks, all summer long?

MR. SHORES: Nine weeks.

MS. RIEDEL: Nine weeks. And then were there communal dinners in the evenings?

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes. Well, we got — get together people who lived in various parts of — some lived in tents, some were down in the Armstrong Forest. Some were down in the — there was a camp down bellow the hill. I forgot what it was called — Armstrong, I guess. And there was a hotel, little — Forest Camp Hotel and some people stayed there. And there were two old — two or three old farmhouses at Pond Farm and three or four of us stayed in one of the farmhouses. There were only, like, 16 students, maybe 16 or 18, 16.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. Would she limit it to that?

MR. SHORES: Yes, for the summer session, and —

MS. RIEDEL: Do you remember any of the other students?

MR. SHORES: Yes, we were — I've lost track of almost all of them, but — except for the ones that were from Eugene. And yeah, unfortunately, I did, I lost track of them. And anyway, those evenings together, we'd sometimes have dinner at our own place and sometimes we'd have dinner together. It'd be up to Marguerite, depending on — and then she was sort of hold court, tell stories, and we'd discuss all kinds of things. And people smoked at that time and those that smoked were smoking. And she would make this great to-do about ripping the filters off the cigarettes. I wouldn't think of smoking a filtered cigarette and she'd puff on a cigarette. She really wasn't a smoker, but she was joining the group, so.

Once a week — almost once a week, we would go out on a field trip and draw, or go to the beach, or something like that. And then these drawing sessions that I mentioned earlier were — she'd have us look at a group of things she'd set out. And we'd draw it, and then turn our backs and she'd quiz us on what we'd been drawing, just to see how accurate our eyes were.

MS. RIEDEL: So she was teaching drawing classes at the same time?

MR. SHORES: Well, it was — it was a drawing session. It wasn't the technique of drawing. It was mostly trying to train the eye to see and this was her mechanism. But she didn't criticize the drawings or anything. It was — it was just another mechanism.

MS. RIEDEL: For a way to see the forms.

MR. SHORES: Yes, a way to see the form. And at the beach too, see — just to see, but mostly, it was kind of a day at the beach. It was —

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Would you work five days a week or seven, six?

MR. SHORES: Well, I think we worked Saturdays. I'm not sure, not Sundays. People did go over and work, I think one or two, but it was a day to go down to the

Guerneville, or go swimming, or something like that, take a break. She wasn't that disciplined. It wasn't seven days a week — [laughs] — but —

MS. RIEDEL: Got you. But six hours a day —

MR. SHORES: But she really demanded, and quite often, in both sessions that I was there, two or three people did — one session, maybe two or the other just finally couldn't take it. They just — it was too disciplined for them.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: And it wasn't that bad. It just that people aren't used to that — that European kind of discipline. And they just said, we're leaving. Because she'd say, if you don't like it, you can leave — and some did.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: But she lived in a little house next to this studio house. And it was a — it had fence and a gate. We were all —we're in the studio in the morning, waiting for her to come up, we can hear the gate go clink and Marguerite coming up to path. And almost every day, she would, in the afternoon, pick someone to come down to have wine with her after class.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah.

MR. SHORES: And to be picked was really special time. Well, it was a very — very great occasion and everybody was so envious. But then sometimes, she would have the whole group down. And she had wonderful things there, things from her mentor Gerhard Marcks, drawings and paintings, and Trude Guermonprez, and some Paul Klee things. She had wonderful things to show, and books, and then her own pots, of course.

And up by the studio, there was a sales room, where her things were kept. People would drop in all day long from down below and from tourists and visitors to buy things. And she'd dropped everything, of course, and ran out to sell to them. When I think back, there were just beautiful pieces there and they were all so inexpensive, but that's the way it was in those days.

But anyway, it was an introduction too of how — how to sell. She talked about things like that too, because she'd been selling at Gump's [Gallery, San Francisco, California] earlier, and she primarily sold them mostly up there at Pond Farm in her workshops. She'd always take a lot of work with her when she went around the United States —

MS. RIEDEL: She traveled.

MR. SHORES: — and sold a lot at that time too.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Were there many visiting artists or other artists passing through? Was this one you met Trude and —?

MR. SHORES: Yes, from time to time, Trude was there and I can't — there were. Yes, there were quite a few people that — and past students would come up and visit her in the summer.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Gerhard Marcks himself came, you said?

MR. SHORES: No, he was never there while I was there.

MS. RIEDEL: He never came? Ah, mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: I don't know whether she — she probably wouldn't want him — she'd want to spend the time with him, and if there was a class on — I know he did visit her a couple of times because it was a little house that she had set up just for his — that she called his — his little apartment. But — yes, there were interesting people there. I can't remember, other than Trude —

MS. RIEDEL: And that's when you met her, originally, and then you were both trustees to for the American Craft Council.

MR. SHORES: We all became quite good friends after that. I think maybe because she'd known I'd work with Marguerite. I've been part of Pond Farm and she had — she had been when it first started to — she was teaching there. And there was still the sheep there and the looms from when she — when she had her classes there.

MS. RIEDEL: And she and Marguerite, you said were, more good friends, even though they had artistic differences?

MR. SHORES: Yes, they were — I think they were — they were friends, I think, most of their lives. They had both very different opinions and ideas about things, but they were friends. And I'd forgotten who else had been up there. But someone had taught metalwork, and Gordon Herr who owned the Pond Farm, was the one that encouraged Marguerite to do this. And he — he taught —he may have taught some metalwork or architecture. I don't remember what he — she was always referring to Gordon because it was his — it was his place.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: And his son Jonathan lived up there. That's right, I've forgotten about Jonathan. And she was a great friend of his, and she was — she didn't raise him, but she was a great influence because he lived up there a lot and they were good friends. I don't know whatever happened to him. I'd love to know that, I don't know, I've forgotten about that, because he'd be a grown man now — a long time ago.

So — but there were interesting people and she talked about people in the community, and the plumbers, and electricians, and — they were all friends of hers. She'd say, I really enjoy the people who work around here more than artists. She said, these are much more real people. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Hmm.

MR. SHORES: And they all liked her and she liked them. She lived up there all alone, year-round. And I'm sure in the wintertime, it was very lonely because there was no one around for miles and it's wind on top of the

mountain. It's kind of hard to get up to her, the winding roadways, but she liked that and she'd had an old station wagon and she drove down those hills miles an hour. It's a wonder she didn't drive off the cliffs sometimes. [Laughs.] She knew it so well.

And she was well liked in the Guerneville community and was considered a kind of a celebrity, but — those kinds — not weird, but an artist in the community. And she — I think — I think she — I'm not sure exactly what happened. I think she finally had to move out and was in a rest home in her later years in maybe Los Angeles. I'm not exactly sure. I should — I don't even know who to ask anymore because Trude's gone and I don't know who would know.

MS. RIEDEL: But you would have been in your late 20s at this point?

MR. SHORES: Yes, yes, mid-to-late 20s. Yes, late 20s. Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Pretty dynamic experience.

MR. SHORES: That's when I graduated. I graduated at 29. I was 29 when I first started.

[END MD 01 TR 01.]

MS. RIEDEL: You went on to get an M.F.A. at the University of Oregon as well? Was that — this was while you were still an undergraduate, right?

MR. SHORES: Yes, I just continued right on. Just went straight on through and that's when — that's when I was awarded the Ellen Pernell scholarship, and I was a graduate student, a graduate instructor. I helped — I taught jewelry and —

MS. RIEDEL: Jewelry?

MR. SHORES: Yes. I worked with Max Nixon.

MS. RIEDEL: Using metal, ceramic?

MR. SHORES: Metal.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. Had you done that at all before?

MR. SHORES: Well, I had some classes with him before and he needed an assistant, so I helped out and did lost wax casting and fabrication. I'd taught a little bit at Lewis & Clark [College, Portland, OR] when I first started.

MS. RIEDEL: Metalsmithing?

MR. SHORES: Jewelry —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MR. SHORES: — mostly casting. I liked doing it, but it wasn't my material, though and I knew that, but —

MS. RIEDEL: You took some classes then in grad school, or when you were still an undergrad?

MR. SHORES: Undergrad — yeah, undergrad when I was taking the class, then I taught at the grad school.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, I didn't know that. I knew about the painting and the clay, but I didn't know about the metal.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, and I — painting was far more important, but I took it because I really kind of wanted to know the techniques. I was kind of interested in. I'm glad I did it because it was beneficial. I never took a weaving class, but I couldn't do it all, I guess.

But those two years at M.F.A. was — was a wonderful time. I had a great committee, and one of my other most influential people was Marion Ross, who was an art history professor, and he introduced me to pre-Columbian. He had fabulous classes on pre-Columbian.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MR. SHORES: I think he'd visited every Spanish colonial church in South America and Mexico. And he had wonderful slides. I think he traveled around Europe and the Orient too. But I took a lot of classes from him. He was another great disciplinarian. I suppose this was the exception to the rule: he was a male that influenced me greatly. Marion was a — turned out to be a great friend. I admired him greatly. His classes were just

extraordinary and he had an insight into all art forms, as a historian would have, not only architecture, which was his specialty, but he — he was interested in ceramics, was interested in paintings.

He was a well-rounded person, a very proper person, always wore Brooks Brothers suits and vests, and even when a group of us from the campus from the art school would go swimming up at Fall Creek on the weekends, we'd invite him, he'd sit in his Brooks Brothers suit and a black umbrella on the rocks and watch us swim. I've never seen him outside of that suit. [Riedel laughs.] And he traveled to Europe. He traveled with two Brooks Brothers suit, one he wore and one in the suitcase, and he'd travel, like, six months and with a tiny suitcase. And he said, the secret is, as you get to a hotel, you take your suit out and put it between the mattress and press it out that way and make sure it is flat. [Laughs.]

And he — had this amazing ability to focus in on things, to see what the problem was, or what the richness of something was. And he would teach that — you know, in his class, he'd tried to teach that at his classes. And with a group of us that — because a lot of people were afraid of him, he was — he had a stick and he would tap the screen and he was adamant. He looked a little bit like Truman Capote — [laughs] — that kind of a small feature, but he was nothing like him at all personality-wise, but —

MS. RIEDEL: And he was a great traveler?

MR. SHORES: World traveler. He sent me cards for years. He continued to travel all of his life.

MS. RIEDEL: Did that — did he inspire you, do you think?

MR. SHORES: Oh, he did. I mean, I used to think that's what I would like to do when I get to the place where I could that. We met in Europe one year. I was in Europe and we had a great time. We were in Holland together and Denmark. He introduced me to some architecture — or some architects that he admired and some interesting people. Marion was a real inspiration.

MS. RIEDEL: Did he collect too, Ken?

MR. SHORES: He had a small collection, yes. He invited — there was group of us that really liked him and he liked us because we paid attention to his classes. And he'd invite us sometimes after class, if there was, like, a five o'clock class, over to his apartment. He lived right on the edge of campus that was called the College Side and upstairs in a little apartment that looked just like an English professor's apartment: dark walls and parchment lampshades and lots of paintings of people that were there at the university, and some portraits of him, a couple of them, a lot of English majolica ware, and some really fascinating things.

I'd never been in somebody's house that had collected like that. It was a small collection because it was a small place, some oriental rugs. And he was a good cook. And he sort of — I just by watching him cook, I'd learned how to do simple things like how to make a green salad, he'd say, now, you can never get too much salt. And he would show us how to — well, he wasn't really showing us, we'd just watched him as we talked. And it was always a treat to go over there. And we'd have a couple of drinks with him. And he was very, very generous about having a few students over. And as a result, we became really friends, good long-time friends. And he was on my thesis committee. And he was really very intrigued about my thesis because I based it on — can't —I'd forgotten my thesis. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: It'll come.

MR. SHORES: In Barcelona —

MS. RIEDEL: [Antoni] Gaudí?

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: Yes. I based it on him because I've always admired his work. And so Marion had had some books on his work and the architecture and the ceramics and the great cathedral [Sagrada Familía] —

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: So I — most of it, it was inspired by nature. They were grown, earth, organic forms.

MS. RIEDEL: Of course.

MR. SHORES: And I was just so intrigued by all of that, so I did my thesis on pots with organic forms inspired by — by —

MS. RIEDEL: By nature, or by Gaudí.

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: By nature, or by Gaudí?

MR. SHORES: By nature and by Gaudí, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: So were these sort of those bamboo-looking flower containers, or did those come later?

MR. SHORES: Well, some of them were — almost lost the form of being a pot. They were — in fact, I have a disc — but I don't have anything to play it on — from the University of Oregon. They kept some of them after the thesis was over which Namita [Wiggers] wants to use in the show.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MR. SHORES: But some of the forms were maybe round volumes, like completely impregnated with mushrooms pulled out of the sides, somewhat like a bamboo star, and then mushroom forms or leaf forms applied like petals. And they became — they weren't actual copies of any organic vegetable or form, but they looked organic.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, very, and were they — they were glazed.

MR. SHORES: Glazed, but gently with earth-toned glazes, sometimes just clay slips and sometimes it'd be a white matt glaze or double glazed that bubbled through that made sort of an organic form.

MS. RIEDEL: And did you learn this from Vic, all this glaze technology from Vic?

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, Vic —

MS. RIEDEL: Because she studied from Glen Lukens.

MR. SHORES: Vic was a great glaze technician.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: That was her great strength. She glazes backwards and forwards. Unfortunately, most of the glazes she knew were low-fire bright-colored glazes because that's what they used, but she had a wealth of material on stoneware glazes and we would, like, once every two weeks, we would have a class of just glaze calculations. And we talked about that and firing.

MS. RIEDEL: Would she have you experiment too?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, we would each have — pick an area and do our own experiments. And she was great, because I must confess and I may have never said this publicly before — [laughs] — clay was my material, but the technical aspect of it really never intrigued me. There're a lot of potters who started out that got so absorbed in it and they forgot to make pots. They became kiln builders, they became technicians, glaze technicians, and they were so inspired by all of that. And that was the last thing I was interested in. I just — in fact, I really — I've never really enjoyed firing the kiln.

I did it because I had to and I learned to do it and I did it pretty well, but I — all that technical part of the ceramics was way down the list of interest for me. I found that most people that I ran into, potters, it was high on their list. They were intrigued by the — the way things were fired, the way kilns were built, and building an anagama kiln or building the tunnel kiln. This is something I would never undertake personally. And I'm not putting it down, it's just that — it was an area — I guess I was a little bit apprehensive about it because I didn't know that much and didn't want to know. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: And you were most interested then in its plasticity as a material?

MR. SHORES: Yes, I was more interested in what it could all do. I mean, I found clay an intriguing material, but I would much rather — skipped the firing part, but the firing was part of it too. I mean, there're things that you had to do to control the fire to form some of the glazes. But I guess I have never — I certainly would never confess that to my students because — [laughs] —

MS. RIEDEL: But this was to all technical skill you had under your belt, so you could use it as you needed it.

MR. SHORES: No, it was thanks to Vic that I learned all of this because she was — she loved kilns and I — she

was a tiny little person. She'd climb underneath these big gas kilns and work on the burners and she — she was just an extraordinary person. And she knew glazes very well, and the technical aspect. She learned all these from [Charles Fergus] Binns, and another person she worked with back in Ohio State [University, Columbus], I think, is where she spent summer sessions and I think she got a degree there — I'm not sure. But she really liked to the — well, I think at that time a woman in that field was — had to do that, otherwise she'd just be considered a dilettante. And so she really learned the technical aspect that —

MS. RIEDEL: The only one I can think of who was even doing something similar was Frances Senska. And did they have any interaction?

MR. SHORES: Senska? They knew each other, but I don't know — I think there was — there was enough distance that they didn't become very good friends, though she was a great admirer of Senska. And, in fact, that's how we first knew about Pete [Peter Voulkos] because I think Frances had sent word over that Pete was coming to the University of Oregon, and for Vic to meet him. And he was one of her better students.

MS. RIEDEL: And this — this was when Pete Voulkos was studying with Frances?

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, okay.

MR. SHORES: And so that's when Vic got to know him and she bought a piece of his at that time. And bought one of those beautiful bottles and since then — I think the gallery— the museum has it now. We'll definitely get into that.

MS. RIEDEL: We'll definitely get to that. I wanted to direct us briefly to Asilomar [First National Conference of American Craftsmen, convened by American Craft Council at Asilomar, CA], because this was happening right around the time of your M.F.A. —

MR. SHORES: That's right.

MS. RIEDEL: — 1957, the first council.

MR. SHORES: Was it — was it '57? I think it was.

MS. RIEDEL: I think so.

MR. SHORES: I think it was the year that I came up to Portland. It was that summer when I finally graduated. Yeah, it was. That's right. And Bob James, who was an assistant to Vic at the time and later took her place as head of the department, he and I went down together. Vic didn't go. I guess she didn't — wasn't interested. And we went down together and I wasn't sure what I was getting into —

MS. RIEDEL: I bet.

MR. SHORES: I just heard that it was going to be a group of crafts people from around the United States and it was the first one. And so we drove down and I — we stayed in a dorm that they'd set up for people. And it was just a wealth of experience —oh. Vic had sent word to one of her friends, Arthur Pulos, who taught at Rochester in metal. Do you know the name?

MS. RIEDEL: I do.

MR. SHORES: They were good friends and she'd told Art to be sure that he and I get together. So I met him at the time. And almost, as I recall, there was some talk of me going back there to teach, but maybe not that year, but the next. He was very nice to me. He was a very pleasant guy. And anyway, I met a lot of people. I met Toshiko [Takaezu] for the first time and Voulkos and [Antonio] Prieto. And Marguerite was there, of course, holding court — [laughs].

MS. RIEDEL: And these were the first time you were meeting a lot of these artists?

MR. SHORES: A lot of, for the first time, yes. A wonderful woman from Ojai [California], the potter, with that little jewel-like things, was the mistress to Marcel Duchamp —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, Bea — not — Beatrice Wood, yeah.

MR. SHORES: Beatrice Wood. I think she was there and — probably this went on around people I never heard of before they became well-known later. We met the first time. It was actually the first grouping of people getting together like that ever. And there were all kinds of group discussions and seminars and a lot of parties in the

evenings. I was at the beach, and there were bonfires.

There was a great spirit that went on. I can't remember how long it lasted. It seems to me it was four or five, six days. Some people may have stayed longer, but it was just an amazing experience. We didn't know what was going to happen, but it turned out an enormous success.

And it was the American Craft Council — the World Craft Council, they put it together.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And they published — made a publication of the whole thing. And that's — that's really when the American Craft Council became the — kind of become known to the crafts people as they're actually doing something spectacular like this.

MS. RIEDEL: And a major presence on the West Coast with that.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I mean, people knew about the American Way and America House and the magazine, but this was the first time they'd really done — brought the people together. And I think after that they did it regularly then and either regionally or nationally.

MS. RIEDEL: What were some of your impressions? Who do you remember in particular from that conference? Does anything stand out? You talked about a heated discussion between Marguerite and Antonio Prieto.

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, I think that was one of the most memorable — there was a panel discussion, as I recall — I can't remember everybody there, but Pete was on the panel and Tony Prieto and Marguerite. And there was somebody else that was — that was very calming, but it turned out to be a real battle between Marguerite and Tony Prieto. And I can't remember what it was, but —

MS. RIEDEL: They were both making functional ware at the time, yes?

MR. SHORES: I think that — I think that as we discussed this — that Marguerite felt the discipline of the Bauhaus and the — the pottery should be functional and there was really only one way to throw and that's the Bauhaus way. And, of course, Prieto was much more experimental in his work and a pot can be a pot. It could be all different forms and —

MS. RIEDEL: A painter too, yes —

MR. SHORES: And — but it got to be very verbal and hot and heated and angry, they'd both had tempers. Hers being — [laughs] — the German temperament, his being Italian, I guess — but it was exciting. And Pete was trying in his calm, quiet way to say, let's slow down. Let's talk this out and — but it was — it made it a great interest to everybody. It got people excited and thought-provoking.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, he was at Archie Bray at the time, right?

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: Pete was at Archie Bray [Foundation, Helena, MT] at the time?

MR. SHORES: I think by that time, he was down in L.A.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MR. SHORES: Fifty-seven.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, that makes sense, right.

MR. SHORES: I think he was. Yes, he — I think he was. And I don't even remember whether Paul was there or not — Soldner. I think he must have been.

MS. RIEDEL: He might have been a calming influence, I would think.

MR. SHORES: He maybe, he was. I just don't remember him there. I think Lenore Tawney — I think she was there.

MS. RIEDEL: Sam Maloof, probably —

MR. SHORES: Who?

MS. RIEDEL: Sam Maloof.

MR. SHORES: Yes, I'm sure he was.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] The Heinos and the Natzlers [Otto and Gertrude Natzler] were they there — Otto and Vivika Heino and the Natzlers?

MR. SHORES: I don't remember them being there. I would think I would remember that. There were a lot of jewelers, Merry Renk. I can't — I wished I'd gone through that book before I gave it to the museum — [laughs] — because everybody was listed in it. It was kind of the who's who in the United States that could — that was available. They all seemed to make an effort to go.

MS. RIEDEL: It must have been extraordinary for you as a young artist just starting —

MR. SHORES: It was just at the right time too. I'd finished and I was kind of ready to go out and do my own thing. And it was nice talking to Art, and he was trying to give me some advice. And at that time, there were no real teaching jobs. There was a job at Flint, Michigan, of all places, some junior college and Vic sort of encouraged me to apply to it, but I wasn't too interested in that. I guess I did apply, but I don't remember if anything came of it. But at the same time, the museum was — at that time, the ceramic studio was looking for a technician, as they called them, somebody to work, do the firings for them and help out with the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: And had you been involved with them yet?

MR. SHORES: No.

MS. RIEDEL: So this is — and Lydia Herrick Hodge was running it at this point.

MR. SHORES: Lydia and Vic — Victoria — Vic were good friends, and Lydia would say, is there anybody you know that you could suggest that we could hire? And Vic said, why don't you think about that? And I said, well, I don't want to be a technician. It's kind of scared me because I'm not too interested in that. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Right, exactly.

MR. SHORES: But I was intrigued by the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: Hmm. They had a gallery in the school at the time.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, and — in a way, it wasn't a school. It was just a big back workroom where —

MS. RIEDEL: They'd fire the —

MR. SHORES: — where we fired and sold the clay and materials, and also a place where I could work.

MS. RIEDEL: Sort of supply shop.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, it was kind of a pot shop, and she said, well, just go up and talk to them. And I said, I guess it wouldn't hurt. But it just didn't sound like the right thing to do, but I came up and it was — the group that I — the review board were all the volunteers, all these ladies. They were wonderful women. They were — most of the volunteers at that time were husbands of architects — it was a woman's architectural league, and they were — somehow had gotten involved with the studio. And they were all there. And to be a volunteer with Lydia — you would have to almost like go through boot camp. [Riedel laughs.] And it was a privilege to be a volunteer. I mean, you fought to be one, and so they were all very smug being volunteers and very sure of themselves, and entrenched. And I just —

MS. RIEDEL: Now, was this where — is this how you met Delight Hamilton?

MR. SHORES: Yes, uh-huh.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, okay. And it — was there Mary McNab, was a she a volunteer too?

MR. SHORES: Who?

MS. RIEDEL: McNab?

MR. SHORES: Kay McNab?

MS. RIEDEL: Kay McNab.

MR. SHORES: Yes, I heard she was. And although their husbands were architects, there were other groups that weren't, but most of them are wives of architects. It was — I was very inhibited when I walked in because there they all were in a big circle, sitting in chairs. There must have been 12 of them.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, my goodness.

MR. SHORES: And Lydia and Maurine —

MS. RIEDEL: Roberts, right?

MR. SHORES: Very outspoken. And they were all very nice, very polite, and I tried to be as cordial as I could and show interest, but I was really sort of — it was just so scary — [they laugh] — because all these women, and what was I getting into. And Lydia was — bless her — she was very, very nice and she — I could tell right away she's a real thoughtful, intelligent artist. And we talked about the history of the studio and her work and her sculpture, and how she was still trying to do some. And they'd said they were very interested in my work. They'd seen some of the thesis and pictures and — and she gave a tour of the studio and then we sat and talked.

And they all sort of quizzed me and I got through it fine. And then they would started talking about salary. And I think they were planning to — Lydia — in Lydia's mind — I found out later — wait a minute, I must have — she said that they were going to offer $5,000 for the year, which to me that was a lot of money, although it wasn't at that time. And Maurine, you know, we weren't friends at that time, she said — anyway, Maurine said, let's offer him $3,500.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh. Really?

MR. SHORES: And I said, well, I have to think about it. And — but it still intrigued me now, then I saw the place. There was a great workplace.

MS. RIEDEL: And you'd have your own studio — you'd have studio?

MR. SHORES: They said I could work part-time for the studio and part time on my own work. And I could sell it through the gallery. And instead of — at that time it was — I think they were taking a 25 percent commission and mine would be half of that. And so — that sounded intriguing too.

MS. RIEDEL: And the job, Ken, that was firing the — firing work for school kids or teachers that would bring it in, and selling clay?

MR. SHORES: For the public school, yeah — mostly little kids, like, kindergarten, first, second grade.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. They'd bring it in and you'd have to glaze it or it was glazed and you just load it and fired it and send it back out?

MR. SHORES: No, they had brought it in green, unfired because they didn't have kilns.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: They had other — there'll be boxes and boxes of little animals and figures, broken arms and legs and paws and tails — [laughs] — which I'd have to piece together.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, gosh.

MS. RIEDEL: It took forever to get that done.

MS. RIEDEL: You fixed them?

MR. SHORES: And then I had to separate it in this huge kiln, so I knew which school — because none — they weren't signed or anything, just keeping them all straight. It was a labor of love.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: But sometimes they'd be, you know, thousands of these pieces, and somewhere along the way — I'd lost the picture — I had slides of it coming out of the kiln, all these bright pink, blue, yellow, green animals. And it was just thrilling to see all these things. And I'd got them out of the kiln and packed them in boxes; they'd come and pick them up. But I often thought it might have started some of the children on to — way to an artistic career — maybe, maybe not. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: But it was a service that the studio offered and —

MS. RIEDEL: And that was one of the ways the studio had gotten started was to — somebody donated the land and that was one of the provisions, correct? Was that —

MR. SHORES: Yeah, the school's board gave the land for $1. It was a whole half of a city block. And then WPA [Works Progress Administration] and — it was all put together by grants and foundations, and I think that was part of the idea that it would be to help the schools. And then we sold all kinds of chemicals for local potters, the few that there were — it sold cobalt by the half-pound in little bags and pushing them sort of like a country store. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And clay, finally — and we sold clay. So that was my job, to do all of that. And then it turned out that Lydia was not well then and within the first year she got sick —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MR. SHORES: — and had — she sort of directed the gallery from home, from her bed because she was there about a year. So a lot of the responsibility fell on me because I was the only paid person, plus her secretary, who was partly paid — not very much — but she was very, very loyal and came everyday and did all the books.

MS. RIEDEL: And who installed the shows in the gallery?

MR. SHORES: Maurine.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: Maurine and I. I was — immediately was — it was one of my first jobs also, which wasn't talked about. [Laughs.] And it was a big job and it was a wonderful experience. And Maurine had a great eye. She could look at the space and say, this is where this is going to go and this go. And I learned so much from her: how to put things together and how to envision. She had a real talent at that. She actually had an art background from the University of Washington [Seattle] and a degree, but never did anything with it but that. She did a little weaving then, but her whole life was the gallery. And it was very rewarding.

She — she became, like, second-in-command. She was Lydia's right-hand person. And everybody listened to her because when she said something — [laughs] — you paid attention. She was — she was very dominant that way, but a very likable, generous person too, a very sweet person. And we became fast friends, maybe because I sort of bowed under to her too — [Riedel laughs] — but I didn't mind that because I learned a lot. I appreciated what she was saying. But she was a great force there because Lydia was not able to do anything like that. And so when Lydia died, that's when they decided that maybe that was the end of the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: And you'd been working there for how long? You started it right —

MR. SHORES: I started in '57 —

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: — and I think — I don't know, maybe two years.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, really quickly then.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, it was very short. Maybe — I don't know how long, I can't remember. I should remember that, but I don't — a couple of years.

MS. RIEDEL: You were — you were the artist-in-residence there. You worked there from, I think, '57-'64 or so no, before you became the director?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, that's right.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. So how — so how long was — when did Lydia pass away and when was the time that they were going to close? And did you become director immediately after that?

MR. SHORES: No, no.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: There were years we just didn't have a director.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And I — that was — those were kind of hard years because it was — I was kind of acting director, but not officially, and Barbara [Weber] and I together kind of ran the place.

MS. RIEDEL: And you — who was involved in the movement to save it? Because it did almost close when Lydia died, right?

MR. SHORES: Yes, and that was when Lydia died, and even the board, most of the board said, well, it served its purpose and there's no one to spearhead it and we don't have that kind of person —

MS. RIEDEL: Maurine was unable or —?

MR. SHORES: Well, Maurine said she couldn't do it. But she was very adamant about not — but on the other hand, she said — she was so loyal to Lydia — she said, I don't know what we'll do without her. But I think she really didn't want it to close —

MS. RIEDEL: And it had been run by Lydia from the start? So we're talking practically 20 years, is that right?

MR. SHORES: Yes. And then Sue Cooley, who was a major force at the gallery, she had moved here from the East Coast. Her husband started a big company, which became internationally known — Precision Castparts — and they became very, very wealthy. She was a really wonderful person — is; she's still alive — and became one of the most important volunteers. She kind of took over too, and helped get us through that part. And she and I and — mostly she and I — and I think Maurine supported us too — said, let's propose to the board that we get rid of the backroom, where all the — the industry was going on, get the big kiln out of the kiln room and that could be my studio. It was a huge room. It's bigger than this room, and had high, double ceilings. And then make that into a studio — make into an exhibition space.

And, of course, it would have cost some money and we didn't —the gallery had no money at all. It lived from month to month to month. And then people would give a little, but no one was giving great sums of money. So we had a great board at that time. David Pugh was head of Owings & Merrill here in Portland. He was the president of the board. And he and Dick Norman, who was an architect on the board, listened to our pleas and even Vic, I think, said, well, if you think you can do it, do it. Plus the board just didn't want to take it on because boards are responsible for an organization and just no one felt they could take that kind of thing on.

MS. RIEDEL: But also the — even as — well, especially under Lydia's care, there'd been extraordinary exhibitions there, yes?

MR. SHORES: Yes, there had been wonderful things, and it was becoming internationally known. It had a voice.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely. And there was a rivalry to some degree with the East Coast and the West Coast.

MR. SHORES: Very much so between that and the American Crafts Council and the Contemporary — Museum of Contemporary Crafts [New York, New York], especially America House because they had a shop and Contemporary Crafts [Portland, Oregon] had a shop.

MS. RIEDEL: And this far preceded America House by a few years at least, right — Oregon Ceramic Studio?

MR. SHORES: Oh, many years, yeah, quite a few. And I saw an exhibition before there was — I think it's in the museum's archives now — great letters between Lydia and Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb, the founder of American Crafts Council, exchanging ideas and notes. And you could tell there was real rivalry there and a little bit of jealousy, I think, on both parts. But Mrs. Webb had so much money to build that and we — the gallery had none. But it was — still, it was a legend in its time, because she was paying attention to us, obviously she was and wanted to learn some of the facts of what had happened.

MS. RIEDEL: How Lydia had accomplished what she'd done?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, and how it happened. And Lydia was, I think, generous. I wished — I don't know how many of those letters exist, but I think there're still quite a few there. So we — finally, with Sue's help, we convinced the board to undertake this and raised — I think it was $5,000 or $6,000 to redo the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: So it could begin to generate more income and expand its role?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, to get the money and to redo the gallery. And they built the big deck on the back and gutted the interior, the kiln room. And I don't know, I guess that money partly was contributions. They did a fund drive and — it doesn't sound like much money now, but it was quite a bit then. And no one had ever given much money to the gallery. It was — sort of run on a shoestring.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: Lydia never had board meetings. She'd go once a year to the chairman of the board, Charles Adams, who was head of the bank downtown — [laughs] —and just say we need this and this and this. And that was the board meeting. [Riedel laughs.] And he was so great, Charles F. Adams. He'd supported the gallery right through those bitter times, but it was so casually run. And then got more formalized, of course, as it got larger and kind of big because it had to be more fund drives. So once that was accomplished, then that opened up the stairways —

MS. RIEDEL: Did Sue Cooley sort of spearhead that drive to raise the funds? Sue Cooley, or who undertook that monumental fundraising?

MR. SHORES: Well, the board did and we all helped. And Sue still, I think — as I recall she'd kind of helped spearhead the drive. Some of the members of the board said they'd volunteer, and —

MS. RIEDEL: Do you remember who was on the board at the time?

MR. SHORES: Well, they have a list of it.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: I can't remember. I know Vic — Vic was still on it and I can't remember, maybe Ruth Halvorsen, who was a Portland public schools superintendent and she was very responsive, and Dick Norman, who was the architect that helped. And I just don't remember — but there is a list of them all.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, sort of a history of a heroic fundraising in transition to that institution.

MR. SHORES: Yes, I mean, it — amazing those people, how they stuck it out with all that. But when it first opened — the studio always had great, great support from the press in Portland. The art directors and the art writers, editors for *The Oregonian* always had something in the paper about the Oregon Ceramics Studio or Contemporary Crafts. They were so good about it. I think it got as much, if not more, coverage than the museum, but they were — because they were always interested in the new shows and they were always reviewed.

MS. RIEDEL: I remember amazing shows. I mean, Marguerite had a show — Marguerite Wildenhain, Voulkos had early shows, right?

MR. SHORES: The early shows, yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: The first Voulkos show on —

MR. SHORES: First, yes —

MS. RIEDEL: Voulkos show.

MR. SHORES: — and the first Jack Lenor Larsen fabric show. There were a lot of firsts from people in the Northwest.

MS. RIEDEL: Rudy Autio, did he show here?

MR. SHORES: Who?

MS. RIEDEL: Rudy, Rudy Autio?

MR. SHORES: Rudy, yes. He had a show up in — well, down at Seattle, but he had a big show there early and somehow having a show there opened up more vistas than any place else because it was getting to be nationally known. So if you could say on your résumé you had a show at Oregon Ceramics Studio or Contemporary Crafts, it was meaningful.

MS. RIEDEL: Why was the name changed and what was the reason for it?

MR. SHORES: It was — in the early '60s, I think —

MS. RIEDEL: That sounds right.

MR. SHORES: Sixty-two or '64, something like that. We felt there was — because there was no longer a service for doing ceramics, that it was more than that. It was an exhibition space. In fact, they had two names, Oregon — Contemporary Crafts Association and Contemporary Crafts Gallery, though the association was nonprofit, but

they both were. But that was the foremost thing.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] And first it was the association and then later became the gallery, is that right? Or they were simultaneous?

MR. SHORES: They had — somehow we had two names.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, it was both official, but the gallery was on the letterhead for gallery workings and then the association was for a formal — more formal, nonprofit correspondence. So that — that changed a lot too, and that —

MS. RIEDEL: And who was arranging the shows when you were acting as the technician and Lydia had passed away? Who was arranging for all the exhibitions?

MR. SHORES: How did they get arranged? Maurine mostly, and then she and I worked together on it. I remember bringing in suggestions, but she'd had experience of all the past shows. And I think that first few years were people that we'd shown before and that — and then there were some local people who hadn't shown, and then at that time I was beginning to have a show that was almost once a year. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MR. SHORES: I had a lot of shows there and Tom Hardy, a local sculptor, who had shown there before. He had a number of shows. So it filled up pretty fast.

MS. RIEDEL: Who else — do you remember who else exhibited during those early years?

MR. SHORES: Who else? Well, a lot of people from Seattle. And we had the Northwest Designer Craftsmen show down several years. Bob Sperry had a show there, Howard Kottler, Helen Skowronski, others — just ever so many — Ruth Pennington, the jeweler, and then from Montana, we had a Senska show, the Rudy Autio show, and a lot of the Montana potters showed there. And we had group shows. We had a couple of Bay Area shows of San Francisco potters also.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And —

MS. RIEDEL: So Tony Prieto would come up, and Edith Heath?

MR. SHORES: No, we never had — that I remember that, no.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: I don't think so. But yes, that's right. There were — California —

MS. RIEDEL: Carlton Ball, maybe?

MR. SHORES: I think that must be — I thought — it was before my time, but I think he was teaching up in Washington and I think he had a show there. I'm pretty sure he did. And then, of course, every year there was an annual, which kept everything busy, and I knew he had some things in those annuals. That got to be such a big job, we'd changed it to a biannual because it was just happening too fast, and there were too many people beginning — at the beginning, there weren't that many that submitted. And we got to be a big occasion. And the museum [Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon] bought out of each annual; some of their best things they owned are from those shows. They have early Voulkos vases and bottles, Autios — and wonderful Betty Feves, great pieces out of the annuals. So that — it was a busy schedule.

[END MD 01 TR02.]

Oh, yes. And Betty was a great supporter too and we had a lot of her shows. And she he lived in Pendleton and so she — she came over a lot and brought new things. She was a wonderful supporter. Ray Grimm had moved to town and taught at Portland State. He had a number of shows there. A lot of local potters, weavers, Laurie Herrick and — it was — it was a busy time.

MS. RIEDEL: And so you were — you were working on your own in the studio and exhibiting your work —

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: — and at this time you were working on very — they were — well these — I'm trying to think what you — what were the pieces like this early on? You hadn't gotten into the fetish —

MR. SHORES: Well, in the very beginning, I was so poverty-stricken and I was not being paid very much. [Laughs.] I was doing a lot of stuff to — a lot of things to — that sold easily, but I did hundreds of what — so-called people pots.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MR. SHORES: Little thrown figures that I added arms and legs and faces and appendages and hair and things, and then many, many, many, many owls. They were thrown forms and then squeezed together and pellets of clay put on. *Sunset Magazine* did a picture of *Owl Garden* [c. 1963] and I got just — I sold literally hundreds of those. But these were all things that were going for $5 apiece or $10. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Hmm.

MR. SHORES: And I was doing so well — and I was pleased — that Barbara, the secretary, said, I think we should change your percentage to 50 percent.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MR. SHORES: And I was —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MR. SHORES: — dumb enough not to fight back and I said, well, okay because I wanted the studio to be supported.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: I thought, well, it's my duty to do it. [Laughs.] So then all my newfound money went down the drain — it didn't go down the drain, it went to help support —

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: But she meant well too, but I don't think they thought I was going to sell that well. They were just commercial things.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. Was everybody else paying — were they taking 50 percent from all the exhibitions at that point?

MR. SHORES: No, still 25.

MS. RIEDEL: No. Oh. [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: So, well, anyway —

MS. RIEDEL: So you were penalized for working there. Oh, dear.

MR. SHORES: It worked out. So then I began to sell — still sell, and I took more time out for my own shows to do more important work. I started experimenting with things — back into organic — I did a lot of organic things again. And then I started doing some slab pieces. And I did one show that was nothing but slab sculptures and painted with acrylics.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, these — these weren't the tree totems — those were earlier than that?

MR. SHORES: No.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: Who had?

MS. RIEDEL: The totems, those trees — they were tree totems — it wasn't clear if they were freestanding or wall pieces, T shapes.

MR. SHORES: Oh, those were — no, those were something else.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: These were various sizes, but they were slab forms and like structures, in a way. And I, for some reason thought, why not paint with acrylic. It was before anybody started painting on clay.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: People were — it was probably the biggest — it wasn't a flop, but it was the least successful show I'd ever had and I thought it was one of the best.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MR. SHORES: But people said, how can you not put glazes on? Glazes go with clay and your glazes were so nice. Why would you give up glazes? Hardly anybody recognized it for what it was, I thought. I was kind of disappointed.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MR. SHORES: But now today, the few pieces that I found, I had saved a couple and today the Portland Art Museum and the Contemporary Crafts gallery [Museum of Contemporary Craft] gallery both fought over the last piece and they both wanted to buy it. And finally, the gallery got it because when ahead and raised the money for it, but it — you know, I'm just — there's one of those strange — I sent that show down — part of that show down to — I was invited to be — the show that's held in Southern California that's every year.

MS. RIEDEL: "Made in California?" The one that —

MR. SHORES: No, it's in one of the — the complex of schools down in Southern California for the — oh, gosh.

MS. RIEDEL: This isn't the Edith —

MR. SHORES: And they have a big ceramic show every year, they send invitation to one person.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, Scripps [College, Claremont, CA].

MR. SHORES: Scripps, yes. And I was invited to show there one year and I sent these down. And I'd never heard anything about it.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MR. SHORES: I think it all came back.

MS. RIEDEL: Was Paul Soldner there then?

MR. SHORES: I think he was, yeah. I think that's how I got the show. But still, it was — you know, and Paul was —

MS. RIEDEL: No comments at all.

MR. SHORES: — the acrylic was heresy.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right. And that was early, because the only one I can think of who was working fairly early with that was Bennett Bean, but I don't think he had even started to yet.

MR. SHORES: I don't think even then he hadn't.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MR. SHORES: Yes, but it was kind of a fluky thing to do, but having a lot of painting in my background, I thought, why don't I do that.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, right.

MR. SHORES: I'll have the opportunity to show though.

MS. RIEDEL: And what were the pieces like, Ken?

MR. SHORES: Well, I've got some pictures of them somewhere, but they were — they were sort of like little stage sets, but not stage sets. They were — they were set up on — sometimes on a cylindrical base, all clay. It was a slab and a backdrop that maybe was rearranged in different ways, and then slabs of clay protruding up, sort of — one that the gallery just bought that I mentioned was called *the Little Red i* [1962].

MS. RIEDEL: E-Y-E or I?

MR. SHORES: I, like the alphabet. And in the middle of this grey and white and brown, very painterly kind of surface with swabs and paint, was this slab of a little red I sticking up in the middle with a circle on the top for the dot of the I. And it was painted in red. I must say, it was pretty effective. And I liked it a lot, so I kept it. That's why it was — was still here when — I put it in another show when they decided they want to buy it. So that was one and then some — some were not as successful. Some were better than others, but — some were wall tiles, painted, but they weren't scenes or anything. It was just using paint.

MS. RIEDEL: So abstract, non-objective?

MR. SHORES: Abstract, yes, using paint as you would use glaze.

MS. RIEDEL: As different from owls as they could possibly be.

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, sometimes. [Riedel laughs.] And I did a lot of — before that figurative sculpture and things like that and — and which I still like to do, and portraits and things like this head. This was entirely different.

MS. RIEDEL: Exactly.

MR. SHORES: And I really wanted to do another show, but even Maurine and Owen, said, she — they'd allowed it to happen, but said they wouldn't do so well, but they'd reluctantly, and they were trying to be nice about it. The reviews were okay in town, but —

MS. RIEDEL: Really? The reviews were okay?

MR. SHORES: Well, they didn't put it down. But most of the people at that time didn't do critical reviews. They just did a review and said this is what it is, without making a pro or con statement. So it was — it was — I guess I wanted to say it was not well-received, but it was all right. I think one of the better shows that I had. So that was — that was an interesting time —

MS. RIEDEL: And do you think you would have continued to go on in that direction if it had been better reviewed?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I think would have. I started adding gold leaf to some things and some of the fetish pots and — but it wasn't like the paint. But I think I would —maybe would — if I think back on it, I'd thought about doing some fetish bowls or feathers, but I thought that's going too far. I mean, it's got completely out with feathers and paint — so I just didn't — I should have been more courageous, but I just — I got involved in what I was doing. I liked the idea of glazes on these little bowls, anyway.

MS. RIEDEL: And it's interesting that when I think about the later work, you'd got into paintings with fired clay involved.

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: So in some ways, you did bring the two back together again in a very unusual format.

MR. SHORES: Well, yeah. I was — it was in the back of my mind always to do that and I just went on. Then I got involved with — well, I did do a lot of whimsical buildings. I did a whole show of those and those were painted. That's right. I've forgotten that. Those were all painted.

MS. RIEDEL: That's right. This would have been also the early '60s, mid-'60s?

MR. SHORES: No, no, that would have been in the '70s.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, so later.

MR. SHORES: I think it was — yeah, it might have been after I started the feathers. It was much later, yes. And I had a show at Maveety Gallery, which was a big gallery at that time here in Portland and then up in Seattle. And it was a one-time thing. I enjoyed doing it, but they were all whimsical. They were decorative.

MS. RIEDEL: Very colorful?

MR. SHORES: Colorful.

MS. RIEDEL: Based on architecture that you've seen from your travels?

MR. SHORES: Mostly architecture, some were temples. And I remember I'd set — I forgot — a temple, sort of like Islamic temple, and I'd set it as an invitation to the show and Marion Ross — art historian — wrote back and said, I see you're still interested in architecture. He thought they were quite nice. I was glad to have his approval. But — yes, that was — that was an interesting show, but I just didn't repeat it again. That was a one-time thing. And some of them had gold leaf on them. I still have quite a few downstairs in the studio.

MS. RIEDEL: I'd like to see those later.

MR. SHORES: But it's interesting what people expect from you. Then the feather thing became quite acceptable and I've actually sold just about as many I could make, not that's not true, but I did very well with them.

MS. RIEDEL: And these started in the early '60s and it went on for ten years, yes?

MR. SHORES: Well, feathers started — no feathers didn't start till '70.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MR. SHORES: My first big show was 1970 at the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And then all through the '70s and '80s — it's about 15 years, or maybe longer and I still were doing a few. I still have been lately too, not so many but a few. But when that show — that big show in Kyoto was on —

MS. RIEDEL: That was in '71, I think, yes?

MR. SHORES: Yes, and he came out for that and picked out some pieces and they bought one or two for their museum that's in Kyoto. Did you ever see that show?

MS. RIEDEL: I didn't.

MR. SHORES: I was going to — I didn't even go over there to see it either.

MS. RIEDEL: Had you been to Japan?

MR. SHORES: No, I didn't. That's a big — big gap, but that was a — the book — it was a wonderful show. I think it was —

MS. RIEDEL: I imagine.

MR. SHORES: It must have been interesting. But I was pleased to be a part of that and I'd shown in a couple of other galleries in Japan, group shows and they seemed to like the feather things. They seemed to have a kind of oriental flavor in some cases. And I think it was then — two materials. It wasn't three because I always felt clay is such a specific definite material and the hardness of it and the durability of it, it'd be interesting to juxtapose that with something that's fragile and soft as a feather and yet make it work together and not make them look like it's decoration, like feathers were just stuck in, like, on a hat.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And it was a problem. I threw away as many pieces as I kept.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MR. SHORES: Because they just didn't work out. They just didn't work out. They began to look like they were just decoration and not — the most successful ones were the ones that — they integrated into the form and you could sometimes not tell one from the other, unless it was just a rim and then, of course, I'd emphasized the rim of a bowl. But it was a lot of trial and error, getting the holes put in the right angle because the feather quills, you can't bend or break. So you had to kind of go with nature.

So you had to plan ahead and the first three pieces I did, the feathers were going at all different angles and I couldn't get them to go into the same area because I didn't make the holes that way. So that was a problem and then having to make sure that the holes didn't fill with glaze, because sometimes there'd be 400 or 500 holes on the surface to put them, and inevitably some of them would fill up with glaze.

MS. RIEDEL: Throws off the spacing.

MR. SHORES: So I had to — dealt with that by putting sticks into the holes and let them burn out. And even then sometimes didn't work, but most of the time, it did. But there were just a lot of technical things, that they were

challenging and it was interesting and a good time.

MS. RIEDEL: Where did the inspiration for those pieces come from originally?

MR. SHORES: Well, that's when I was involved with pre-Columbian art and there was a lot of feather work done, headdresses and actually even a few things I found with clay, and in the Pomo Indian baskets in Northern California. I was always intrigued with the baskets and then those wonderful rims of feathers —

MS. RIEDEL: Feathers, right.

MR. SHORES: Sometimes over the whole surface. And then in the Northwest Indian collection, the Rasmussen Collection at the museum, a lot of feather work in that and I was inspired by all of these different areas. And feathers — and then I started reading about feathers. And feathers, for centuries, were considered money in cultures. They were traded. They were considered rare. And only the very wealthy could have feathers. Like, the Incas — only the chiefs could wear feather headdresses and feather ponchos. The same as in Hawaii, the feather robes for the kind and queen. And there was a great history of feather work in many, many cultures.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. Yes.

MR. SHORES: And mostly so-called primitive cultures, that were primitive of course, but used feathers because they were part of nature and they were beautiful —

MS. RIEDEL: Exquisite.

MR. SHORES: — especially tropical birds. So I was intrigued. I still am with feathers. When you see a beautiful feather, it's — it's just unbelievable that nature can produce that, some really unusual feather. I think it's still a lot to be done with feather work, but they're fragile and I've always been afraid of them disintegrating, so I've sprayed them, trying to maintain, and then they're usually under plastic boxes.

MS. RIEDEL: I was going to ask why the plexi enclosures. So was it strictly a question of —

MR. SHORES: Well, that was primarily the main reason, but then I found out later, they look so much better when they're in an enclosed face. They're much more — I don't mind the word at all, I use it all the time — but they're much more precious, more malleable-looking, more spiritual significance to them. It's like putting something on an altar that has its own location rather than just laying it somewhere. It designates it as a special item, which I think I wanted those little bowls to read that way. They were not just little bowls, they weren't utilitarian, but they were an offering bowl, a fetish bowl. So the boxes not only protected them, but they gave them that kind of special feeling that I thought, at that time, they should have.

And I remember the first one I took back to New York, when I was on the board of trustees at the American Crafts Council, I was showing it to Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb, and she said, oh, it looks like it came out of the Metropolitan Museum [of Art, New York City] — art museum. But she was intrigued by the idea that it was like a jewel. She'd said it was very jewel-like. And I hadn't really thought of it that way, but it was an interesting insight on her part that she quickly related to something that came out of the Met. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: That's marvelous.

[END MD 01 TR 03.]

MS. RIEDEL: Well, how did you decide to use the mirrors as bases?

MR. SHORES: Well, again, I think the enclosed space is important, but also, it seemed like it needed to have some dimension other than just sitting flat, and the mirrors gave it more life. You could see the underside. Sometimes I had feathers underneath and that way, it reflected the base of the piece.

MS. RIEDEL: It also doubled some of those very delicate ceramic edges. It almost looks like then instead of one, there were two.

MR. SHORES: Yes, right, because that was a little sort of illusionistic. The mirrors are wonderful. I was sort of intrigued. I really wanted to go on with using mirrors in a different way, but I never got around to that. But I think mirrors can be very exciting with three dimensional pieces, just clay of some sort.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, you used them as part of the small tiles later in the totem pieces, right? It was clay and glass and mirror.

MR. SHORES: Yes, right.

MS. RIEDEL: I imagine after all the trips to India too that you would have all sorts of ideas.

MR. SHORES: Yes, a lot of that did come from India because those wonderful temples that are nothing but tiny mirrors inside and like at Amber Palace in Rajasthan [India], you go into the little chamber and it's nothing but millions of mosaic mirrors and no windows. And with a candle, the guy would move the candle around and it's like a thousand constellations going on, absolutely overwhelming. It's so beautiful. And that was done hundreds of years ago.

It's amazing how people could replicate such an interesting visual experience, by just little mirrors and darkness and a candle. So that — yes, that was all inspiration. India is bound to inspire anybody, I think. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Well, definitely, let's move back because I feel like we haven't given fair time yet to Latin America, and in particular, Peru.

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: We're still in the '60s a little bit and you had said that pre-Columbian ceramics were a lot of the inspiration for the fetish pieces, the claim the feather pieces.

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And you had first started — when you first started traveling, your first big trips to Latin America were late '50s?

MR. SHORES: Well, it was actually first to Mexico City and, of course, seeing the big wonderful national museum there was so overwhelming and so beautiful.

MS. RIEDEL: This was '58, that big museum of anthropology?

MR. SHORES: Yes. And then I was intrigued with the culture and getting interested in the ceramics and the pre-Columbian pieces. So I started doing trips to the Yucatan and in the major Mayan sites: Uxmal and Chichen Itza.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MR. SHORES: Balenke and then Tecal in Guatemala and Honduras and Copan. It was so intriguing. I kept going back year after year. I just couldn't get enough of all of that. There was something so exotic and mysterious about the Mayan countryside and their architecture, as well as — even in Mexico, Monte Alban and some of the Zapotec structures there and, of course, the big pyramids outside of Mexico City. So, I was terribly caught up in all that and I spent most of that period of time going down to Mexico.

MS. RIEDEL: And what had first spurred your interest in Latin America? Was it the ceramics? Was it the art, the textiles?

MR. SHORES: Yes, I think it was. I think I was always interested in Mexican or pre-Columbian ceramics and I didn't know much about the fibers. I had seen pictures of cloth and feather pieces, but it wasn't the clay pieces, because I think of all the cultures, it's certainly one of the highest about how clay was manipulated in a very primitive way into such a sophisticated form. I don't know that the Greco-Cyprus pots and clay pieces are highly sophisticated, but equally so, I think are the pre-Columbian pieces.

MS. RIEDEL: Are you thinking in particular of the figurative works or are you thinking of the Incan painted pieces?

MR. SHORES: Well, both. Some of the figurative works are just absolutely amazing as sculpture. And then there's wonderful painted Mayan pots that —

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: — that are just beautiful paintings. I found it all intriguing and all very interesting. And certainly, for somebody interested in clay and textiles, there couldn't be a better place to go than that particular area. It's quite different than, say, Oriental ceramics. The refinement of the Chinese is not there —

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: — but there's a vigor and a strength that I think some of the Oriental doesn't have, that the pre-Columbian has. It's very direct and very, very powerful in its expression.

MS. RIEDEL: From the very small, detailed figures to those enormous Olmec heads, but those were stone, weren't they?

MR. SHORES: Some were stone, but some were clay, yes, and some were quite large. Back to two figures that we have at the museum are almost life-sized and they're all made in clay. They're seated figures. They're wonderful. No, they certainly were able to — as much as the Etruscans did life-size figures, the pre-Columbians were doing large-scale things, too.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: Of course, their stone work is beautiful, but I think for clay though, it stands with the rest of the world as far as achieving great things with clay. So that's always been a fascination to me, and it's close by. It seems almost — well, it's our neighbor, which is important too, because it enters the United States into the Southwest.

MS. RIEDEL: So you started looking at the architecture and the ceramics and then working your way further South?

MR. SHORES: Yes. I'm still obviously interested in Spanish Colonial architecture and artifacts, Santos figures and again, they're so varied and so beautifully done, but these are from all over the world, mostly from — well, not mostly from Mexico either. They're from Europe and everywhere, but that's a whole other subject of religious art. We might not do that right now.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. We can do that later.

MR. SHORES: But a lot of it comes from South America, the beautiful Santos figures.

MS. RIEDEL: So in the '60s, you were making these — well, you weren't — hadn't started the feather fetishes yet, so what was your work looking — what were you working on in the '60s?

MR. SHORES: Well, I was doing some figurative things.

MS. RIEDEL: You were doing the people pots still?

MR. SHORES: Yes, some. And then I did a few things that were almost too close to being replicas, but they weren't, because I got so intrigued with the figurative aspect of some of the pre-Columbian pieces. But I just liked the idea that clay could do that and I used to emphasize that when I'm teaching too. Well, so-called primitive societies are not really primitive, but very sophisticated, another approach.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: And that's a good example I think is pre-Columbian. Anyway, it was a great period and I'd still like to go back some time. I understand the pyramids now, you can't climb them like you used to.

MS. RIEDEL: I think that's true.

MR. SHORES: A lot of them are falling into disrepair. It's a shame. But hopefully, they will restore them and try to bring them back into shape. And then, of course, there are thousands of places that haven't been discovered that are still under —

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely, the jungle has taken them over. No idea what might be under that.

MR. SHORES: — in mounds. It's intriguing to think what's underneath all of that.

MS. RIEDEL: Exactly.

MR. SHORES: Yes, maybe a whole civilization.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes. And until you stand there and see how easily it's covered over, it's hard to believe that that mountain could actually be —

MR. SHORES: And for that not to have been discovered — it's hard to believe that Hiram Bingham — it was 1911 before Machu Picchu was unearthed after all those years. It showed that the world was not as it is today, but there were lots of isolated places.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: There aren't that many anymore.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes. And who knows what else they would find in that area.

MR. SHORES: Unless they were hidden underground or someplace like that. But it's — that aspect of the world has certainly changed, because there are very few discoveries of lost civilizations. Maybe a pyramid down and then, a tomb, but the world's been discovered.

MS. RIEDEL: To a large degree. Now you went to Peru for the ACC Crafts Council in 1968?

MR. SHORES: Yes, for the 1968, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Let's talk about that.

MR. SHORES: It was a pretty grand trip. There were lots of people there. I don't know how many were in the conference, but hundreds. And I think it was Wampagnee was the name of the little tourist area. There were cement huts and cottages that everybody stayed in. Some people stayed in Lima, which was a half hour away by bus. But most everybody stayed out at Wampagnee. And it was just a great experience because there were good speakers, but there were people from all over the world. And again, from Ojai —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, Beatrice Wood —

MR. SHORES: Beatrice Wood appeared in her Indian saris during the conference and made the Lima newspapers. There were pictures of her walking in it.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, sure. [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: There were just all kind — everyone was there, it seemed like. Always, you see people, Lois [Moran] and Rose [Slivka] and Paul Smith were there and people from Europe even. It was a well attended conference.

MS. RIEDEL: I actually — I've taken us ahead because it was — you became a trustee for the World Crafts Council before this, in 1966. And this was right around the time that you were becoming the director of the — well, it was now becoming the Contemporary Craft Gallery Association. Can you talk about that time a little bit?

MR. SHORES: Well, yes. I think it was '66 that I became director. They decided they needed an official director and asked me to be the director and I said fine, but I did say that I thought maybe it was going to be time to move on to something else and I gave them a warning that I'd probably be teaching in a couple of years. Anyway, this was —

MS. RIEDEL: And was this — why were you thinking of that? Why were you thinking now of teaching after you hadn't thought about it since grad school, yes, or before that?

MR. SHORES: Well, I think it was another job. Somehow, the job at the gallery began to be really, not bureaucratic, but it got to be more of a desk job than it was an artist-in-residence job.

MS. RIEDEL: Got you.

MR. SHORES: And it was beginning to succeed more and it was busier and I felt I'm just going to end up being a director and quit being an artist. And I'd been there a long time and I also was very possessive about the gallery and I found that out when I went to — I took six months off and went to Europe in '62.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And everybody was — when I look back now, everybody was glad to see me going. They said, you need a break, can you go? And this — I was going to stay a year.

MS. RIEDEL: Where did you go?

MR. SHORES: And I got so — I felt how can the gallery get along without me? And I got so possessive about it, and kind of homesick, and no one had written to me for three days or four days and I thought, what's going on there, and I need to get back. And I began to sit back and realize that's all wrong, that it wasn't my gallery and I didn't want it anyway, but it wasn't — but I felt so responsible and I felt it was part of my life.

And so I spent six months and had a great time through Europe, came back early, much to the dismay of everybody, because they were getting along just fine without me.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs] Where did you go, Ken, while you were there for six months?

MR. SHORES: All over Europe. I spent a long time in France and the South of France, some in Italy, a lot of time in England and then, of course, into Spain.

MS. RIEDEL: So again, you were looking at a lot of architecture, no doubt —

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: — churches and villas.

MR. SHORES: And it was still a great time to be in Europe because things were relatively inexpensive. You could still do Europe on $5 a day, which is unheard of now.

MS. RIEDEL: Wow, yes.

MR. SHORES: But we actually did have — I was joined from time to time with friends, and we had the book and we would track down hotels and meals and everything for $5.

MS. RIEDEL: Unbelievable.

MR. SHORES: Unheard of. Now with Eurail pass. It was very, very reasonable. But money was still not plentiful then because I remember in the South of France, near Cannes, I was in a gallery and I saw the most beautiful Picasso litho [lithograph] of — the piece, the dove with an olive branch. And it was one of many he had done, but it was singed and I think it was an edition of 50 — signed and numbered — and it was $50. I wanted it so badly, but I thought, well, I can't carry it; I'd wreck it in a suitcase. I mean, if I sent it home, maybe it wouldn't get there. The rationale was at $50, it would have been like almost a month of travel, which is crazy. But to this day, that's the one regret I have that I didn't buy that.

MS. RIEDEL: Buy that piece.

MR. SHORES: But it was memorable. But I ended up buying a few things and bringing them — the figure up there, the standing figure with the leg sticking out —

MS. RIEDEL: Playing the instrument?

MR. SHORES: — there on the shelf, facing us with the two cherubs underneath him.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay, okay.

MR. SHORES: It's a 16th-century Spanish piece from a cathedral. Things like that were still available then — Gothic figures for $500 and $600, which I couldn't have afforded, but those were all available in that time period. So I brought a few things back in the suitcase when I came home, but that wasn't the reason for the trip —

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: — because I feel like it was not a big thing then, but it was a good trip and I learned a lot and saw a lot, and things I'll refer to later on in my work and so on.

MS. RIEDEL: In terms of architecture in particular?

MR. SHORES: Yes, particularly, yes. And the places along the Southern Riviera, the first time I'd seen the [Henri] Matisse Chapel [Chapelle du Saint Marie du Rosaire] at Vence, and things like that that I've seen several times later, but the first time, for some of those, and then the Gaudí pieces.

MS. RIEDEL: So, Barcelona, Sagrada Familia.

MR. SHORES: Yes. So it was a good time, but anyway, I got back in '62, and it was — so I stayed on and then four years later they proposed my being director. I was at '64 — '66?

MS. RIEDEL: I've got '65 maybe.

MR. SHORES: — sixty-five, okay, because I think '66, I started teaching, part time.

MS. RIEDEL: And '66 or — or, yes, and then '67, I think maybe you made the transition for good or I think maybe a little later than that, '67, yes.

MR. SHORES: I think it was the year after Peru that I did — I told the gallery — I was still considered part-time, which was ridiculous, half-time. And I said, well, okay, the other half-time, I'm going to start teaching at Lewis & Clark. I had a job offer. And then I'll keep half-time at the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: And what did you — as director of the gallery, what exhibitions did you schedule? What did you

want to do? Was there a significant shift from being the artist in residence to being the director, or were you pretty much doing the same thing with a different title?

MR. SHORES: Well, we continued on in the same thing. There were no great dynamic innovation — we still pretty much just kind of covered the Northwest area and still Maurine was around. And she was making the big decisions on that, even though I was director, but it was okay. But we had several invitation shows on a national scale that were pretty important, and regional ones. I think invitational shows can be sometimes higher-end shows, because you can pick out and put the people together that you feel have something in common and maybe the same quality work.

MS. RIEDEL: And would you jury those, or would Maurine jury them, or you'd do them together?

MR. SHORES: If they were invitational, they were just invited, so we had to make sure that we knew what we were doing.

MS. RIEDEL: But you choose — you chose who to invite, yes.

MR. SHORES: Yes, right.

MS. RIEDEL: And were there — who would you show? How would you choose? Would you always invite people — would you invite the same people year after year, or were you constantly looking for new work?

MR. SHORES: No, I think we were always trying to find — and particularly at that time, I was beginning to see people on the East Coast. And —

MS. RIEDEL: Because you now were a trustee with the American Craft Council.

MR. SHORES: And there was more exchange. I'm talking with people like Rose Slivka and — who became a good friend — and Paul, who —

MS. RIEDEL: Smith.

MR. SHORES: They had ideas too that they would contribute and say, why don't you do this and do that? Paul was a great theme show person. He would do shows called "The Door" or "Feathers" and "Fern Feathers." He was very talented in designing shows. So I pulled information from all these people, Lee Nordness was a great help.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, "Objects U.S.A." was a few years later.

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: "Object U.S.A." was a few years later?

MR. SHORES: Yes, that was '66.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, so that was ahead a year, '66. You were director at the gallery. You were now a trustee of the American Craft Council.

MR. SHORES: Teaching.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, and "Objects: U.S.A." was touring.

MR. SHORES: Yes, that's right. It was a big — yes, that was as I think back. In the middle of all that, when I finally — I guess it was '66 that I finally said, I'm going to teach full-time, and gave my notice to the gallery. And that fall, when I started teaching full-time, I had a call from Mr. Barrett [ph], who was president of the ACC, a really dear person.

MS. RIEDEL: Would you hold that thought for one moment, the call from Mr. Barrett?

[END MD 01 TR 04.]

MS. RIEDEL: This is Mija Riedel interviewing Ken Shores at the artist's home and studio in Portland, Oregon, on November 13, 2007, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, disc number two.

And we had — Mr. Barrett was calling.

MR. SHORES: Yes. I'd given my notice to the board at the gallery and started teaching full-time, and I think it was the second week of school that Mr. Barrett from ACC called and said that they wanted me to be the director of

Museum West in San Francisco, which had just opened a couple of years before. It was in Ghirardelli Square.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: You remember it?

MS. RIEDEL: No.

MR. SHORES: Well, this small gallery was an extension that ACC had decided to do West Coast, represent them and have exhibitions, and Paul did the installation and the lighting. It was really nice; small, but it was nice. He said, we'd like you to be a director, and I was so overwhelmed because I just started my new job and I — told him that and he said, but you'd be really good at this, we really want you, and Mrs. Webb wants you and he said, really seriously consider it. He said, I'm sure they'll let you out of your contract, and that wasn't a problem. I knew they would.

I said, well, let me think about it, so I told my boss at the time, the head of the department and he said, oh, you just started. We want you to stay, so I was in a great deliberation. And I kept thinking it would be exciting to be in San Francisco again, but I thought, well, it would be getting right back into a desk job, but I guess in my mind, I thought I might do it and I told Mr. Hinshaw at the school what would happen if I did, and he said, well, if you did, you did, and then we'd just have to find someone else.

Shortly after that, the next day or so, Mr. Barrett called and said, have you quit your job yet? I said, no, but I'm on the verge. He said, I hate to tell you this, but — Mrs. Carpenter was a great friend of Mrs. Webb's and lived in San Francisco. They'd gone to school together and she was on the board. She had a protégé in San Francisco and she wanted to be the director and she absolutely insisted on her or she'd withdraw her support. I shouldn't probably say that.

And so he said, I'm really sorry. We just have to do this because we were depending upon her for West Coast support and we need to have her part of it, and he said, I hope it hasn't wrecked your chances of your teaching, continuing. And I said, no, I think it will be all right. So I went back and told them [at Lewis and Clark], and they said, oh, that's wonderful. Anyway, that's how close I came to not continuing to teach.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. And you think you might have taken that?

MR. SHORES: I was on the verge of doing it. It was just so tempting.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MR. SHORES: And I thought, well, I could work down there and I was being unreasonable in my mind. But then I thought, on the other hand, that might be the end of my art.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: So I was mixed about it, but I was really tempted.

MS. RIEDEL: Of course.

MR. SHORES: And I thought that might even lead on to New York or something, but looking back on it now, it was — what a blessing because it folded up about two years later.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And it could have with me too, or maybe I could have succeeded with it, but it folded, so anyway —

MS. RIEDEL: Who was the director? Do you remember who became the director?

MR. SHORES: His name was Herb.

MS. RIEDEL: Herb?

MR. SHORES: Herb something.

MS. RIEDEL: Was he director for the entire two years?

MR. SHORES: I think so, I'm not sure. Nice fellow — I'd met him before and he seemed nice, but I don't know that he had any experience.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: I'm not sure about that either. It just was one of those things that I keep thinking in my life how many times, what if I had not left the fabric place in L.A. and gone on? What if that museum job had happened? Or what if I had stayed at the gallery and not taught, and all these — we all have "what-ifs" in our lives, the corners that we turn without knowing. It just seems like my life has been emphasized by decisions like that, but I can't complain because —

MS. RIEDEL: Some of which you controlled and —

MR. SHORES: — it all worked out very well. But it might have been better, who knows, but I don't know.

MS. RIEDEL: It could have been worse.

MR. SHORES: Much worse, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: So in '66, you now were teaching. And how did you become the Northwest representative of the American Crafts Council and what did that involve — the trustee, and what did that involve?

MR. SHORES: The one that was — I can't remember who it was before — oh, it was the Spencers, Ralph and Lorene Spencer, who were the Northwest trustees and it's voted on by the region of the membership. And they asked if I would put my name on the ballot and I said, sure, because I was still at the gallery too. Now, that would help the gallery and I thought it would be fun to be a trustee.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: And I knew the school would let me off to go because it was good for them too.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MR. SHORES: So I was voted in and became part of — I knew Lois quite well. She used to come around to the regions and we got to be quite friendly, so I knew right away what I was getting into because Lois was head of all this.

MS. RIEDEL: And what were your responsibilities? What did a trustee do?

MR. SHORES: Well, it was kind of keeping track of the region. We were to put on local conferences or affairs, so everybody would get a chance to know each other. It was sort of pulling the region together as a unit.

MS. RIEDEL: I see.

MR. SHORES: And then that unit would answer to the national unit.

MS. RIEDEL: Having a better understanding of what was going on.

MR. SHORES: Yes, what was going on and what to expect from the American Crafts Council and it was nice because we had several conferences and getting different ones in Washington, and once down here and once in Montana and people got around and went to these — it was like the big national ones, only these were regional ones. And Lois would come out, sometimes Paul, but almost always Lois was here as a representative and it kept the council in closer relationship to the regions by having these. I don't know what made them decide to give it all up; a number of years later they did. It's too bad in a way, but it might have gotten too expensive or too unwieldy.

MS. RIEDEL: Was this all funded by Mrs. Vanderbilt?

MR. SHORES: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] We would sometimes put on local events to take care of some of the expenses, but mostly, the national — I think it got to be a little unreal, but each of the trustees, we would go to New York four times a year for board meetings and we would all contribute information from the region and give reports. It was always interesting because there were six of us.

MS. RIEDEL: This is all in New York City.

MR. SHORES: Yes, all —

MS. RIEDEL: Trude Germonprez was another trustee?

MR. SHORES: She was the Southwest, and I was the Northwest and there were four others and it was very interesting. And Mrs. Webb — bless her — put us up in her apartment. She had a penthouse over in the 70s,

East 70s, and some people stayed in other places, but I stayed there a couple of times and it was just a delight. Did you ever meet her?

MS. RIEDEL: No. Would she stay there too?

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: Did she live there, so she was staying there as well at the penthouse?

MR. SHORES: Uh-huh [affirmative], who?

MS. RIEDEL: Mrs. Webb, was she —

MR. SHORES: Yes, she lived there. That was her home.

MS. RIEDEL: She was there too.

MR. SHORES: She lived there. In the little dining room, there was a wonderful [Paul] Gauguin, there was a [Claude] Monet water lily and they were just all over the house, just like the rest of us would put up a casual painting. That's what she had. And she had a little kiln room where she was doing —

MS. RIEDEL: In the penthouse? [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: — and little cups and things and I looked in there one day and the place was a mess and the whole thing had over fired, and there was glaze on it. I don't think she was — well, she was serious about it, but I don't think — she was just playing around, but she was interested. And she was a wonderful person. One morning, we were all having breakfast and she brought out — she cooked. She brought out eggs and she said, I don't know whether I put sugar or salt, but it doesn't matter, just eat it, she said. [Riedel laughs.] She was so casual.

And one night at a party — she was having a party there for a group of people because of the trustees — and across the room, I saw this beautiful sculpture and I hadn't seen it before, and I said to Mrs. Webb, who is the sculptor of that? Who is it? She said, oh, you know, and she couldn't think. And I couldn't tell from where I was either and we chatted for a minute or two about it and that was the end of it. And a week later, after I'd gotten home, I had a card from her, a wonderful little card, and all it said was, it's Lipchitz, and it was a Jacques Lipchitz sculpture, beautiful. That was just her kind of funny humor. She really had a sense of humor. She sent Christmas cards with her and — just 85 or so on a motorcycle with leather pants and jacket.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MR. SHORES: Yes, she was just quite a character. I liked her a lot. And when you'd go up there in a taxi cab around Manhattan, which we did several times, she always kind of wore long, flowery, almost like housedresses, and a straw hat, looking very provincial. But everything — the cab we got off, she would pay them and then tips of a quarter and they acted as if it was $100. They were just — she had that quality about her that she could get by with that. The rest of us would have given probably $1, or at least 50 cents, but she just gave him a quarter. She was an amazing woman. She was so generous and she had us up to her house up in the Hudson, the trustees one time, and we just did all kinds of extraordinary things.

MS. RIEDEL: Was she very involved in these conversations that you would have as a trustee?

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, she was at all the board meetings. She was very much involved and really cared. It was her life at that time. My understanding is, and I'm not sure that it's accurate, but she was left a bit of money. It was like $9 million. At that time it was quite a bit — from an aunt, and it was a kind of a superfluous fund that some of the heirs got, and she put that all into ACC and that was what started it and what maintained it. And unfortunately, everybody thought it was very, very affluent, the organization, and she never asked for much money or anything. And as a result, they never got grants or anything from anybody, because they thought that it was well established financially, but she was making it work on that, the bit of money that she acquired.

Whether that's actually accurate or not, but that's what I was told many times. But she was very dedicated to the organization and surrounded herself with good people and she went to all the — she was at Lima, greeting people at the airport at the World Crafts Council and she went to everything, and she was in her 70s, 80s, when all this was going on. She had lots of influence. She had known the Rockefellers who'd come to openings and probably were on the board. I have a card or two from Barbara Rockefeller when she was still on the board, and she was so dedicated to the craft. It gave her an existence, something really important to her, other than just being a socialite.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm, yes. And that would have to have been because she was committed over years. Did she make any sort of specific provisions for how it might continue after she was gone or the funds ran out or was

that part of the problem?

MR. SHORES: That I don't know because I wasn't on the board then, but I think not, because I know that it was quite a blow when they realized that there wasn't a lot of funding after she died. I think a lot of even the — I suspect even some of the board members didn't know that. I'm not sure. But they had people on the board strong enough. I think they rallied around and started raising money. And that may be why they got rid of the museum, one of the reasons, because there was a big privilege there too.

MS. RIEDEL: Museum West? On the East Coast? On the West Coast?

MR. SHORES: Yes, Museum West [San Jose, Califronia].

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, the America House.

MR. SHORES: Well, the America House, but also the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. It was there by the Modern, remember?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, okay.

MR. SHORES: And they owned that building — it was small, but then they moved to CBS.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, to CBS?

MR. SHORES: The CBS, the radio, the television.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, they moved into the same building?

MR. SHORES: Just across the street.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: They had a big space there, and I don't know what happened and now it's in that place on Columbus Circle, the old Teletower that was a museum.

MS. RIEDEL: Separate from the American Craft Museum of Art and Design?

MR. SHORES: Maybe that's what it's called now. It's being rebuilt and —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, the new one, right, exactly, because they're there on 53rd.

MR. SHORES: It had the big circle windows in it in Columbus Circle.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: I've forgotten who was — that was a museum at one time. It belonged to some — he was a very wealthy man. It lasted a few years and then it folded up. He built the building. Anyway, that's where I guess the museum is now and it's completely separate from American Crafts Council, and I never really did know why. I think all these reasons contributed to it, but it was after Mrs. Webb was gone. So now American Crafts Council is just mostly the magazine and they do, what, two or three shows a year, sale shows. It's quite different from what it was.

MS. RIEDEL: So all those craft shows would have started right after — you served as a trustee from '66 to '70? Is that right?

MR. SHORES: About that time, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And when did the craft fairs start up? That would have been the early '70s?

MR. SHORES: Well, I think that some of them were going during that time, I think, or just starting. The big one was upstate New York.

MS. RIEDEL: Rhinebeck I think, yes?

MR. SHORES: Yes, Rhinebeck, yes. And then the West Coast, I think, and in the South, but I guess that's —

MS. RIEDEL: Is that all?

MR. SHORES: — their major function now, other than the magazine.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. And that was her idea as well?

MR. SHORES: I think.

MS. RIEDEL: To build education and exposure.

MR. SHORES: Uh-huh [affirmative], and I think the thought was that they would maybe pay for themselves too because there was a lot of exchange of selling and renting out spaces, but I never knew the particulars about that because I left the council after four years, and Trude and I left the same time. I missed her as much as anything about not being on that council. Her sister lived in New York and her husband was Boris Aronson, the famous set designer. And I got to go to their apartment and meet him and Trude's sister was just as sweet and nice as Trude was, and that was a rare experience because I admired Boris's — he did cabaret and he did all the big musicals. He had great insight into — he was kind of number one. He was always taking Tonys, number one set designer. So that was part of meeting Trude. It was meeting them too. It was great.

MS. RIEDEL: And you two would visit back and forth, Trude and you, yes?

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes. And she came up to Portland sometimes, and I visited her down in California at her house. She was up on Mission Hill, I think. She had a wonderful view of the whole city, a little brick house, with her husband, John.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: And they had Paul Klees and Wassily Kandinsky and all kinds of things from the Bauhaus. I often wonder what happened to that collection. They were wonderful little Klee paintings.

MS. RIEDEL: Now — and we've talked yesterday about Margaret DePatta and you admired her work, but you never knew her in San Francisco.

MR. SHORES: No. And I wished I had, but I was a very, very young man, but I really — that was one of the first people that I heard about that I could actually own a piece of their work.

MS. RIEDEL: And you got a ring of hers — you bought a ring of hers. That was one of the very first — one of your very first art acquisitions.

MR. SHORES: Yes, right.

MS. RIEDEL: When you started teaching at the university or over the years, what was your approach, what was your teaching philosophy? We talked briefly about Marguerite Wildenhain's influence yesterday, but —

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes. When I started at Lewis & Clark it was a very small department actually; well, there were just three of us in the department.

MS. RIEDEL: And what were you to teach? Was it a specific media or —

MR. SHORES: Ceramics and sculpture, and I also ended up teaching the first couple of years of jewelry class. And my studio, the studio where I taught, was down in the basement of an old greenhouse. It was cold and damp and had to have the heater on all the time. In the wintertime, it had water on the floor; it was very primitive. But over the first, I think about three or four years, I finally got the administration to expand us to another building, biology, and they took over a new building, and I moved the whole department upstairs and it was huge there. It was big space where they were able to buy wheels and it was a wonderful space. So I taught. The first year or two, I taught sculpture and I hadn't taught full-time, ever. And I taught some classes at the museum art school and summer classes and things, but it was really more than I bargained for. Teaching full-time, it's not an easy job to do it well or try to do it well.

MS. RIEDEL: And try to maintain your own work.

MR. SHORES: Yes, so I conjured up some ideas for the sculpture class and unfortunately, a lot of — because they were going to offer — a lot of faculty wives joined the class immediately, which is inhibiting because I knew they'd go back and talk to their husbands and they'd go to the administrator. So I had to be really thoughtful about how I'm approaching all of this and make it look it interesting, and yet really make it really available so they could accomplish something because most of them didn't know what they were doing.

But it was fun and it was a learning process for both of us, for all of us, but it wasn't a very happy condition because it was so miserable down there, but students put up with it. It was a private school, Lewis & Clark, and they paid a lot of money to go there. And I was surprised they would tolerate it, but I think they found it intriguing. I even had a live model once, a nude model, and he just about froze to death down there. I just did it

once. I didn't want to be responsible for pneumonia or something like that.

But we muddled through and we had a couple of miserable wheels. We did mostly hand-building and then finally, when we moved upstairs and started getting a lot of electric wheels, then I could really start promoting the Pond Farm technique of throwing pots, but I incorporated it with my own thoughts because, in the meantime, I'd given up throwing with the double tools that I learned from Marguerite. I found it a little unwieldy, and she did it with smaller things and larger pots. You needed the pressure of a hand in order to — so I found — I changed a lot of things as I went along.

But I had some wonderful students, some students not so good, but that always happens. Some of the students have come along, they've gone on to be professional potters, some are showing and doing well and have good positions, so it was very rewarding. I still have correspondence. A few of my ex-students live here in town. We're all good friends. They've been very helpful to me and I've tried to be with them. So there are rewards to teaching, because the people you meet and some of the colleagues of faculty, I became friends with them. It was a new experience and the more I taught, the more I was able to do it with more ease and not put so much time in so I could get back to my own work.

MS. RIEDEL: And you'd teach wheel skills and then slab constructions, sculptural building, glaze calculation, all that sort of thing?

MR. SHORES: Yes, all of it, yes. The sculpture class, I did one term a year of just clay sculpture, and it was all hand-building and first, it was life size portrait that each one did, self-portrait, which was very soul searching for the students when they're trying to look at themselves in the mirror and actually see themselves in a realistic way.

And then we did other things in sculpture class, but that was one of the big — and then we also copied forms in nature, small forms and then would blow them up 20, 30 times. The piece outside that's about this high that looks like an artichoke, but it's an ear of popcorn, only about four inches high, and he blew it up to that size. And each kernel, it was made by hand and it took him like a month and a half to keep it wet and kept it all going. It's a fantastic piece.

MS. RIEDEL: It is a fantastic piece.

MR. SHORES: For craft and everything. It's one of the best pieces I've had come out of the student work. That's why I'm really pleased to have that piece and I've always admired it and every day I look at it I think what a tour de force it is.

MS. RIEDEL: It's exquisite. I noticed it when I walked in.

MR. SHORES: And I don't know what's happened to him, but anyway, the piece is here, so there were some great things about teaching.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you teach drawing too or you taught drawing as a part of ceramics?

MR. SHORES: I just did that as a part of the class sometimes just to — I emphasize that students try to look and study and I said, on your way down from the dorm every morning, really look and see what's going on because I'd ask about it after they got to the class, what have you seen today? And somebody was saying, oh, what do you mean, and nothing. I was on the same path this morning and there are new flowers growing up by the library, there are some wonderful rocks with moss, and they just looked at me blank, and the next day, they'd come and say, yes, we saw those.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you assign any sort or reading? It makes me think of John Ruskin and ways to see the world.

MR. SHORES: For reading?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: Well, we talked about — yes, certain things that one could read and I tried to make it more than just a "how to do it" ceramics course, which is what most of them thought they were signing up for.

MS. RIEDEL: And the drawing exercise reminds me of what you did in the Wildenhain Pond Farm exercise, to some degree.

MR. SHORES: Yes. We would have a big table full of 25 or 30 wine bottles, all different colors and sizes and shapes, and the whole class would sit around the big table and at 15-minute intervals, draw what they saw on the table. And then we'd move around to the next side and did four sides in an hour.

MS. RIEDEL: There were all different things too, milk bottles and other kinds of bottles, right?

MR. SHORES: They're all at different levels and different colors and different sizes, so they had a different perspective. Each time they went around, they could see everything eventually, if not, that one time. So at the very end of the session, they would turn their backs to the table and then I'd say, how many bottles were there? And hardly — I don't think anybody got the exact number — and then I'd say, what colors? How many blue ones were there and how many red and how many brown? No one ever got it right because they were too busy drawing and not looking. And they were just concentrating on pulling that form into a line and not really looking at — they might have just taken a minute to look at the whole thing and say what am I supposed to draw and get an idea.

It's hard and none of us would — I probably wouldn't be able to do that either, how many blue ones, but most of them were just stunned to think that that's what I was — what that was all about and they realized later that they all agreed that we use a small percentage of our eyesight. The rest of it is just sort of blank. First of all, our vision is directed at what we're doing. You can't have a — like some birds have super-vision. But we couldn't exist without focusing in on — but I think people just don't analyze what they're looking at. They don't really see the context of what things are in and how they understand what goes on next to it. You just look at something, you look at that one thing and that's it. I think we tend to be overly focused in our eyesight, unless it's something like an operation where you have to be focused in. We just don't see the overall picture too well.

MS. RIEDEL: That was something you tried to help them do.

MR. SHORES: I tried to expand their vision and just get people to rationalize in their mind what they're looking at and try to register, and not just a big blur or a big image, or I don't know what I saw, it was there or something. It has really paid off. I think most people had a good experience with that.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you firing all high-fired now? Stoneware, any porcelain?

MR. SHORES: It was — unless there was an advanced student that did some special firing, a little fire or something, but it really was stoneware and cone 10 and students got involved and they each had to make a glaze every term, at least one, and it was a cooperative. Everyone used each other's glazes, and a lot of the students were there for just one term. It was an elective. But then some would take it for one term, but stay a year and some changed their majors from biology to ceramics and things like that, but the majority were electives.

Today, I run into people who say, I had a class with you, but I had thousands of students over 30 years. If I'd had them for a year or more, I'd remember them, but the one-term people, they came and left. It went so quickly that I really didn't get to know them. But then we had a wonderful program at Lewis & Clark, and it was an overseas program. And they went for two terms, but I initiated a one-term trip to New York and it became so popular, we did it every year. They had three classes. One was, we would study contemporary art in New York and go to all the galleries and museums and once, we had a person there that taught them theater.

MS. RIEDEL: Is this the dean of the School of Humanities?

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: Was this the dean of the School of Humanities? Was this in the '60s or more recently in the '80s or '90s?

MR. SHORES: I think the first trip was like 1969 or '70.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: And the first trip to New York because one of my students, I still see. He was in that first group.

MS. RIEDEL: And someone would teach them theater?

MR. SHORES: Yes, and they had to all attend; we had 22 tickets. We went to 20 shows during their 10 weeks there and they had discussions about the show and usually had some theater graduate student back east who taught the class. And then the class in art I taught, and we did papers on galleries and unsigned galleries, particular shows, and we had discussions about that.

MS. RIEDEL: And they were doing no studio work during this time, right?

MR. SHORES: No. And the third class was a practicum that we set up before we left, and as these tours developed every year, they got better and better, and some of them — they work at the Museum of Modern Art. One was on *Interview Magazine* with Andy Warhol, some were at the Metropolitan because one of our graduates

was head of the American Painting at the Met and he took us to the vaults and did wonderful things. They were all over the city; some worked with artists as apprentices. They were just everywhere and part of it, we had field trips, we — Mary McFadden and Patrick Lannin had us up, I think I mentioned, up to his place. They had dinner for us. Alice Neel, the painter, had us over to her studio and spent the whole day talking about her art.

MS. RIEDEL: How extraordinary.

MR. SHORES: Just wonderful people, and Toshiko [Takaezu] had us out every once during every trip and had a big luncheon and we'd do a raku party at her kilns. And they had a wonderful time out in the country, having been in the city for a few weeks, you went crazy, and we met all kinds of famous artists in their studios. They were so generous about letting us in.

MS. RIEDEL: How did you set that up?

MR. SHORES: Well, just a part of it was my contacts with ACC and Rose Slivka, bless her. And each year word got out around New York, and some people used to call, since I do have a class coming out again, we'd like to have somebody, because they made use of them, apprenticed them. I think they were — I can't remember. It was two or three times a week, two times a week, maybe three, I don't remember; it depends on what it was. And most of them really enjoyed it and they had a great time, and some of them stayed on later after they graduated and got jobs in New York.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. Where would you take them, Ken? What would the focus of your class be?

MR. SHORES: The art part?

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: We would - it depended on what shows were on where, but if it was a special show I thought would be of interest to everybody — I hated to get too specialized.

MS. RIEDEL: Because this would be visual artists, students, potters and theater students as well?

MR. SHORES: Yes, uh-huh.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, so a range of art students.

MR. SHORES: And we went to some crafts things because of my area of interest and we went even down to Greenwich House, spent some time down there, visited several sculptors in their studios and then we'd go to the museums together. The Modern had an evening where they would let groups in like ours, just alone. We could see shows there. They had the programs set up like that. It was wonderful.

MS. RIEDEL: Fantastic.

MR. SHORES: So the longer we were — the Metropolitan Opera had us. We went one day and spent the whole morning watching a rehearsal and just a few small groups of students. I guess they do that occasionally. They really enjoyed that. I don't think they understood how they got into places they'd never — Mary McFadden gave us all tickets for a fashion show and we all got to go to one of her big fashions shows, and they all had an opportunity to know what that's like. So they did extraordinary things.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: And it was good for me too. I enjoyed it, but people in New York were generous about that. Of course, they got something in return, but Mary didn't have to do that, but she just thought the kids would like it, and, of course, all the big buyers were there and people from all over the fashion world were there, a little gold chair set up and the music playing. So that was a great experience too. It was a nice program for us, and they still do it, most of the emphasis overseas. They go over for two terms and all over. They've been everywhere, almost every country in the world. So it's a wonderful program.

MS. RIEDEL: And you really started that program?

MR. SHORES: Just in New York where I initiated that. The program had started, but they never had one to New York and the head of the program said, what about doing art? And they did have one to Washington D.C. and it was art-oriented, but there — and there's is a lot of art there, but he said, I think we should have one in New York. Why don't you lead one there, being as I'd been on the council and was familiar with New York, because I'd been back so often, I really felt like a New Yorker in a sense.

MS. RIEDEL: You'd go four or six times in a year for the Crafts Council. Is that right?

MR. SHORES: Yes, um-hum. So I really got acquainted with people, as well as I knew the city quite well.

MS. RIEDEL: I imagine Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb must have been introduction to some extraordinary connections.

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, she did. Rose was great. Rose's heart was in the art world, not the craft world. She'd married a sculptor and they'd divorced, but anyway, she knew all the sculptors and painters, [Richard] Diebenkorn — not Diebenkorn, but almost anybody you could name, she was a friend of theirs. She used to take me at nights to openings. I met so many people, famous people, and they all knew Rose. She was part of the scene there. She helped set up some of the artists for the students to go visit. And we got to visit *Craft Horizons* and see how the whole magazine was put together.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, was this before or after the major article in *Craft Horizons* about you and your work?

MR. SHORES: See, I think that was 1970.

MR. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: So that was just about the time my first trip was New York, but Rose was responsible for that because —

MS. RIEDEL: And she was very enthusiastic about your work and —

MR. SHORES: She was a very good friend and she liked the work and actually, you remember the old *Craft Horizons*?

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: It was more than an art magazine than a craft magazine. She had always had stuck in a few sculptors or artists in there.

MS. RIEDEL: I remember some of those old hardback copies. They were downstairs, from the late '50s, when they actually were hardbacks and bound.

MR. SHORES: Yes, they were really sort of the cardboard hard-bound. She was —

MS. RIEDEL: They were exquisite.

MR. SHORES: Did you ever know her?

MS. RIEDEL: I didn't.

MR. SHORES: Oh, she was quite a character, and very, very bright, very astute and for a scholar, too, had —

MS. RIEDEL: The range and diversity and depth of those publications, those issues was impressive, the *Craft Horizons*.

MR. SHORES: Yes, and I was kind of surprised when she left, that Lois took on the magazine, but Lois did such a good job too, but in a different way, and I think my understanding is that they wanted it to be more of a slick, posh, lots of photographs, hardly the old issues never had photographs much, they couldn't afford them. Oh, I think mine was the first color cover they had.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MR. SHORES: And it was because we raised some of the money here at that time for — it was kind of expensive in those days to do that. And then when Lois took over the magazine, it was practically all color photographs and quite a different approach, but I think she did a good job with it, but the new person sounds very good too.

MS. RIEDEL: Andrew Wagner, yes, I think so.

MR. SHORES: I think that's going to be a nice change. Each one had its own approach. Rose was really more of an art editor. She liked the crafts and she was knowledgeable, she knew everybody and she and Pete were good friends and she knew all the crafts people, but she really — her heart was in the painters, the painters and sculptors. That was okay.

MS. RIEDEL: In 1970, when this issue came out about you and your work, did it have a huge impact for you?

MR. SHORES: Yes. I had lots of response from people, friends and people I didn't know wrote letters, a few letters, and saying that they enjoyed it and they were interested in the direction I was going in and —

MS. RIEDEL: And by now, you were well into the clay and feather fetish pieces.

MR. SHORES: Yes. And the school was happy about it and it really helped the exhibitions because other people knew about the work, had seen that. It was great that that happened.

MS. RIEDEL: You were extraordinarily prolific. When I look back at — was looking back at your CV, you had one-man exhibitions through the '60s and '70s practically once a year, almost once a year —

MR. SHORES: Yes, I did.

MS. RIEDEL: — for 15 or 20 years while teaching full-time for —

MR. SHORES: And sometimes, maybe twice a year, some of the work would be incorporated in another show and move on in Seattle or someplace. Yes, I was busy. It's a lot of work, but I —

MS. RIEDEL: You were teaching and you were working and you were traveling.

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And at this time, the travel was still pretty much focused on Latin America in the '60s, yes?

MR. SHORES: Yes, it was. India didn't start until — the first trip, I think, was '74 and then most of the travel started to go in that direction, and went to Europe a couple of times, but most of the time — we had a wonderful break in our schedule at that time at Lewis & Clark we got out of school at Thanksgiving and didn't go back until January. So there would be sometimes six weeks. And it was a perfect time to go to India because the weather was good, and I'd never been to India in the humidity and the hot weather or the monsoons, because I was able to go at that time of the year. So that was another reason that I kept going back because it was such good weather and there was so much to do and see, and just kept returning to India. Yes, that was the first trip. I think I told you how it happened, didn't I?

MS. RIEDEL: I don't know.

MR. SHORES: India had some sort of policy that they'd set up. It was wonderful that they were inviting writers, visual artists, musicians, poets, to visit India, on India. They would take care of the whole thing. And we were to meet in groups and they would set up the time they'd meet and they'd take care of us when we got there.

MS. RIEDEL: Was this an arts exchange? What was the point behind it? Do you have any idea?

MR. SHORES: The exchange?

MS. RIEDEL: Was it an arts exchange or what was the reason behind it?

MR. SHORES: I think the idea was that they thought if a lot of people saw India, they would spread the word.

MS. RIEDEL: And artists in particular, I'm sure.

MR. SHORES: And maybe artists would either paint it or talked about it in poetry or do something that — it was kind of a nice idea, that the creative approach, rather than businessmen, were going over, but getting artists to reflect on India rather than —

MS. RIEDEL: A very interesting approach.

MR. SHORES: Yes, I thought it was. So I was delighted and they sent me a ticket and I got on first class from here to New York and first class Air India. I'd never been on first class before. There were like 10 seats up in front, they had caviar the whole night and a little stand and champagne and food. It was so posh. And that alone impressed me, but when I got there, I was the only one in the group that they decided — I don't know if the others either couldn't make it or they changed it. So I was all alone, so I had a car and driver and guy everywhere I went in India. It was a private trip.

MS. RIEDEL: And had they had set up where you would go and what you do?

MR. SHORES: They had it all planned out and I was met at the airport and taken to the hotel at night and next morning, I got up and had breakfast. Mrs. Vora, who became a dear friend, she was Jain, she was of a particular religious sect that was very interesting and she met me in the morning and said she'd be my guide, a very intelligent woman. She led mostly tours for Europeans, French and Italian, scholars in particular areas, specialized fields, and she was my guide for the whole time in Bombay where we landed.

And then from then on, I would go to — fly to the next place and there was somebody to meet there. There was also a government representative, and I met a young man who was finishing his M.F.A. in Udaipur and doing part-time helping the government being a guide, and he was on a motorcycle, and he drove me all over Udaipur in a motorcycle out into the countryside into wonderful old ruins — a very nice guy and we became — we corresponded and every time I'd go to India, he'd look me up or we'd get together and he since moved, and he lives here in Portland now.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, my goodness.

MR. SHORES: Yes. And he got married in India and he has two daughters and one is now at graduate school in New York and one is at the University of Oregon. And we became lifelong friends. So that was a nice plus for the whole trip.

MS. RIEDEL: Where did they take you? Was it based on what your interest was?

MR. SHORES: Supposedly, as an artist, they thought —

MS. RIEDEL: So they took you to architectural ruins.

MS. RIEDEL: Of course, any place in India would be valid, but we went through Rajasthan and saw the wonderful ruins there and the old palaces and the forts in Delhi. We did an awful lot of them in short time and flew up to Calcutta and Benares and Khajuraho, and I think we even went up into Nepal. I'm not sure about that, but there was a lot of ground. It was mostly temples and art galleries if there was a city large enough to have them, but everything was — it was India. And it was just enough to whet my appetite to realize that I've got to go back and so —

MS. RIEDEL: How long was that first trip for?

MR. SHORES: I think it was two weeks.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, you did cover a lot of ground.

MR. SHORES: Yes. So I think it was two years later, we designed a trip through a travel agency here and I led my first art and architecture group to India. I think I made about 13 trips, four or five on my own.

MS. RIEDEL: Was that the first time you'd done that? Had you done that in Latin America as well?

MR. SHORES: I did that to Mexico twice, two or three times. So I knew kind of what it was about, but it worked out well. I was — all the trips that I led over there, I was so fortunate to have really good people. It was only once, one person, complained bitterly that she was going to go home, she couldn't stand it. And I encouraged her — because that was in Calcutta, which is pretty brutal. And I encouraged her to stick it out for a while and she got so she loved it and at the end of the trip, she said, oh, I'm going to be bring my children back next year and she did. She fell in love with India, but she almost left, because she was just miserable. That's the only time. The rest of them were just enthralled with India.

MS. RIEDEL: And where would you take them, Ken? What would you show them? Was each trip different or did you come up with specific regions?

MR. SHORES: Most of the trips were different because some of the people went three or four times; some were one time, some two. We did some of the things you have to do each time. Everybody wanted to see the Taj Mahal and usually landed in Bombay or Delhi and we saw the temples of Khajuraho if we went that way, Calcutta or if we — or on the West side, we'd go to Rajasthan and see the Lake Palace and the Jaipur and all the astronomy buildings in Jaipur and then we went to South India. The first trip was a disaster. It wasn't a disaster, but it was almost a 30-day trip and I had 18 people, the biggest I've ever had. And unknowingly, I thought, well, the 30 days, we can cover all of India. So we had one and two night stands and about halfway through, people were actually revolting.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, yes, one in two nights? That was it?

MR. SHORES: We just said we — we got to a beach resort in Arissa [ph], and it was beautiful and everybody just fell apart on the beach.

MS. RIEDEL: I bet.

MR. SHORES: And we were only supposed to be there one night and everybody said, we're not leaving; this is just too grand. And I said, everything is assigned to take us, the reservations. I'm leaving tomorrow and this is the time the plane's leaving, and — no, we're not going. And I said, well, it's up to you. And the next day, they

were all there, waiting to go. They knew they had to, but by the end of the trip, I was exhausted. They were — I didn't know any better. I thought — I just hadn't had enough experience. Some places, we had two nights, but that wasn't — in some places, we should have had four or five days, and not seen as much.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure. Right.

MR. SHORES: So I learned my lesson, but no one ever said it was a bad trip. They all said once they got home, what a thrilling trip it was.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, I imagine.

MR. SHORES: And to this day, most of those people still talk about — some never went back and some went back several times, but that was the closest thing to a big disaster. It was my fault for not knowing, but I just wanted —

MS. RIEDEL: But how extraordinary, the very concept of trying to cover India in 30 days.

MR. SHORES: We went all the way around which is unheard of, just unheard of, and it wasn't too expensive in those days. Today, it would cost 10 times that, but most of these weren't experienced travelers, so they didn't — an experienced traveler would say, hey, listen, we can't do that, but nobody told me that, but we got through it and nobody got sick and that was good.

MS. RIEDEL: And would you take them then to see what you had seen, temples and galleries and then develop from there?

MR. SHORES: As we progressed with the trips, I had a wonderful — well, actually, Shireesh, the fellow I mentioned —

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, yes, who now lives in Portland.

MR. SHORES: — he started getting things set up for me in India and we did extraordinary things. One time we had — we were supposed to have a 15-minute audience with Mrs. Gandhi at the parliament and we got there and we were there about an hour and a half. She was so captivating and so enthralling talking about India, and we sat and had tea with her and cookies and it was just — what else?

MS. RIEDEL: What year would that have been, Ken? Do you remember?

MR. SHORES: Oh, yes, and then the president of India had us over to the palace and we had — I think we had lunch there.

MS. RIEDEL: Lunch at the presidential palace?

MR. SHORES: And one of the ladies in the group was a wonderful woman. She was in her 80s. She went with me twice. I don't know how she did it because I'm hesitant now about going to India. I'm younger than that, but that one time at the palace, the president took her under his wing. He was so impressed with her because in India, people of that age kind of go off to die, or they just stay at home. And here she was traveling around the world and he called her Mom and he had her sit by him and she was just thrilled. So she went back the next year, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Of course she did. [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: I think she would have got the next one, but I think she just couldn't make it. So what else did we do? We got into theater situations that no one else had seen and Shireesh set up some marvelous — oh, and the Maharani of Udaipur, who's a survivor of the longest living family in the world that you can trace back — he traces back to the Sun King back in the 5th century and he's supposedly a direct descendant of that. He and his wife had us over to the Lake Palace and into his private palace several times for tea and then he had us up later on in the private palace for an evening supper party. These were all different groups, different times.

But he always remembered and he was very, very cordial, very nice. In fact, one of my dear friends, she and her daughter went with me, and they'd never been before and the daughter was — Kay was — she'd graduated from college, a very, very bright girl, and very bouncy and a very interesting person. He got interested in her. He and his wife were temporarily split up, I'd heard. Anyway, he showed us around the palace, and he was very cordial to her and had kind of a little private tour that he took her around part of the palace. And that was the end of that and he knew that we were going on to Jaipur and stay there for a couple of nights. And, lo and behold, we were in the polo bar that evening after dinner and he came in with a couple of people, and said, oh, hello, fancy seeing you here, and he wanted to know where Kay was. So he invited her, when we got to Delhi — he was on his way to Delhi; he knew we were to a private dinner party of some famous author and I can't remember who it was — and so she accepted and of course, Ann, her mother, said Kay, I don't think you should do this. And Kay

said to me, what do you think? And I said — I knew him pretty well and I think he enjoyed being with Kay, but he was too great a person to even consider something like that in my mind he was anyway, and he was going to this dinner party. It was a group party; it was 12 or 15 of them there.

So she went with him and Ann and I went downstairs at this wonderful hotel and had some food and proceeded to have quite a few drinks because she was so worried about Kay and he came and picked her up in a funny little car he was driving. And she said they drove to this really nice home in Delhi. It was a wonderful dinner party, there were lots of very elegant people there, she had a great time, he brought her back and that was it. And he wrote to her constantly and said, please come back to India, you and your mother and your father, and love to have you. And she gets Christmas cards from him, so some wonderful things like that happened to a lot of the people there. It's just amazing how those trips worked out.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs] I'll say.

MR. SHORES: I can think of other things, but there were lots of other things that were just very special for our group alone.

MS. RIEDEL: And you think this was partially because your first trip was government sponsored and the connections they set up with you then enabled you —

MR. SHORES: I think that helped in the beginning because it's a small world there. The government agents all knew each other. I kept running into them over the trips and I was getting to be sort of known amongst the travel group in India because we'd run into each other a lot. And it was through Shireesh and somebody else that we got to meet Mrs. Gandhi and then the president, but that was really a thrill of a lifetime to meet Mrs. Gandhi. There's been so much criticism about her. She's a wonderful, lovely woman and very brilliant and she was so attractive, but she had such a presence about her, and she just didn't let us go. We just sat there and had a wonderful time.

I warned everybody not to get — that was the time when she pulled curfew on everything and imprisoned a lot of people and trying to get things straightened out. And I said, let's don't discuss politics because it would be rude and everybody was nice about that. I was afraid somebody would say, what about such-and-such? They all talked about the art and they got into talking about clothing and saris and tradition and culture and food, and she was just a delight.

MS. RIEDEL: What year was this, Ken? Do you remember? It's one of the earlier trips?

MR. SHORES: I'm not sure. It must have been one of the trips in the '80s because I have a picture of us all together with Mrs. Gandhi and the whole group.

MS. RIEDEL: So these trips — you first went to India in '74 and they went through the '80s or early '90s?

MR. SHORES: Yes, right up to — the last group I led was in the '90s.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MR. SHORES: The last trip I took was in '95, I think. It's been a while since I've been there. The Maharani of Jaipur was considered the most beautiful woman in the world at one time. There's a book written about her. They lived in New York a lot. She was absolutely a stunning woman and we met her at her house. She owned a hotel in Jaipur, the famous one, and her beautiful home behind it, and we had breakfast there one morning, and she had been imprisoned by Mrs. Gandhi — they were close friends — but she was not put in prison.

MS. RIEDEL: House arrest.

MR. SHORES: She was kept locked up in her palace for six months and they were very, very dear friends, but she refused to divulge where all the — Mrs. Gandhi was trying to tax all the treasures of the wealthy people and, of course in India, the maharajas have treasures hidden and still do, hidden away that are probably just unbelievable, and the maharani wouldn't talk about it. She said, I can't do that. Mrs. Gandhi said, until you do it, you're locked up and finally, in six months, she let her out. But it's set up in Amber Palace there, great vaults of wealth hidden away by the Jaipur maharajas. There was so much wealth in India at one time. They were all enormously wealthy, some of the wealthiest people that ever existed in the world, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: And these trips really — they certainly weren't the beginning of your collecting in earnest, but they have been a significant, huge part.

MR. SHORES: Well, for Indian art, it was the beginning of collecting that, because I never really had access to it, except for the occasional miniature you'd find or something, but it was — at that time, it was exciting because you could see really beautiful antiques. Some were prohibitive, price-wise, but some were very inexpensive. Now

it's gone.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. I'm sure.

MR. SHORES: So it's all gone. If it is there, it's very, very expensive in very high-end antique shops, but most of it's gone.

MS. RIEDEL: And you have — at least half of your collection is Indian, isn't it, close to?

MR. SHORES: Well, a good part of it. That whole room is Indian and miniatures and —

MS. RIEDEL: Both of them, aren't they?

MR. SHORES: And even the Buddhas, many of those are from India. Yes, probably more Indian art than anything else —

MS. RIEDEL: I think so.

MR. SHORES: Yes, it was disappointing this last trip because, for a while, the Indians weren't interested in their own art. They wanted western furniture and they wanted western chandeliers and paintings. Now the middle class is rising up and fortunately, they're beginning to get interested. So, what little is available is being taken over by the Indians, which should have happened long ago, but it didn't. The British took tons of things out of India. So — as well as the rest of us, but there is still a lot there, but most of it it's pretty well hidden away or owned by Indians now.

Once in a while, the best buys in Indian art are here in the States. Europeans still revere Indian art and value it, but it's still not considered as high an art form as other, like the Chinese or Japanese. I think it is, of course. I think in a way, it surpasses, those things come up in collections and in auctions, and a lot of the missionaries that were there in the 19th century brought things home, beautiful things. And second and third generations could care less about — they say, oh, my great-grandmother had this; it came from India. But even that is getting scarce now because people are getting more — well, they're more experienced now, understand that they are valuable. They may not like them, but they know they're valuable.

MS. RIEDEL: And did most of your collection come from India, or a significant part has come from auctions in the States?

MR. SHORES: Oh, no, I — maybe half. When I had the shop, I sold a lot, but most of it was not really old, old antiques, but some good pieces.

MS. RIEDEL: Have you catalogued your collection, Ken?

MR. SHORES: No, I haven't. That's something I just — it sounds like it would be so hard to do that I — several friends have volunteered. We go through — along with the video and talk about it and catalogue it that way.

MS. RIEDEL: That's a good idea.

MR. SHORES: Which would be easier than having to write everything down on pencil and paper, and then go over that and refine that, but some things shouldn't be lost.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: This piece, particularly, it's — it's supposed to be 14th-, 15th- century Spanish. When I was at the Prada [Museum, Madrid, Spain], there were two panels that were exactly like this.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, my God.

MR. SHORES: Not the paintings, but the format, and this is part of another group and I know it belongs to those two, and they probably should go back to that.

MS. RIEDEL: Where did you find it?

MR. SHORES: Betty [Bowen] a great art collector in Seattle, who died about 20 years ago. Anyway, she collected art and she picked it up in Europe in a grand tour back in the '20s, when you could probably buy things like this. And she brought it home and she had it in her house, and it was in her living room, and it was covered with smoke from the fireplace. And it was so black and dark and when they had her sale at Foster White Gallery in Seattle, mostly [Mark] Tobey's engraved paintings and wonderful paintings that she'd collected, regional and some national, but mostly for the painting collection. This was kind of on the floor in the back of the gallery for

sale, and it was just so black. I wasn't sure there were paintings under there. I could trace — but I loved the arches and I knew it was an interesting piece, but I think he had like $2,500 on it, and I thought, for an unknown thing, I can't afford that anyway.

And it was beginning to pop off the gesso, because it's on a thick plank. It weighs a ton.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, two or three inches, yes. You can see that.

MR. SHORES: So, I let it go. I had things to show at work at Don Foster's gallery. He said, don't buy it because he said, it's falling apart and you don't need that. So I let it go and then, it was about six months later, he called me, said, you know, I still have this at the gallery. Are you interested in it, still? I said, well, I guess I am, but I can't afford that. And I think he came down about $1,000 or $1500, and he said, you can pay for it over increments. And I said, okay.

So a student and I went up to Seattle in a big truck and picked it up. It was really popping off and I thought, well, I could fix that. Well I couldn't. And then, I didn't know how to get gesso to come back. And so I talked to a restorer here, and he's very good. But he said, well, it might be four of five years before I can even get around to it. And he said, it's so much an hour, and it sounded like it was going to be a fortune.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: And his ex-wife, who was just as good as he was, but she had her own place, she said, well, I could do it. And she kept it for six months, and with a hypodermic needle and hot wax, she shot every inch with a hypodermic needle and with a little tiny iron pushed it over there, and the wax pulled the gesso back to the board.

MS. RIEDEL: Amazing.

MR. SHORES: It took her forever.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: And then the few places that had popped off, she filled it in and restored it, did a wonderful job.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: She's tried to clean it and every so often, new feet would appear and old ones would disappear, because they used to repaint.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: So, she said, I just quit doing it. I'd leave it alone. And I know it's a good piece.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, it's exquisite.

MR. SHORES: That probably is part of the problem, because it's exactly like the format, the same kind of painting, same arches.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, it's just exquisite.

MR. SHORES: So that's one piece that's really important in the house. I think there are a number of things like this scattered about, but I've been lucky enough to —

MS. RIEDEL: It's one of the miniatures — the Indian miniature paintings are just — look exquisite too.

[END MD 02 TR 01.]

MS. RIEDEL: There is a spiritual, there's an important spirituality, spiritual sense that's run throughout your life and your work and I thought the best way to approach that would be to start at the beginning again and with your experience as a child.

MR. SHORES: Yes. Well, of course all these things start at the beginning at childhood generally. I guess I can say I had the privilege of having had a very fundamentalist approach to religion in my childhood, because I think it's the sort of the thing that you can grow into or away from, or it enhances your life culturally if nothing else. It gives you information about history and about other people, and I found over the years that that's been very, very important to me and when I see students — I've seen students that had had no background in religion of any kind working from an empty drawer. They have nothing to base their ideals on, whether it's fanaticism or

whether it's the simplicity. They don't understand because they haven't thought about it or had the training.

So I personally see nothing wrong with people being brought up as a strict fundamentalist or a strict Catholic or an Orthodox Jew or whatever, a strict Hindu. It gives you a foundation from either to grow upwards or away from but at least it's the roots of your life. And I think a religion or philosophy, for lack of a better word, is fundamental for all mankind from the very beginning. People have either revered and tried to understand the world through nature, through each other and through various means and forms, because that's human nature. We want to know why we're here, what's going to happen to us, why that's going to happen and these are all questions that no one has ever been able to answer because no one's come back to tell us. But it's curiosity in every culture and still exists today, although I somehow feel sad about it. It's covered over a lot by other things, by technology or by people being super busy and don't have the time or the inclination to think about.

But there's nothing better, I think we all realize it, to be by yourself occasionally and that peace of mind where all's right with the world, and what brings that on, we don't know but there are those moments that I'm sure everyone's experienced it that there are no questions and there are no answers. It's just existence is bliss. That's a quote from Hinduism too. Existence and bliss. That's something we don't have time to experience much anymore. People don't take time to sit and meditate on the sky or on themselves or just have time, a quiet time and more and more people are getting interested in meditation not necessarily for that kind of result, but to clear their mind and try to have a kind of positive attitude about life.

So anyway, I started out with a very fundamentalist philosophy and went to Bible School every summer and we studied the Old and New Testament. We had to memorize quotes from the Bible and I just accepted it because that's all I knew. I didn't protest because I didn't know what to protest against. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Did it speak to you in any way? Did it resonate, did the stories or anything about it resonate or you just going through — it was like another class?

MR. SHORES: Well, it just seemed like it was the natural thing to do. I was fascinated by biblical stories, because some of them are very heroic and humanistic and magnificent of some people and of course the Bible is full of gore and violence and all kinds of negativism too. It was just like an education at a young age based on religion, but actually it was an education about the world and human nature, but at the time I didn't analyze it that way. I just accepted it. But as I grew up and kind of drew away from that particular religion and was on my own in college experiencing other things that other people were experiencing that were not necessarily based on religion, I had choices to make, as we all do, and I kept searching.

I think again, for any person, a thinking person, life is a search for them in one capacity or another, a search for happiness, a search for understanding, a search to avoid loneliness, a search for compassion but it's a search. I don't know of anybody that's absolutely complacent with their life and says, I'm not looking for anything. I'm quite happy the way it is. As Buddhists say, if there is a sin and they didn't believe in sin, if there is a sin, its lethargy. And that can happen so easily to any of us. It's better not to think about, just be lethargic and let things happen, but that's wrong of course, because we need to — life is a struggle and it's a search — to be positive about things.

So as I progressed along in life and I got involved with other people and other philosophies and religion, it was an interest in college too and took some religion classes and found out about other religions and explored in different areas as best I could at that time. And then I started meeting people that were involved in other philosophies and then eventually, having — after met Vivian Wilkenson in San Francisco and she introduced me to Vedanta, I still thought, well, that's an interesting concept but I never took it as an earth-shaking concept— or took it in a super serious way.

But when I started traveling and started meeting with other people, other than the kinds of people that I'd known before, it was interesting to hear their thoughts about life, what was meaningful to them, what was not meaningful and so forth, the positive life that some lead and the negativism that many people have and why did this happen and how it comes out in art, how it comes out in music, both pro and con. It's human nature to be a part of both sides. I don't think anyone, unless they've really become a very, very pure person is invulnerable to so called slipping into other areas from time to time or constantly. But as life went on and the more I traveled the more interested I got in other cultures and other religion and other churches, other philosophies and other kinds of art.

MS. RIEDEL: And in Mexico you were saying this happened in the travels through the — seeing so many of the Spanish colonial churches in particular.

MR. SHORES: Exactly. Yes. The churches like in Europe and in Mexico, particularly in Mexico there are beautiful, beautiful churches. Again, some of the churches were notorious for being violent and having very negative things happening in their history, but in essence, the churches themselves were so beautiful inside and so, in a sense, a feeling of sacredness even though we knew that there was a lot of negativism going on in all churches

as well as all religions.

But I found it very inspiring and wondered what is that thing that makes it inspiring? Is there a word for it? Is there some answer to all of that? And I kept hearing more about people searching for truth, for faith, for all these so called knowledgeable terms but they're really abstract, such as the definition of faith: faith is a substance of things hope for and evidence of things not seen. What does that mean? Nothing. The substance of things hoped for. It's a kind of eternal struggle I think that mankind has gone through, but I'm beginning to find people that have succeeded somewhat in finding themselves, finding their niche, finding their interest, finding a sense of peace and happiness to a certain extent, discovering more about themselves, what makes them tick and the world operate, and the more knowledge in that direction one acquires, the more harmony you have within yourself.

So it began to slowly trickle into my work in various ways and sometimes in a very literal way like in the '60s I had gone to Europe, I came back and started doing some very literal narrative representational work of cathedrals and figures and monks and in high-fire clay, and glazing them and some were I think rather successful and positive. Others were more decorative and not so very strong in imagery, but I found a great deal of satisfaction in that because it was not a meditative way of succeeding to the solution in your life but it was kind of a positive direction, it was a step in the right direction. I did do several works for churches in Portland and a couple in Seattle.

MS. RIEDEL: Were they commissions, Ken?

MR. SHORES: Commissions, yes. One was a group of six or eight panels of apostles and some were baptismal fonts, some were decorative panels over baptisms fonts, but at least I was working within the church atmosphere and it was a different kind of approach. You weren't trying to prove anything, you weren't trying to overstep another boundary or doing some supreme work of art that no one else had done. You were kind of doing it as a — not a gift but as a presentation and like an offering, even though some of the commissions weren't paid for in money, but that was really the motivation behind it all. And I really enjoyed doing those things, but there was a limitation too, because my heart wasn't quite with all these particular things that they required at the time.

But bit by bit studying various cultures, the trips to Mexico were great with the churches, but it was India I think with its vast resources of philosophy and religion, everything in India is touched by religion and you can't separate the art from religion or the architecture from religion. It's all pretty much the same. The background, the literature and the old Upanishads and all their early Sanskrit writings are all based on philosophy of some sort or religion, some of the most ancient in the world. And that intrigued me because I thought this is coming closer to anything I've encountered up to that point. In most cases, I find Hindu philosophy and the religion itself, but particularly the philosophy, is not an exclusive philosophy and particularly the Vedanta aspect which is one of many that accepts all the religions and philosophies going to the same goal but doing it in different means as the analogy was with the mountain top and everybody has their own path way up and reached the same pinnacle.

And I found that fascinating. And then, experiencing the vital power of inside some of the temples and outside of the temples in India was just as strong if not stronger in many cases than the Christian paintings and the Buddhist concept; very, very strong. And it's such an ancient culture and ancient religion that I felt, well, there must be something, something here, and somehow I got more attached to that because it seemed to be more realistic to me. I don't think it's any one religion that's superior to another. I don't believe that because I don't think that's what it's about, but some things are more accessible to you, some religions and I think people are drawn to that.

MS. RIEDEL: And as you said, your experience of it was that the religion infused the objects, the art, the architecture, so there was a deep spiritual sense in the concepts.

MR. SHORES: Yes. There is a oneness there. It's not a façade, it's not something added. And another thing I felt about it too was that practically everything I encountered in India in art and architecture was egoless, there were no signatures on anything, whereas in the Western world, we became very conscious at an early time, in great times, such and such sculptor and architect, and that's okay, but there was something very free and refreshing about all these wonderful edifices and sculptors done by anonymous artists, artisans and architects which is absolutely opposite of what we know in the Western world.

We're so attached to name and form and that means so much to us. But actually, in essence, it's what the object says or how successful it is. It doesn't matter who did it. It was interesting to find — and I like the idea of egoless art. We all tend to sign our work and we all like acclaim that it's being accepted. I think everyone likes acceptance. No one likes to be rejected whether their work or themselves or whatever. It takes a strong person to be able to accept rejections as well as acceptance. But an egoless approach to art is something we really

don't know much about anymore. It's very much a part of our art today, who's showing where and how important they are and how prolific they are. And I'm a part of it, we're all a part of it, but I think it has to be, in my mind, not the strongest motivation for working or for existence because that isn't where it's going to be — it's not the be all and end all, I hope, in life for any of us to think that way.

So anyway, I kept proposing in my work little projects that would be so-called spiritual. I like the idea of offering bowls, fetish bowls, something that had maybe a mysterious symbolic quality to it that might be an offering to nature or an offering to God if one wants to think that way, or to whatever. But it's not just an inanimate object that sits there. That's what I think makes a work of art: is the content at heart, the spirituality of it. I think spirituality is such a misused word nowadays, but the essence of the piece must come through, the integrity of it and as we all know, things sometimes could speak to you because there's just a direct feeling that's coming from that, the vibrations or whatever, and that's what we all strive for, is to have that.

And when I used to mediate a lot at the Vedanta temple here in Portland, I used to go every morning and evening, and there were few times after several years of doing this that I would leave the temple to go home to have breakfast and go on to work, but as I was driving away, I'd have this brief moment where absolutely I knew everything because there was nothing to know and I knew it and I knew that everything was right, and it was a brief moment, maybe just a few seconds but it felt like a long time and I experienced that a number of times from deep meditation and it's an extraordinary feeling. I can understand why people want to continue to meditate and spend time doing that, but I got too busy and too fractured and got away from it but I do recall those moments, even now how that felt. It was just an extraordinary feeling and the old "no questions, no answers" was right. There was just nothing to bother about, everything was right and it was just — it was perfection.

MS. RIEDEL: Was this during the time you were making the fetish pieces?

MR. SHORES: It was about that time when I started the fetish and they were more abstract. They were really more — I talked to you about the narrative church work was pretty much laid out as something like a commission. I had choices to make, but the fetish pieces and the feather chalices and things, they weren't specific. It was just something I felt coming out of me rather than like a commission. The work was premeditated. And there were some mistakes, there were lots of errors, not everything came out right, but when they did, I really felt like they were successful.

MS. RIEDEL: You said sometimes the mistakes and the successes were the same thing.

MR. SHORES: Well, sometimes yes. That's right. Yes. And of course, it's all relative because one day you think that's a terrible mistake and the next day you look at it and say, that's really pretty nice, so it's your mental state — and you approach it that particular time, because that can change too. I don't think anything is absolutely perfect and never will be. We don't know what perfection is and probably we shouldn't know because maybe perfection is what we are now. Of course most people say that's imperfect, but we don't know that. But then the older one gets, you begin to think about your days are numbered, but we should know this when we're at age 20, but we don't think about it at any age, and it's not something to brood over.

In fact, I think it's kind of — I think of all the people I've known that have died and I think in a way they've already experienced something I haven't done yet and it makes me questions. Not that I'm interested to die but I don't think it's such a — I guess, what I'm saying is the older I get, the more I really begin to feel that it's just another part of our existence and it isn't the end and isn't the beginning. It's just part of our existence and we go on, and it just seems like it's right, and somehow I wish we, as younger people, when we're younger our culture would not think of life being the only thing that we have and after that death is the end of it all. We hide death in such a terrible way.

My first morning in India when I got up and was driving through the streets and out outside the window of the car, a funeral pyre went with a body covered in marigolds passed by and the man's face — the whole body exposed, and I was just two feet away from it. I watched them all go by and I was just absolutely startled and shocked. And there was a little drum, musicians and things, and they were accompanying the body through the streets and I thought, that's really a wonderful thing. We take our hearses and take them in backstreets and everything is hidden, it's all somber, it's morbid, it's depressing and it's really frightening. And here, it was out in the open, it's a part of life, it's a part of their ritual of living and it's a part of the ritual of dying and it just seemed very right to me.

That was my first day in India. It's kind of an interesting thing that happened. In fact, I believed more and more that that some of the unhappy things in our life, sometimes there are reasons for it and they turn out to be good things as we know. We think it's bad at the time and thank goodness it happened. As we talked several times about whether this had happened, what if this hadn't happened —

MS. RIEDEL: Exactly.

MR. SHORES: — and we get so negative about it, but if one keeps a positive attitude, I think you can succeed far faster and far better and maybe not succeed at all, but the negative attitude but just — it's a struggle.

MS. RIEDEL: Is that something that you think is an innate part of your personality, is it something that came out of your religious studies as a child or out of your experience traveling, your experiences in India? Where do you think that sensibility comes from?

MR. SHORES: Well, I think it's from all of that. I think life is really an education and we should make it that way because you never give up learning no matter how old you are. I think it's a constant learning process, but I think the challenge is to put that learning to good use and not bad use. And we have temptations along the way all the time to, if not be lethargic, even more so, be violent and put it to bad use, and it's just tragic because there are such good people that have destroyed themselves from ignorance or from just not knowing and you question the validity of how this could happen but then again, you can say, well, I tend to think the concept of reincarnation that it's a learning process and we'll be back to relearn that and do it right the next time. That's one answer. There are many answers.

But it's still tragic — but it isn't tragic in the long run because sooner or later it's corrected I think, but I think it comes from the learning from beginning, and as I've said, I was fortunate, I think, to have had the good fundamental background from which to break away and that I didn't do it entirely either because I still believe in many of the concepts and I do believe in a so called higher power, whatever that might be because it doesn't really matter at this point. You don't have to have a name or form for everything. We have a tendency to do that.

MS. RIEDEL: It makes me think of your Shiva series which were speaking earlier the sense of creation and destruction, the seeds of creative — in any creative act lying the seed or the remnants of some destructive act. It makes me think of your Shiva series, more abstract, but a sense of this spirituality, the way we're talking about it moving into the work and then the Maze series and what the maze signifies also metaphorically in terms of its religious history. So it seems like this has steeped its way into your work in many different forms.

MR. SHORES: Well, I think so. Yes. From literalism to abstraction, the concept of God or the higher being in many cultures, it's just like a simple stone, completely abstract and then it can be ornate like the Christian world, where everything is actually very literal or can be — it takes all forms. So as art does too, I think a lot of religious arts gets very abstract and very powerful at the same time.

It doesn't have to be literal interpretations by any means and it seems to happen more in, not primitive societies, but so-called primitive societies, but I find most societies are pretty sophisticated in one way or another. But the Aborigines, their art form, their concept of higher powers or of God or whatever can be very abstract and very strong in color and form and that's true in a lot of other — African art too can be the same. Many cultures have this concept of abstract strength in their art. And in any way, our culture too and its abstract concept of painting today. Some of the strongest I think tends to be spiritual, and I think of the [Mark] Rothko Chapel [Houston, TX]. Those paintings — he may not have meant them to be spiritual but they are just glowing with an essence.

MS. RIEDEL: That place is extraordinary.

MR. SHORES: Amazing, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: And maybe he intended it that way, maybe he didn't. I don't know the motivation, but it doesn't matter. It's just that they do exist and they are powerful pieces. So it can happen today in our world. I think it's a little sad that — and maybe it's momentary but we tend to shy away from anything that might be spiritual or religious thinking that it's just old fashioned or meaningless or kind of hokey or whatever. And actually, most people are afraid to even talk about the spiritual life. It's like prying into their soul and they don't want to discuss it. They may not have anything to say anyway, but if they did, most people are very hesitant. And then there are those that want to tell you everything about their spiritual life, proselytize too much.

MS. RIEDEL: If you're not working within a specific religion, there's not a very developed vocabulary for speaking about it.

MR. SHORES: That's true. Again, I think a lot of artists that maybe aren't involved in religion express themselves through their work, maybe not knowingly that it's a kind of spiritual offering because they don't have the vocabulary, even the thought behind it. But the essence is there and something inside them has come out into the work and it's a very strong work and they may not be a so called practicing religious spiritual person but I think everybody has that lurking in them in some capacity, some way, somehow. That comes out and manifests itself in many different ways through cooking, through all kinds of things, but there is a kind of beauty and

strength and benevolence that comes out of people that are somewhat aware of their goodness within themselves.

MS. RIEDEL: We were talking earlier about Martha Graham who's been actually here twice and what an extraordinary experience that was, but she used to say, if I could say it, I wouldn't have to dance it. And I think that that's —

MR. SHORES: It's wonderful — yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Exactly.

MR. SHORES: Right. It speaks to what we're talking about right now.

MR. SHORES: I think many, many artists get their thoughts and maybe not their real thoughts but their feelings out into their work, whether it's a piece of music or whether it's a piece of art or dance, and that way they can express themselves and it comes out in a very strong spiritual way whether they meant it to be that way or call it that or not. It's what makes a piece successful or not successful. I think how deep it comes out of the person and motivation. Sometimes we all try too hard, you're working towards the show, you're motivated to get all the work done and you tend to run things through in a quick way because if one piece works out, I'll do another one similar and without thinking that each piece has its own essence and its own individuality.

But if one really lets the juices flow and have it come from the inside out, I think that's when the piece really becomes successful, strong and full of vitality and people realize that when they see it. Some people are just drawn to something automatically because there's a feeling there, a recognition of some sort. It's a subject that one could go on forever discussing because there's no single answer in our vocabulary. I think there is a single answer we just aren't aware of it, so that's why we have philosophers and we have religious people working and people that aren't religious still working; everybody wants an answer. I would like to have an answer, and they work about it in their own way.

MS. RIEDEL: What was the motivation for the Shiva series because that was — this followed the feather fetish and the chalice, the feather chalices, correct?

MR. SHORES: The big paintings?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes. And this was — you went from 3-D to 2-D. You were back at painting and sort of painting on clay, you had paintings with inlaying clay pieces and they all have — they were part of a series called Shiva.

MR. SHORES: Well, I think the painting idea, I just felt at that time a need to come back into a two-dimensional work and not necessarily figurative. I just really wanted the feeling of applying paint and getting that feeling of action and motion, but I couldn't completely abandon clay, so they all had some clay attachments to them, mostly working as a texture with the paint, not against it, but hopefully the texture of the clay pieces would tie in with the texture of the paint which is generally pretty heavy pallet knife paint, and I liked the idea of the landscapes in India. Some of them were, especially the Rajasthan, desert landscapes, great stretches of straight horizons and various colors of earth tones to say a blue sky or a green sky or whatever, and they became very abstract in concept, but that's how that came about. It was fun to do because I really kind of lost myself in it, and it was a new departure at the time, because I hadn't done anything like that for a long time. Yes. I really enjoyed doing that and I think some of them came out pretty well. Others not as successful.

MS. RIEDEL: Those were in the '80s, in the early '80s or the late '70s?

MR. SHORES: I think in the mid-'80s, early '80s I think.

MS. RIEDEL: So you'd been going to India for six or seven years.

MR. SHORES: Yes. I had gone on a number of trips and yes. I had a couple of shows with those at the Fountain Gallery in Portland and then over at Gump's of that series. That was an interesting —

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have numerous shows with Gump's?

MR. SHORES: I had shown some of the clay and feather pieces there, but shortly after that they disbanded their gallery. They'd been there for years. They moved eventually but they took that whole floor out and changed it. So I didn't show there very long, no, because it disappeared. It ended. But it was a nice time. But I could go on and on about how I feel about all that because I think it's such an integral part of my life and I don't really like talking too much to most people about it because, again, I don't mind it but I think people feel, they begin to feel I might be proselytizing or trying to convert them, and I have nothing to convert people to because there's nothing to convert, but I think it's such a major part of our lives and it's an area that we neglect to discuss with friends or anyone because they feel it's too personal. It's like, don't discuss religion and politics because you'll

get into trouble.

MS. RIEDEL: And religions have such a long history or trying to convert that it's hard to discuss it.

MR. SHORES: Yes. I think that's right. People will say — it gives people strength to say they converted somebody to their way of thinking because it also makes me feel that they must be unsure of themselves to want to get people to want in. You think it's the other way around, that they're so sure, they want people to be like they are, but sometimes it's insecurity. The more people you can rally around, the stronger your concept is. It depends upon the person of course, but it's a fascinating subject and I think over the years, most thinking people have discussed it, artists as well as philosophers and many, many books of course that they're written on the subject, creativity and religion and philosophy and Joseph Campbell.

MS. RIEDEL: Are there any books — I was going to say — Joseph Campbell came to mind, but are there any particular books that have been significant to you over time?

MR. SHORES: There are so many. I kind of read some of the older scriptures. I like reading the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, some Zen manuscripts and books and in fact, I found even that the Da Vinci chronicle — what was it called?

MS. RIEDEL: *The Da Vinci Code* [Dan Brown. New York: Doubleday, 2003]. [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: Code. As hokey and corny as it was, it was fascinating as another — it was just another aspect, another way of thinking about things. I found it was kind of refreshing.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MR. SHORES: I know a lot of people criticize and put it down but not that I thought it was great in depth but it was a fresh approach to a religion we all know so well, Christianity, and how it could be distorted and converted. But basically, I'm really more into some of the more — in fact, I haven't for a long time, but I used to enjoy reading parts of the Bible too just like there are some beautiful parts like Psalms and the Song of David and really great poetry. I think scriptures from most of the major religions are pretty interesting. The Tibetan Book of Dead; it's a little hard to read, but I find it fascinating, and there are just all kinds — new books are always on the market too. I don't always read books in that vein. I read some novels too and some biographies and art books and things like that. I think I like to have a wide range of reading because I find it inspiring at times. Sometimes it's non inspiring maybe, but the same with movies and theater. Sometimes it can be very thought provoking and inspiring and then other times, it would be so trashy and not much value, to me, but to others yes, and we all have a different sense of humor and different sense of values, but we sort of select and make our life, we read the things we think we like to read and watch and see the things we enjoy.

MS. RIEDEL: When you were teaching, do you assign any texts like this?

MR. SHORES: No, I didn't because it was a lab class and the students — I did a little bit in the beginning when I started teaching and a lot of them questioned and rebelled and said, this was supposed to be an art class, a studio class. I didn't know we'd have homework and assignments — [Riedel laughs] — so occasionally I'd suggest — have a suggested reading list and we'd have some quizzes. Some people were eager to read and others just didn't do it, but no, there were no written assignments and things like that because it just wasn't the way the class was set up. I know a couple of studio classes had textbooks, but most of the students didn't read them. Art history of course they did. They had to.

MS. RIEDEL: But you didn't teach that.

MR. SHORES: No. No. But I think we talked about different books and different philosophies in class and those that really were interested, they'd come up and say, what's the name of the book and who's the author? And those interested would go ahead and do it on their own.

MS. RIEDEL: So you made the information available to anyone who might be interested.

MR. SHORES: Yes. Yes. And I did have a reading list that people could look up, copy probably, whatever. And of course, I always had — almost every term I'd have students over at the house and we would talk about the things in the house and the religious art and it was more meaningful when they could actually see things out of a church or out of a temple or something in someone's home as a collection.

MS. RIEDEL: In a whole other context.

MR. SHORES: It never dawned on them that people might collect things like that. And it was kind of an eye-opener to many of them.

MS. RIEDEL: Religious artifacts as art objects.

MR. SHORES: Yes. And not done in such a way that they were being proselytized or converted or anything like that. They are works of art. And that was kind of an education to many of them and they loved coming over, so we would have some — we always had once a term. Somehow it was a good field trip.

MS. RIEDEL: Surrounded by saints.

MR. SHORES: Yes. [Laughs.] That's a whole world in itself and some people cloister themselves and they would leave that world and then others of course have never entered it in their lives. That makes me more and more convinced that there must be such a thing as, if not, but like reincarnation. I just don't think this one shot at everything is what it's all about or once you're gone, you're gone. There's too much strength in the human constitution, in their makeup, or in the world or in nature to think that things die.

It may take on another form; it may not be the same, but it doesn't end. It can't. It just doesn't. Even if it's blown up, it comes into another form. But name and form. But it gets so deep, it gets almost to the mystical point of that it doesn't matter anymore. And it really doesn't. We try to find all the answers, but in a last — the essence of it all is that it really doesn't matter.

It's the way things are and the way life goes and death goes and the world goes. It's going to happen and another one is resigned and inevitable but it's just a part of it. It's not the end or the beginning, because again, the Hindus say there is no beginning and there is no end.

MS. RIEDEL: What's kept you working over the years?

MR. SHORES: Kept working?

MS. RIEDEL: Kept you working.

MR. SHORES: Oh, I get it. I can't imagine not working, and I've often felt sorry for people that have never had the experience of creating something and if it's successful, there's not any feeling or euphoria like it. You just feel the greatest sense of accomplishment and a reason for existing if something comes off right. I'm sure. I think most creative people feel that way. I think most people feel that created — everyone's created in some respect. But a sense of accomplishment, I think, whether it's maybe having a family and they turn out well or whether it's helping somebody, or whatever, creating a work of art, Mother Teresa helping people, but the sense of getting something right it's so special. I'm sure you've experienced it in some respect in many things that you've done.

But I think maybe artists have a better shot at it because they have something they've worked on and it's really been — it's tangible and it's there and it really worked. It's so successful and it isn't that you want credit for it. It's just the fact that you accomplished it. And then it may go away or somebody may buy it or it may get lost, but the fact is that you did it and you succeeded in getting it to come through. Not everything happens that way as we know.

MS. RIEDEL: And it's tangible and that others can sense it as well.

MR. SHORES: I think that's what keeps most people working. They work because there's that wonderful feeling and I think I'm going to get this done tomorrow and you get up in the morning and say, I'm really going to do it this way and get busy and you do it and the momentum goes, the time goes and it either works or doesn't work but then you start again.

But it's that wonderful feeling of the process that can be very distressing too if it isn't working out, frustrating and you have to sort of stop what you're doing and say, I'll pick it up a week or two from now and look at it again. But when it does work it's a nice, just a fluid flowing inside and out and it's a great feeling. It's hard to describe to anybody unless you experience it. But I think most people understand that because they do it in once capacity or another.

MS. RIEDEL: What is your working process?

MR. SHORES: Process of working? I've tried different things. I used to do a lot of drawing first, sketches, and later on quit doing that because I do them in clay, little thumbnail sketches sometimes, they're little models. I felt more like I was more steps ahead by working in three-dimensions in the models and then the larger product. But the process would be — I don't know. Somehow, ideas hit you at a certain time and you get inspired in a larger product, you start working, and one thing leads to another and the original idea is far behind now and you're way beyond it. And that's when you get really excited. Sometimes, the original idea just stops and you get — [inaudible, laughs]. You start over again with something else.

But it's trial and error. Not everything can be successful, but it's wonderful when you get into a body of work and

the things flow. It's just there is a rhythm to it and you just don't take many breaks, you go to bed but most of the time is spent working. You don't take trips in between and break it up. Because sometimes when you break that routine, you can't get back to it. It just stops. So if you're having success, I think you stick with it.

MS. RIEDEL: How did you balance your teaching schedule and your avid traveling schedule with that kind of work routine?

MR. SHORES: Well, there was a certain — as I mentioned, a certain time in our teaching schedule that we had six weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas. I generally just sort of planned on traveling at that time. Most of the time I'd get home by Christmas because I sort of like spending it here but sometimes not, and I knew the summers would be free, sometimes for a bit of travel but mostly for work, and I taught, I think the fulltime was — I can't remember, we did four days a week or three and a half, but I had a day or two off during the week. I allocated that to working in the studio unless something else came up.

So it was a matter of disciplining oneself and allowing certain time blocks to work. And it was all right except that when you got really into the rhythm of something happening, and you had to take a break and teach for three days, you'd try to keep the momentum going by checking on the work in the evening or maybe adding a little bit to it as you did, but you kept it alive so that it wouldn't die and you have to start all over again. So there were kind of ways of doing that and it depends upon what the work was. Some things took longer to work with and others happened more rapidly. I think people have different work habits. The main thing is if you take a long break, it's hard to get back. It's very hard and everybody knows that so you're trying to avoid that.

But we all approach it in a different way. Some people have a very rigid schedule — getting up in the morning and they are all ready to go to work by 8:00 a.m. and they work until 4:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. at night and then stop. I couldn't work that way. I work as the spirit moved and if I can work two or three hours a day really successfully accomplishing something, that was fine. But sometimes I'd work maybe 10, 12 hours in a day just depending on what it was, but I never had a just sort of like 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. regime. I just didn't do that because sometimes you just didn't feel like going any further for a while and I needed to stop and take a break.

MS. RIEDEL: Because you were teaching, you couldn't really work on your work when you felt that spirit.

MR. SHORES: Yes. Right. Even teaching sometimes when assignments were made and people were busy working and I took some clay and did some little thumbnail sketches between criticism and things like that with the students. Then I'd work in school sometimes after class and I'd go out on weekends too and work there.

MS. RIEDEL: Was your studio work very separate from your teaching or was there a back and forth between the two?

MR. SHORES: You mean in the imagery?

MS. RIEDEL: Or even in the thought process or what you were teaching would that somehow surface in your work or they are completely separate?

MR. SHORES: No. Once in a while, we'd be discussing something and it occurred to me, I'd like to try that too, and then it would have related, I'd start to relate to it, but generally, my work was pretty separate from what was going on, because I was teaching in ceramics pretty much Pond Farm production pottery and I wasn't doing that myself anymore and so it was two different things. I threw — I threw a lot of the little bowls and things, but I just wasn't interested in the utilitarian ware. Just I hadn't shown that in years in the exhibitions so it was something I taught but didn't do. Students used to ask that, how come you don't show your pitchers and your mugs and your plates, and I said, well, I used to do that, I've done that, but it was separate.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, you taught sculpture classes as well as ceramics classes. Is that correct?

MR. SHORES: Clay sculpture, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And how then was that different? What were you teaching in those classes?

MR. SHORES: Well, like we did the self-portraits and then we'd do forms in nature. One time we did a form that was manmade and they would blow it up. Some did cameras, little snap cameras that would be three feet across in three-dimension or try to take a manmade object and blow it up and distort it in such a sense it was out of scale, out of reality. And those were fascinating. They did some interesting things. And they became quite abstract, and again, they were taking the essence of what they saw and putting it into their work. So there were those that tried to be very literal and just didn't let the creative juices flow, but even they could begin to break away and they saw the impossibility of making something very literal in that large scale piece.

MS. RIEDEL: And were these classes focusing primarily on technique as well?

MR. SHORES: Exactly. With clay, technique is sort of a password because it's a material that doesn't yield. You can beat it and reshape it and all but it has to be put together right or it's going to crack.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: It has the last word. And so we stressed technique constantly, the coils together, how to scrape, really get rid of air bubbles and create a form in clay and in ceramics, hollow built forms. If it were clay sculpture you were going to cast, you could just work with a lump of clay and it was elimination, but in ceramics sculpture it's application; you have a form and you apply to it, so it's a different approach. I think most students that had had any sculpture in high school or other places did it with a solid piece of clay and would eliminate from it, which is okay if you're going to cast but you can't fire it because generally there are air bubbles all through it. So it was — yes, technique was very important. And in sculpture class we didn't talk about glazes because we didn't glaze. It had nothing to do with color. It was pure form.

MS. RIEDEL: And you would save the exposure to different contemporary artists for the New York field trips, that sort of thing.

MR. SHORES: Yes. Right.

MS. RIEDEL: Different classes.

MR. SHORES: And then we would do field trips, to the museum and some of the galleries if there was a particular show I thought that was relevant to what we were talking about. We'd come to town on a field trip and do that, but generally, most of the students by that time were somewhat well read in art history. The library was a good library and we had a lot of slide collections and they had materials that they could refer to, but mostly it was teaching them the technique, and the self-portraits were interesting because the first thing you would do if you were describing somebody is color. Always you'd say, well, they've got blue eyes, blond hair. You never say, their forehead was creased or too to the one side or the nose was bulbous. Our descriptions and our first interpretation of a face generate from color so they could never rely on color as a description and I think a lot of the girls particularly had beautiful blue eyes and blonde hair and they couldn't translate that into clay.

So they had to really rely upon just pure form and it was a little disturbing when they began to realize there was a bit of vanity about looking into the mirror and seeing color and makeup too and all of that. So it was interesting. It was more than just making sculpture. They were getting an insight into themselves. They all said that later. They never really looked at themselves before. Everybody looks in the mirror every day, but not with the idea that you're going to translate that into form.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: So it was a good project and we did it every term.

[END MD 02 TR 02.]

MS. RIEDEL: This is Mija Riedel interviewing Ken Shores at the artist's home and studio in Portland, Oregon, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, on November 14, 2007. This is disc number three.

Good morning. We've agreed to start today with the community of artists and patrons that have been significant to you over the years, starting maybe first with Rachel Griffin at the Portland Art Museum.

MR. SHORES: Yes. Rachel was a very good friend, very interesting woman. She was a curator at the Portland Art Museum and had been head of education and worked up to head curator and was an assistant to Dr. Newton, Francis Newton who was the director at the time. They were very, very supportive of the craft movement; they were on the board of Contemporary Crafts and were very interested. Through them the museum acquired a very fine collection of Northwest art including some early [Peter] Voulkos and [Rudy] Autio and really wonderful pieces. As a result of this, Rachel and I became quite good friends and very good friends.

MS. RIEDEL: They would purchase things from the annuals and later from the biannuals at Contemporary Crafts.

MR. SHORES: That's right. Yes. They were there — they really had kind of first choice at getting the selection and some beautiful things came out of that which the museum still seem to covet and appreciate. But they were both very, very supportive people to the artists and Rachel was especially interested in my work. She did a very fine article for *Craft Horizons* I think in 1970 and subsequent writings in other small journals and papers and was the instigator for a first big show I had of clay and feathers at the museum. It was like a midterm retrospective in a sense.

MS. RIEDEL: Which was in 1975, yes?

MR. SHORES: Yes. I think it was in '75, and a nice little publication was put out at the time. Then during that time, I think it was probably 1970 or around that time, she asked if I would take on the job of a new installation for the pre-Columbian collection at the Portland Art Museum because of my interest in pre-Columbian.

MS. RIEDEL: And you had installation experience too.

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: All the different types of installation experience you'd had too, I imagine.

MR. SHORES: Yes. Right. It was at the gallery. So there was a small gallery on the main floor that was next to the Northwest Indian collection, and they gave it to me to redesign for the pre-Columbian and I thought it was quite successful. It was very simple, no windows were in there. It was all dark like a temple with four Plexiglas columns lighted inside that looked as if they were altars and the glass cases that were brightly lit inside were a bright orange and the poles were a deep charcoal black, green black. So it was very temple like inside and the lighting was successful, and the collection was small, was a good one, and I think it worked very well. It became — I thought, quite successful as an installation. So that was with Rachel's help that that came around. Then her daughter Molly Gregory was an author, still writing in the Hollywood area, she and her husband at that time, Rachel commissioned them to do, I think it was about a 20, 25-foot — 25-minute documentary on my work at that time.

MS. RIEDEL: Was that part of the museum exhibition? Was it part of your retrospective?

MR. SHORES: No it wasn't. It was just separate. It was something Rachel thought should be done — bless her — so they came up and stayed a week and we shot footage around the house and dialogue, outside, in the studio and work. It was — I thought it was a pretty successful movie but nothing ever came of it.

MS. RIEDEL: And where could one see that? Who has copies?

MR. SHORES: Well, I had a copy. It's on 16 millimeter and since then, Namita [Wiggers], curator of the Museum of Contemporary Craft, has taken it and they're going to transpose it to some sort of disc, and the 16 millimeter, in fact, I think it was given to Molly and she's doing it. She said she would take it on, have it switched over to another format because 16 millimeter is kind of a passé thing. It's hard to find a camera to project it.

MS. RIEDEL: And will that be part of your retrospective ["Generations: Ken Shores," Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland, Oregon, 2008]?

MR. SHORES: I think that's what the plan is, to have that being shown, outdated as it may be, both visually as well as philosophically, but it was kind of milestone in that period in my life.

MS. RIEDEL: What year was that done, Ken? Do you remember?

MR. SHORES: I think it was around '70.

MS. RIEDEL: So significantly before your retrospective?

MR. SHORES: Yes. It was. But it had feather things in it so I know it was after — it had to be '70 or after. It might have been '71 or something like that — two. So they were very, very helpful and very supportive and very nice people, and Molly and I are still good friends and we enjoy talking, and I did her portrait in clay and I still see her occasionally she comes up. Rachel has gone unfortunately, and Dr. Newton also.

They both have passed on, but there are other people at the same time in the community, wonderful decorator, a woman named Lila Colwell who was one of the first people to go directly to the artist and work directly within — she did most of the banks important at that time, commercial designer and decorator and she used to do a lot of local work. She used to spend a great deal of time and purchasing things from the gallery too, Contemporary Crafts Gallery.

She was one of their biggest clients. And she did do a lot of good for the local craftsmen at that time and used quite a bit of my work too, and there were other designers at the same time, they were very supportive of the crafts, Harvey Welch and Jerry Lamb. They are all gone except Jerry is still here. They were pioneers in placing good crafts and art in homes and offices. I think it's too bad, there should be more of that today, but there doesn't seem to be that as it was at that time.

Other community — people that were wonderful, people that were patronizing the gallery at the time, in between here and Seattle, and comes to mind Ann and John Hauberg. John was on the board of Reed College [Portland, Oregon] here although he was Seattleite and he and Ann came down a lot and they were good clients of the gallery and they were patrons of some of my early work and most important work. I think some of the

piece they've given to the Seattle Art Museum.

MS. RIEDEL: Which pieces? Do you remember in particular what they had? Was there a particular collection they paid attention to or did they buy things from each of the different series that you did?

MR. SHORES: Most of the things that they had were some of the feathers series, and then I think Ann bought a piece out of the fantasy tower building series that I did and gave it to a children's home in Seattle when she was on the board, and she was a good patron of the arts and still is I understand. There are many people, too numerous to mention. I think that most of them that were patrons for the gallery and many of them are still around, they're still collecting. We have had a number of very strong craft collectors in Portland, Joan and John Shipley and Ruth Halverson who is now gone.

I've always been attracted to collectors being a collector myself and understand the addiction that it becomes and one can't help themselves but that's the excitement of it all and it also I think helps to preserve objects. If it's antiques, you're preserving something, hopefully for posterity, and if it's contemporary art, you're helping the artist as well as helping preserve their work, so I'm all for collectors, serious collectors. My dear friend Richard Davis, a painter in Portland, one of our finest painters was a very good friend and he was one of the first people I knew of my age that was a serious collector, was before I really started collecting.

And I thought — I didn't quite understand what that was all about, because he would get so excited about finding something whether it was a pot or a painting or an antique of some sort, and finally, as I went around with him to antique shops and flea markets, I began to see what was happening and I think that was one of the things that started me in collecting too, serious collecting.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. So you can blame it all on him.

MR. SHORES: Pardon?

MS. RIEDEL: You can blame it all on him.

MR. SHORES: Yes. A good part of it could go to him. Yes. It's right. I think that — anyway, I had a whole list of collectors but there's no point in going into that. We might want to jump on to —

MS. RIEDEL: Maybe the religious community that's been significant over the years.

MR. SHORES: Religious community. Yes. Right. Again, the great influence of mine as I mentioned earlier in the tape, getting acquainted with the Vedanta Society here in Portland particularly. It's a small but a very strong group and it started early in the '20s which very early because most of the centers didn't start until the teens and 20's, and this was a long established center. The swami of this particular center turned out to be a very, very good friend and I was initiated by him. He was considered my guru or is. He's a wonderful man, one of those rare individuals that you think of as a pure soul, and just had that sense of purity about him that he could almost do no wrong. He had strong opinions, even expressed temper from time to time, but after reprimanding a devotee, he would turn around and be very, very loving to them. It was not the kind of temper that we're used to. It was discipline and then finished, forgotten.

MS. RIEDEL: What is his name?

MR. SHORES: Swami Aseshananda and along with his colleague in Seattle, Swami Vivadishananda, Viva became very, very good friends and they were a very huge part of my life in the '60s and the '70s and I still am a member of the society. Both of the swamis are gone now, but I owe them both a great deal in many respects for straightening my mind out and getting me on the right path of thinking. I feel very indebted to them and I am privileged to have known them. Swami Aseshananda was a direct disciple of Sri Sarada Devi who was one of the people that started the Ramakrishna Order, so he was revered by the whole community in the United States as well as in India. He was the last survivor so he was quite a holy man.

MS. RIEDEL: And this has been part of your life for the past 20 years, 30, 40?

MR. SHORES: Yes. Since I've been in Portland, I started going there in '58 I think and there was a time that I pretty much quit going. I got busy with school, busy with work and just my mind was going elsewhere although not completely away from it. I just wasn't participating. And I still go back occasionally, the new swami that is there, he's a very nice man and we've become friends, Swami Shantarupananda and he's been very much a good friend when I was ill, he came to visit me in the hospital and he was very supportive, very nice man. So yes. I feel very strongly about the society. It's given me a good foundation from which to work.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, when you say a good foundation from which to work, do you mean that literally?

MR. SHORES: Well, a foundation — yes, from which to work mentally I guess and a stronger support for my way

of thinking and my way of life and lifestyle and what has come to be meaningful to me. It was the supporting foundation for all of that.

MS. RIEDEL: There does seem to be a direct correlation in some of your work, especially in the totem and temples.

MR. SHORES: I haven't thought of it that way. Because I think I had a great deal of support directly and indirectly from the society and from the philosophy and from the meditation that made things possible that would not have happened if I had not been involved in it. No one knows what would have been if otherwise, but I feel very strongly about that, and it isn't as I've been a pure Vedantist in the sense that's all I've ever done because I occasionally go to the Trinity Episcopal church and other Presbyterian church and to the Easter services and things in other churches, but I think Vedanta has given me more of a foundation and I feel more acclimated to that organization, not that it's better or worse. It just happens to be my choice. It's been good for me.

MS. RIEDEL: Let's maybe jump back to teaching a little bit at Lewis & Clark and having seen so much craft outside of the U.S. in Latin America and then in India and then having taught in an academic tradition for years, what differences do you see between an artist who's trained in an academic environment and one who's not? Do you see anything in particular?

MR. SHORES: Oh, I think there really is. Yes, but it varies with the individual. I've always personally maintained that everybody should have some sort of liberal arts background, whether it's a year or two, not necessarily a degree, but learning about the world and about culture and about people, about humanity, the sciences if that's a direction you want to go. People can do it on their own, people can become artists on their own, but it's a facility that helps accelerate and gets people thinking and getting them set in directions. And young people particularly, I think it's very good for them to have at least a couple of years of some sort of liberal arts education and especially artists. I feel very strongly.

There are very few — I shouldn't say that. There are a number of people who go directly from high school into an art school and succeed and do very well, but I've always felt that a lot of those students have not much to talk about. They become great artists in the sense that they know techniques, they have a background maybe of studying art history and favorite periods of art and inspiration, but a lot of them have very little to say outside of that, and to me a really creative person should be curious about all things up to a point, some more than others of course, but should have to have something to say no matter how great you are as a technician.

There still has to be what is it all about, what are you trying to translate, what are you trying to convey to a person. You learn how to do it, and you learn the techniques, but you also have to have something to say, and that just doesn't happen. That comes from reading and studying and traveling, which by the way I think is one of the best educations there is. There are some wonderful schools now that have overseas travel as part of their curriculum. A friend of mine has two daughters. One has completed the trip and one is on it at this very moment. They have a whole semester onboard a ship that travels around the world. Classes are held on this ship and ports of call and they get off in Japan, in India, in Thailand, in Suez Canal and through the Mediterranean. It's an amazing —

MS. RIEDEL: That is extraordinary.

MR. SHORES: — trip and all that like in four months and they have credit for it, they have great classes onboard ship which is an extreme, wonderful — and more schools are doing similar things today, maybe not on ships, but overseas travel, and of course that to me that's one of the best eye-openers and educatjions that a young person could have or any person for that matter.

[END MD 03 TR 01.]

MS. RIEDEL: Marguerite Wildenhain thought that potters should not go to college.

MR. SHORES: Yes. She said that you're wasting your time. You should get in and work with a master potter and become an apprentice and then a journeyman and she said that there's no reason to be in school. Now, that was when I first met her, but as I said, she really spent most of her time in colleges doing her workshops, it was not in art schools. So she was very versed in that but then I think maybe she might have rethought that idea. I'm not sure. We never really discussed that later on. But I have a feeling about it too, because I mentioned that feeling a liberal arts education is good for any artist, potter, painter, whatever. I don't necessarily think it has to be four years, but they need something, academia or people of knowledge in different fields. Some of the universities and colleges have really big departments and lots of good equipment and they have the money to fund it and that's a plus of course.

MS. RIEDEL: So you're talking about a balance between technical skills, learning technical skills and then a general liberal arts education, knowledge in order to supply the content with which to develop the work.

MR. SHORES: The balance within the school itself?

MS. RIEDEL: Or from different — not necessarily within the — or are you saying within a single school or could that also come from different outlets?

MR. SHORES: I think it could come from a single school if the facilities are right and the attitude is right, and in many cases, I found that academia in some schools take a dim view towards all art departments. It's a necessary evil to reluctantly offer a liberal arts degree that includes art. A lot of academia really looked down upon the arts. I hate to say that but I know from experience it's true that they are considered almost necessary evils" as part of the curriculum because they just don't feel that they're serious.

MS. RIEDEL: And was this true at Lewis & Clark as well?

MR. SHORES: Well, I've had — in the beginning I had students come over to my classes saying that their adviser said, why don't you go for an elective go make some ashtrays and take the ceramics course—an attitude like what you're going to learn is to make some funny little dish or something. It's out of ignorance on their part when they say these things, but I'm afraid that's true. Not all academia. There're lots of professors that are very much interested in art and it's an integral part of their lives. But there are those that do consider it just an elective and it's something that you might take a class or two just for the fun of it.

But the one plus about having art departments and craft departments within an university is that some students who have never had the opportunity to take a class accidentally stumble into a ceramics class and change their majors. They discover a whole new world and that's happened with me many times that biology majors would come in, take the class for a year or two and decided they want to be a potter instead a biologist. That's an extreme case, but it's happened many times. And I think that's an opportunity that one has in a liberal arts school which you can — it can go the other way around. You can come in and be in the art department and all of a sudden change your major to English or something like that. It could go the other way. So there's the opportunity for search and discovery and then make your decisions after that.

[END MD 03 TR 02.]

MS. RIEDEL: University and students.

MR. SHORES: And art schools themselves, again, it depends upon the quality of the art school and the faculty and some of them are so professional and so dedicated to the causes of the art student. I think it's an amazing — art schools — I'm not against art schools by any means. What I really feel strong about is that however they go about it that a student should have exposure to other material other than just art at least for a year to two. Again, some of the schools, our local school of arts and crafts, are now offering a degree, a regular college degree. I guess they have a few liberal arts classes that you have to take of course to get your degree, and I think that's a good solution if it goes in that way, but it depends upon the school, the attitude of the faculty, the attitude of the school towards the art departments.

MS. RIEDEL: How did it shift while you were at Lewis & Clark over those 30 years from when you first arrived to when you left? The department.

MR. SHORES: As I mentioned before, it was a little disappointing. We built the department up to a very good size department and it was very popular. Most of the classes had waiting lists from term to term. It isn't as if they were looking for students.

MS. RIEDEL: You started off with two teachers and you slowly built your way up to 11, wasn't it?

MR. SHORES: Around 11 with part-time faculty. Yes. And our department has been very, very popular there as well as the theater department and music department. So it isn't a lack of interest by the students, but somehow, a lot of the schools, and Lewis & Clark at this time I think has been guilty of it too has been pretty much run by the administration as a business and I think they're forced to do it because it is a big business now and lots of money involved as compared to the earlier days when tuition wasn't very much and salaries were not that much, but now it's all changed.

So I think politically there's a lot of manipulation going on, building more of the academic departments up and cutting back on the art departments and the fine arts, because you can find part-time people within the community to take on classes. It's harder to do that with academic classes. That's one of the reasons too, it doesn't make it right because the faculty should be just as strong and wedged into the school system as the academic part, but I think that's changing again. It's happening to schools all over the country. This isn't local. It just seems to be a trend. I hope it doesn't mean the end of art departments in universities because at one time they were not a part of universities.

I think art departments coming into universities is relatively an early 20th century phenomenon. And I didn't realize until two years later, but it's a rather new thing, so there may be a trend for it to revert back into specialized schools regardless of where it is, though I think it's terribly important that the student gets a well-balanced background and of course the finest technical training in the art it can because that what it's all about, is teaching the techniques and the mind could come from that plus a good instructor or teacher in the art department as well as a good teacher say in the philosophy department or the English department. But we'll see. I don't know how. We don't know how the future will ring true on this because education is going through great throes of change.

MS. RIEDEL: And when you left Lewis & Clark, your position was turned into a part time position, correct?

MR. SHORES: Yes. When I left, the last year that I was there, I was chair of the department, they decided that my position after 30 some years would be a part-time position, a non-tenured track position which means that they would not have to pay any of the equivalent of dividends or pensions and so forth and it was strictly a budget cut thing. So yes, it was very disappointing that that happened. Since then that's been rectified because the position has now gone back up to a full time position, but it did happen and it was to my dismay because I'd worked hard to make that department a vital, big department and it is a strong department.

MS. RIEDEL: What were the focus points? What were the main aspects of the department? Was it a strong 3-D —

MR. SHORES: The focus?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: The ceramics department is a big area and it's a good part — I think part of the strength of the school and the whole school has been a very strong department, good art history, good painting department and sculpture and photography. So I'm sure it's going to maintain itself, but it's one of those things that there's a change happening and it happened out there, but I think it's coming back to life, I hope. They have a new museum now, or gallery which they hadn't had. We worked hard to get that going and that's helped a lot to build credibility in the arts there.

MS. RIEDEL: Over the years you felt very strongly and very involved with a lot of your students. You felt like there've been some really wonderful students that have come out of your program. You've had some great friendships with a number of them.

MR. SHORES: Yes. I'm still friends with a lot of them. In fact, one of my first year teaching one young man, is still a very strong friend. His family lives here so he visits here and I see him every year. He's a successful teacher down at Salinas Junior College in the Monterey Peninsula and has an interesting career of his own into clay sculpture and stone sculpture and he's been very, very successful.

MS. RIEDEL: What his name?

MR. SHORES: Gary Smith. One of my stellar students, and there are a number of them, the fellow you just met Jim Meakin, is still pursuing his work. He's a very, very talented guy and they're scattered about the country and I've lost track with most of them but here in town, Ted Sawyer who now works for Bullseye Glass which is a nationally owned glass manufacturer and he's had several shows with them, one-man shows and he's become their chief educational instructor and he goes to Scotland, Australia, holds classes in glass. He's become quite successful.

So it's great to see these people become successful and go out and extend their careers in different directions. That's one of the rewards of teaching to see what happens to the students, that they have become successful. And I'm sure there are others that I know nothing but they are still pursuing their art career. I hear about occasionally people teaching in various schools around the country but — and I have contact with a number of them. I think there's great rewards.

Teaching used to be considered one of those necessary evils that artists had to do to survive and in truth it was, in truth it was because there weren't many other outlets of income for artist unless you were enormously successful as a painter or a sculptor and had great commissions or drew great money from your work. But also I think teaching helps well-round the individual too and it is rewarding because you have an exchange with other people. By teaching you also learn, and I regret it a bit that I was late get into teaching in my life, but I'm glad it happened. That's part of my life.

MS. RIEDEL: What is it about clay in particular that you think — what are its strengths and its weaknesses as medium? What does it do that nothing else can?

MR. SHORES: Clay I think is such a magical material, and that seems to be a cliché but it's a material that is so

responsive and has so much life to it, I don't know of any other material that has that quality. I thought of it many times. Metal is beautiful, but it's cold and unresponsive. You have to heat it, to hammer it, to beat it to make it bow to your wishes. Fibers are more flexible, but they tend to be lifeless until you actually get something going with them. Paint is kind of an innocuous substance and you're working with a trick of the eye because that's what painting really is about, is two dimensions become three dimensions in the eye of the viewer which takes a great deal of insight and talent and ability, but the material itself is not as stunning and as humanistic as clay, in my opinion.

Clay has that warmth of being able to say things. Just a fingerprint stuck in clay becomes an object in itself, just touching clay. And it's so easily manageable, but yet, it has its restrictions. You can take it so far and torture it, which beginning students do, overwork it and it just — it actually does fatigue and tire out and slumps and dies. It has to be dried out and rejuvenated. So clay can be a life force but it can die quickly and it can respond by — if it's badly put together, eventually cracking and drying, or certainly cracking in firing. Clay has the last word. You think you get by with something, but you don't, not with clay. You have to handle it and treat it with respect and as a result, it will respect your wishes and come through the kiln.

I used to tell the students to treat it like a human object or an animal — or as you would an animal or human because you've got to almost talk to it and respond to it, certainly do its wishes, but yes, you have to learn to control it too. And clay can be controlled, especially on the wheel. At the beginning students and the wheel have a hard time. They torture the clay and they are just not able to control it because it's something they have never done before, but as you begin to work with the clay and understand how much you can push it into the center of the wheel without pushing all the way over and throw it off center, how you can touch it, how you can open it up, you work with it and with the momentum of the wheel and not against it, so you actually have to consider becoming friends and acquainted with it, and treat it like you would a friend, a human being.

Now this is maybe a kind of silly analogy but it seems to work with a lot of students because they gain a respect for it that they've never had before because you think oh, that's easy to do, I'll just plunge in and do it, and they realize that it deserves some discipline and respect. It's like no other material that I've encountered that have those attributes.

MS. RIEDEL: I think about your work and it seems to me that you have used clay in so many different ways from the early functional work through those very organic forms that were part of the feather fetishes, then the chalices themselves are a variation on the functional but more abstract, to the absolute, to the inlay in the paintings, the ceramic inlays and then the ceramic substructures for the totem pieces?

MR. SHORES: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: You've done pretty much everything clay can do.

MR. SHORES: Yes. They've all been different techniques and each one requires a different sort of — sometimes a different sort of clay, but certainly maybe a different approach. You approach it like you would another personality and you have to learn that technique but it's actually the same material. It just that it's just another personality. It might be like another — a foreigner to us, but still it's a human being in that sense.

And each technique I think has its own drawbacks and own problems, but it also has its own rewards because with slabs you can do monumental pieces by continually adding to it and as Toshiko does with her huge, enormous pots. She'll throw the beginning initial form and then as the old Japanese technique of flattening out a coil and setting it on top and continue to throw that up over a period of several days, acquire a form that might be four, five, six, eight feet high but it couldn't be done at one time, because the clay would slump. So there's a technique of doing that kind of throwing in the same way with hand building and same kind of situation you sometimes have to let time help the clay be substantial enough to continue working.

And as you approach these different techniques, it's what makes clay interesting because you have challenges each time that you haven't had before in another technique. I find clay a fascinating material. I've often thought — originally I started to be a painter and then succumbed to the charisma of clay — [Riedel laughs] — and I still do paint some and sketch, but I can't imagine replacing clay as a material for communication.

MS. RIEDEL: Your latest pieces that we were looking at yesterday are paintings.

MR. SHORES: Yes. It happened because of lack of space and I had to some things for a couple of little invitational shows. It was fun to get back to painting, but again, I've started using objects in multimedia with clay and I've tried it with the paintings too. In this case they were rhinestones embedded in the paint, but I've used wires and things like that.

MS. RIEDEL: And feathers.

MR. SHORES: Feathers.

MS. RIEDEL: A while ago.

MR. SHORES: So I like the idea of multimedia and for instance making clay the basic material but using other materials with it. And that intrigues me. There's no end to what could be with that in scale as well with the textures and techniques and mixing glazes and paint and it can be very complex but very challenging.

MS. RIEDEL: How did the structure series come about, even earlier than that, the totem series, the larger pieces that were very architectural?

MR. SHORES: With the mosaics on the surface? Yes. I was offered an exhibition at the Abante Gallery, a local gallery in Portland.

MS. RIEDEL: That would have been in the mid-'90s?

MR. SHORES: Yes. Early, mid-'90s, I think the show was in the mid-'90s. And I just thought at the time that I would like to do something other than clay and feathers for the show and I'd been doing some small scale architectural pieces, just little pieces, insignificant, and I had plenty of time to do this, and one long summer session, and the studio school was available, and also I had access to a graduate student that was going to help me that summer, so I decided to take on a monumental project. It was large.

MS. RIEDEL: The largest pieces you've ever done, some of them four and five feet tall.

MR. SHORES: Yes. There were heavy slabs and the trick at that point, and fortunately I had to have help and did have it, was that some of the slabs had to be dried out enough that they could be stood up right and yet flexible enough that they could be bent into shape and then attached, and it took a lot of trial and error to find out how this would actually happen. But I spent that whole spring and summer, and mostly the summer working on these, getting just the structures built and fired and through the kiln without cracking, and I got to the point where I was getting almost 100 percent work on it. The first two or three had some problems, so that was gratifying.

And then the real creative work began besides having designed the initial form was to design the design on the outside and using small squares like half inch, maybe quarter inch squares of glass from Bullseye, I covered the surfaces in various designs and tried to follow the convoluted forms and some being very hard edged and some being more free form in design. It was an interesting — I loved doing that project. I'll never do it again. It was hard work with those big, heavy forms but it was exciting to see these pieces develop and I must say the show — visually it was a beautiful show because there were all these different structures and different heights throughout the galley and it looked like a city from outer space and part of the mosaics were mirrored, part were bright color so there was a lot of color in the surface treatment. It was a good period.

MS. RIEDEL: You've worked with a lot of dealers, a lot of gallerists over the years, I think starting back in the '60s, a lot was with Oregon Ceramics Studio at the beginning, but you've worked with so many dealers over time. There hasn't been one consistent gallery throughout that really — a different range of galleries. How has that changed over time? What's the relationship with those dealers and the experience of those shows?

MR. SHORES: Well, it's interesting. Starting out, I was in group shows as most people are and you get involved either in museums or galleries, invitation shows or group shows of sorts. And I think the first big gallery show I had was at Contemporary Crafts when I moved up, and then as you begin to show, word gets out that your work is available. I had some work at the Henry Galley in Seattle and most of the time it was between two of those and bit by bit I got a couple of pieces in the annuals at the museum.

MS. RIEDEL: The Portland Art Museum?

MR. SHORES: At the Portland Art Museum and then at Seattle Art Museum in one of their annuals, at a little gallery in Seattle which is no longer in existence, but I can't remember exactly what they're saying is now, it's been so long. But it was the first big show I had outside of Contemporary Crafts and it was exciting to have that show and it sold quite a bit and there were some good pieces in it. I'll think of the name. It's like McGregor but it isn't.

MS. RIEDEL: Foster/White, that was probably there and Fountain Gallery.

MR. SHORES: Later on Foster/White in Seattle was an important gallery for me because it showed a number of —

MS. RIEDEL: Hall Coleman way back when — Hall Coleman.

MR. SHORES: Yes. The Hall. That's right.

MS. RIEDEL: That was 1959.

MR. SHORES: Yes. That was shortly after starting at the gallery here. And then I started showing with the Fountain Gallery here in town, Arlene Schnitzer's gallery, and had a number of shows at the old gallery that she had and after it burned, a number of shows in the new one— both the Rajasthan, the Shiva series and Clay and Feather series, so I had a number of shows with her group shows in California; had a show at Gump's, Ankrum Gallery in Los Angeles, it was a big show and that was all clay and feathers. Group shows around the United States, a lot of Helen Drutt's Gallery in Philadelphia too, and Contemporary Crafts in New York.

MS. RIEDEL: And then there were the large international traveling exhibitions, "Objects: USA," I think we mentioned yesterday and the show in Japan.

MR. SHORES: Yes. The Japanese show and there was a show that Lee Nordness had put together with — I've forgotten what it was called, but it was in embassies around the world and the show traveled and in fact I had some pieces placed in some of the embassies. A lot of group shows and invitational shows and exhibited in Montana at the University of Montana [Missoula] and in Idaho, a number of shows scattered around Washington. But dealers — interesting; the dealers were always different and their approach was different, responses always quite different, as well as the public in different areas, sometimes very surprisingly great results and other times very few results. But that's the plight of show business.

MS. RIEDEL: Do you remember any in particular that were surprising or not?

MR. SHORES: Well, the Ankrum Gallery show in Los Angeles. I really didn't expect to sell there because I wasn't that well known and they did very well. And Foster/White always did well with my shows and again, I felt hesitant showing there because I wasn't known. And then the Structure series show at Abante Gallery had a great response. People enjoyed the work but very few things sold. Part of it was unfortunately because it was open by appointment only after the show opened and I didn't know he was going to do that. He maintains it was the best way to have an exhibition but people would call me at home and say the gallery was closed and I'd say well, knock on the door, maybe he's there and he'll let you in. Maybe he can let you in. And that was I think a good part of why that show was —

MS. RIEDEL: So you arranged to have a show and you had no idea when you were making this agreement that that gallery was only going to be open by appointment.

MR. SHORES: I didn't know that it was going to be like that, no. But he said that's the way he always operated. He didn't like street people coming in just wandering in and coming out of the rain, as he said. But a number of people from out of town tried to get in and weren't able to because he just didn't happen to be there that day. That was just the way he operated.

MS. RIEDEL: That's unusual. And I noticed also, Ken, that there wasn't necessarily one single gallery through the years and do you feel like that was a conscious choice for some reason on your part or you were so busy teaching that you really just waited until you heard from a gallery that was interested in exhibiting the work?

MR. SHORES: Yes. I think the only consistent gallery throughout the years was Contemporary Crafts. I showed there a lot throughout the years, but they were good about — they weren't restrictive as a gallery artist because that wasn't the way they operated so he gave me an opportunity to sign up with other galleries and I did sign up with the Fountain Gallery and was with them exclusively for a few years and as well as Foster/White in Seattle. He wanted exclusive up there. But as the work changed, I guess the galleries changed, and I didn't — I really didn't stay with anyone for years and years and years except Contemporary Crafts. And some of the galleries have since closed Ankrum is closed and I showed at Maveety [Gallery] for a while and they closed. It was a good gallery here in town. So I guess there were various reasons why and people asked to have a show and if I wasn't tied up, I was quite happy to do it if I liked the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you notice over the years a change in the quality of the exhibitions or the way they were handled or the way they were installed, the way that your dealings with the dealers themselves, did you notice an evolution over time or did it stay pretty consistent?

MR. SHORES: Well, yes. I noticed even at the time each gallery had its own way of doing shows, part of it was because of the configuration of the gallery, had certain ways that they installed the show and part of it was just the way they looked at a show and exhibition. And it's amazing how different galleries look at their own gallery, how they feel the shows have to be installed.

MS. RIEDEL: You must have had strong ideas about that yourself having done so much installation.

MR. SHORES: Yes. I really — most of them let me help out at least have some constructive criticism. Most galleries are pretty good about that. We worked together on it, but once in a while, the gallery just didn't have

very good facilities, but generally though it was always very successful installation because most of them had been established galleries and very few times I quarreled with the installations of the shows that I've had, so generally it's been thoughtful and worked out carefully.

MS. RIEDEL: Were there catalogues done over the years in conjunction with anything?

MR. SHORES: At a lot of the shows — yes. I had catalogues from Ankrum, catalogue from — no. It wasn't a catalogue. It was a brochure. Abante did one, [George] Broderick, nice catalogue and sometimes the shows were just announced by mailers or invitations. There weren't always catalogues with every show. And the shows at Contemporary Crafts and American Crafts Council New York usually had a catalogue. They were group shows and quite well done. The Japanese shows had really nice catalogues. So yes, I've been in a number of shows in Eugene and some small catalogues came out and I have, I suppose, a collection of several dozen catalogues and small brochures.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you generally satisfied with the way those exhibitions were handled?

MR. SHORES: I think generally so, I think so. I think most galleries really made an effort and tried hard. They didn't throw things together. A few people were new at it and not too experienced and they were really open to advice which was good, but no. I think I haven't had bad luck with galleries, I wouldn't say, at all.

MS. RIEDEL: How do you see the market for American craft changing over the past 30 or 40 years?

MR. SHORES: The which, in crafts?

MS. RIEDEL: The market. Have you thought much about it?

MR. SHORES: Yes. Over the years. When I first started — going way, way back before my time, I think just a little history, at least in my mind. The craft movement, when it first began, it was a tough time because industrial revolution happened and everybody wanted machine made things. They were popular, they were considered high-end and crafts were considered homemade, kind of left over from the past and certainly left over from the Depression because during the Depression everybody made everything because they couldn't afford to buy things. If they could, they would buy what machine made things there were and I don't think anybody was too much interested in hand-thrown pots and loving hands at home woven mats and things like that because that's what people had to do and didn't have money to buy commercial ones which were considered important items. As bad as they were they were much more desirable than handmade.

I remember as a child we made our own Valentines, we made Christmas gifts, we made Christmas cards. Things were made at home because we just couldn't afford to — and that wasn't just my home. On Valentine's Day, mostly the box was full of homemade valentines from old paper catalogues and all kinds of things. And beautiful; some of them were really quite lovely.

But I think it was after the Depression, after World War II that the crafts began to come into their own — there were pioneers and the Bauhaus had fostered the crafts back in the '20s and '30s but it was avant-garde and it's considered very specialized — Black Mountain [College, Asheville, NC]. And there were areas that really were fostering the crafts but not to public acclaim. I don't think it was big market for handmade items, and until maybe after the war and all of the sudden, people became interested in weavers that were doing extraordinarily colorful weaving with metallic threads and bright colors that the industry hadn't even thought about doing. The revival of the wheel with [Bernard] Leach and [Shoji] Hamada coming to Montana and Peter Voulkos starting out and reintroducing the wheel.

It became very, very in-demand to have wheel-thrown pottery. And then even the little folk markets and flea markets and craft markets that had handmade things began to have really nicer handmade things because schools were beginning to teach this again; as they had before. So I think it was a real revival, maybe at the beginning in the '40s but certainly in the '50s and then by the '60s it was full swing and Woodstock and all the handmade candles and belts, crafts, really plunged the whole economy and country into handmade objects. Part of it was looked at as sort of hippie like material but others were talking about high-end art forms in themselves.

Museums hadn't quite come around to that yet, but that was, in my mind, that's something I would hope it could be accomplished and did of course, but the market changed so radically. Even today we have our Saturday market downtown that's made up of crafts mostly and little food stands and dozens and dozens of craft stands, from weaving, to metal to wood, all kinds of things, some good and some not so good, but it's very popular and people are quite happy to go down and buy a handmade mug for $5 and thrilled about that and find it superior maybe to something that's machine made or factory made unless you're getting into fine porcelains and china.

I think there's a great interest still today in the revival of the crafts movement. And most everybody appreciates handmade things today. They say, oh, this is a handmade mug; this is handmade tablecloth or apron or

whatever or that the sculpture is not mass produced, it's an individual. I think more and more people are interested in the arts, the crafts than ever before because they've reached the distinction between that and the mass produced item, not that that's been eliminated because it's still a big market for that. I think it's a much more thriving market.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, certainly here in Portland with the museum and the evolution of the ceramics studio of the Contemporary Craft Association and then into the Museum of Contemporary Craft which has just moved two years ago into this fabulous new facility in the Pearl district.

MR. SHORES: Yes. That in itself shows —

MS. RIEDEL: It's just dynamic, more dynamic than ever.

MR. SHORES: — the great advancement and the interest that people have because when that first started, the Contemporary Crafts Gallery, the old Oregon Ceramics Studio had a following but it was limited, and people said, well that's really handmade things and the same way with Oregon School of Arts and Craft, the hand loom pieces, weaving classes were big, people were getting interested in it, but it was still considered kind of loving hands at home and it took a while for that to be overcome and people realize that it's really an art form and that really creative artists were working in these materials and doing some extraordinary things.

Some of them one of the kind, and there's an ego about people buying something that's individual and one of a kind, it's handmade, it's theirs and only theirs and there's nothing like it, exactly like it. I don't know whether it's ego. That's probably not the right word. It's something special that people like about an individual piece or even as going so far as to commission something, a set of dishes or commission some woven materials or draperies. It's very important to some people. It's well worth the extra money because they were much more expensive to do generally.

MS. RIEDEL: Have the specialized craft periodicals, certainly *Craft Horizon* has been significant to you over the years, but *Studio Potter*, *American Ceramics*, *Ceramics Monthly*, have they been significant over time?

MR. SHORES: I think that they contributed greatly to the whole crafts movement. It's enlightened people, people that weren't able to get to large centers and see good crafts or well known craftsmen's work, especially like New York or even coming to Portland and seeing the crafts studio here or the one that's in L.A., The Egg and the Eye [Gallery] there and every major city generally had a craft outlet of some sort, but there were many places that didn't and I think the craft magazine series goes so well because people in small towns or in places that had no direct contact with actually seeing the crafts were able to see photographs, hear about artists and craftsmen that enlighten them as to what was going on.

I think they contribute greatly and of course it was of course communication, showing people who the top crafts people were too. They could see what work they were doing and kept up with it even though they might not be able to go to the galleries and see it. And then of course, some of technical magazines like *Ceramics Monthly* served a lot of purposes of education to teachers and students; they had glaze formulas and firing techniques and advertising all kinds of tools and made things accessible to the student. I think they did a great service over the years and continue to do so, especially like *American Crafts*. It's been a great magazine.

MS. RIEDEL: We talked about Rose Slivka and Lois Moran to some extent. Were there any other writers in particular that you felt were extremely influential or whose writing was significant to you?

MR. SHORES: No one special. I think there are a number of good books that have come out about ceramics, but as a continual writer — what's his name that has the gallery in New York.

MS. RIEDEL: Garth Clark.

MR. SHORES: Garth Clark. He's done some interesting articles over the years and he's a good writer. And I think there are more people like that. I'm not familiar enough with textiles, to know — I know there's a hand weaver periodical that comes out and writers contribute to that all the time, but no. I don't know of anyone particularly. I've always admired Rose Slivka's writing because she did such insightful work and her background was pretty much fine arts but she was able to cross over and combine the crafts articles with the fine arts eye which I found intriguing and very helpful, and Lois has been a really good writer over the years and she — Paul Smith has written a number of interesting articles and from Seattle, from the Smithsonian, our good friend —

MS. RIEDEL: Lloyd Herman?

MR. SHORES: Yes. Right. Yes. Herman. Lloyd. He's written some interesting articles over the years and he quite often jurying the shows, he'd do a forward to a catalogue and I found those interesting. There have been a number of people along the way that have been pretty innovative in their writing about the crafts. I just don't

know of any specific people I felt continually following through.

[END MD 03 TR 03.]

MS. RIEDEL: In 2000, you had a retrospective at the Broderick Gallery that was billed as 1955-2000, your work for — spanning 45 years.

MR. SHORES: That's right, yes. Interesting how that came about because I had not met George Broderick before, and a friend of mine, Leo Michaelson, who is a great collector here in town and a good friend, suggested I talk to George and maybe have a few pieces in an exhibition there. Well, I said I'm not interested in doing that anymore because I haven't done any new work for a while and until I do, I just wasn't interested. But I went down and met George and we talked and he was rather new in the gallery business. I think he'd only had the gallery a few years — two or three, four years at the most — and had not heard of me and not familiar with my work, actually wasn't with any work, you can tell, because it just — was sort of a new thing for him.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] What was he showing? What sort of work was he showing?

MR. SHORES: He was showing mostly young painters, and some sculptors and a few established people from around Oregon, Salem and Eugene, people that didn't — hadn't already had galleries. He had a few good people and does have now. He was always helpful in getting younger people started and sometimes had some sort of mediocre work because he was helping them out, getting them started, because he was a very nice fellow and very, very kind and generous and opinionated. [Laughs.]

But he said, well, why don't we do a big show, and I said, well, I don't have any work. And, you know, he said, you've got lots of work in your house, and I had a storage area with stuff in it. And I said, well, that's true. I do, but it's older work and I don't want to necessarily do that. And he said, well, why don't we do kind of a retrospective and I thought with leftovers I'm not so sure that's a good idea. And he wasn't thinking about borrowing things back; he wanted to sell. [Laughs.] He wanted the work to sell too. Well, I did not blame him. He was struggling and he didn't want to just do a surface show.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MR. SHORES: But anyway, we finally after talking for a while and over a period of several days or a while, we decided that it might be a good idea and began to look at all the work that was available. And there was a lot, in all periods, going back to some early almost functional pieces from Contemporary Craft days and some really rather nice pieces I'm sorry that sold now, but then it continued through the fantasy gilded series and the Shiva series, the Clay and Feather series and Structure series, and it had a little bit of everything. In fact, there was almost too much.

And I'd completed a few new things for the show that I had in the studio, just finished up some things. And then we put out this very nice catalogue to commemorate the event, and it turned out to be quite a nice show because it's the first time I'd really seen that whole range of work together at one time. And some of the pieces were pieces I'd held back because I didn't want to sell, so they were all — there were some good pieces in the show.

I really was grateful to him about doing that because it never occurred to me that that's something that could be done or maybe should have been done. So that's how it stood and it's — it was a pretty successful show, sold quite a bit. It had a great review and the woman that writes for the newspaper, Art —

MS. RIEDEL: *Oregonian*? *Artweek*?

MR. SHORES: From San Francisco?

MS. RIEDEL: Probably *Artweek*?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, *Artweek* did a two-page spread on the show, and so got a good — it had good coverage. *American Craft* did an article — small article on it. So I was very pleased the way it came out because I really hadn't been working for quite a while. I'd been involved in the shop.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, the antique shop, which we haven't discussed at all —

MR. SHORES: Yeah, that had taken so much time that I hadn't been working. So it — you know, it was a nice thing to have happen.

MS. RIEDEL: And there was — there were pieces, small collections of pieces from each of the different series over time?

MR. SHORES: From each series, yeah. And most of them had good examples from those periods, you know, there were still quite a few good pieces there. And there're still a lot of things there that he has put away that hopefully we'll use in the new show. We'll need to get that pulled over.

MS. RIEDEL: I'm thinking we talked about the Feather Fetish series that through the '70s and we've touched on the Shiva series, sense of landscape, and that moved on through the Rajasthan series. The Maze series was to some degree a break from that — still two-dimensional, still painting, but a little bit more three-dimensional, yeah — the mini-series and with a reference to gardens to some extent?

MR. SHORES: The Maze series?

MS. RIEDEL: The Maze series.

MR. SHORES: Well, I can't actually remember how I got really interested in mazes. I think it was something I'd read. I went to Powell's and bought every little book I could find on mazes, both old and new, historical.

MS. RIEDEL: Had you seen something in India or it was — it — was it from something you'd read?

MR. SHORES: Not really. I think it was something I read because I don't recall mazes in India. So I got very interested in just the form of the maze itself, and started to think about doing something in clay, but because of the format of a maze, it's really like a ground plan, I decided to do wall panels. Originally, I thought about doing table panels and actual little mazes. Then I thought that sounded too much like bottles and it wasn't something I was interested in doing. But by putting them on the wall, they became abstract in a sense that they weren't actually mazes you could move things through because they were on the wall. And yet they were mazes because you could start at one point and in the end in the center and so forth. Then I got interested in deciding, what kinds of form it should be, rather than just an outline of a maze.

The one that's downstairs in the studio, the *Tiger Maze* [c. 1989], I made a whole series of clay tigers and had them follow the maze path up, and actually I feel it's very abstract, the green and brown maze on these little kind of bush forms that are dotted throughout the surface becomes a pattern rather than a maze, and then adding to them — to it, are the tigers. I kind of bring it back to some sort of — some sort of game-like situation, but still I'd like to think of it as more of an abstract pattern.

MS. RIEDEL: There is a very graphic quality to it.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, it is. I did one with — I can't remember where that is — with Buddha heads. It was a maze with Buddha heads going along the pathway and it became more pictorial, but it was still a maze. I have one somewhere downstairs of little animals, swans and ducks and birds, going around a maze, and then some very abstract pieces, they're just abstract forms. I can't remember. It seems like I did maybe six, eight, or nine — nine mazes, mostly all about three by three, some a little smaller. And it was fun to do. I don't know that — how profound they were, but I enjoyed doing it and it was kind of an interesting idea. I was going to go on and take it along further and get more abstract with it, and I didn't do it.

MS. RIEDEL: There's such strong geometric forms that run through all your work, really starting with the early — some of the early Feather Fetish pieces, but then through the paintings we were looking at downstairs, the paintings with feathers and then the Maze series, to be sure, and the Totem series, the structures — very strong graphic qualities, very geometric that run through 2-D and 3-D.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I think there was — there was a whole — it was non-organic, they're kind of hard-edged and, yeah, graphic I suppose will be a better term, which is kind of a departure from what I've always felt strongly about, clay being an organic material, and I like the idea that it could do organic things form-wise and glaze-wise. But that it was nothing wrong in taking it to the other polarity of getting into more hard-edged and more severe forms, and it was just a new area of interest that I've found intriguing.

I still have basically preferred to think of myself as an organic-oriented, visually-oriented person, more than, say, a hard-edged although I enjoy in some respects that kind of imagery, especially in tiles. And in some commissions — and then, of course, I think it was in '83, Pioneer Square, which is a local square downtown that's being designed by Will Martin, a local architect. And he asked if I would do some gargoyles for a little water trough that was running around a restaurant as part of Pioneer Square. It was elevated up and water troughs surrounding the restaurant, and at each level, there would be a gargoyle spouting water to the next level. And it wasn't a very big space, so it couldn't be a very big object. I thought about it for a long time and I thought, well, I don't really go gargoyles, I really do faces, rather than some birds or architectural feature.

And so I did — I think there were six of them. I did a lot of models, and — [telephone rings] — excuse me.

[END MD 03 TR 04.]

MS. RIEDEL: You were doing a number of models.

MR. SHORES: A lot of models to find the right prototype and I would cast them and did sand casting. So I made the clay models and they were about life-size, and trying different configurations for the faces so that they wouldn't all be the same, and we cast those and things look like they worked pretty well. And they're cast about a half inch thick in bronze, they're pretty heavy. So then I made the larger ones, which were about twice the size, life-size, and it was fun because I did different emotions, and they had to be stylized because they were sand cast. It couldn't have undercuts and be really elaborate and intricate.

So — the project and the problem was to make them interesting enough and yet be — and yet be detailed enough so that they would actually read well, and I think they came out pretty well. Each one was different, with different emotions, like there was a downcast bow, typical sort of — and not the drama masks of tragedy, comedy, happiness and so forth. And we cast them all and then they were applied to the opening at each level where the water will come out and shoot to the next level. The water spouted out of the mouths, and it was fun. It's no great innovative project because it was — they were actually just gargoyles. They were functional, and yet I think they were stylized and abstract enough to be interesting and they're still there.

One was taken a couple of years ago — [laughs] — and fortunately I had the — I had the models so they took it and recast it and it was replaced. I don't know how they took it — because they were bolted down, but it was nice to know somebody wanted one badly enough to have take it. [They laugh.] But it's fun and people — they're kind of hard to see unless you're sitting in the little restaurant, then you can watch the water coming out.

MS. RIEDEL: And that was really the only commission you'd done besides the figures for the churches back in the '50s and early '60s.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, although I did some others. I did one for Centennial Grain, for the outside of their building way back in the late '50s, and it was a bas-relief of wheat and sun, and things like that, kind of a picturesque, and I did — I've done a few commissions that's scattered about, but — did some sculptures — and I think they're still there — at the University of Portland Library. They have huge tanks, aquarium tanks.

I did large 30-inch maybe by two feet, or a foot and a half high of boxes that were very organic, like undersea like with encrusted shells and things and the legs on the side, and as I remember they were kind of orangey, rust-like — I've forgotten what the glaze was. But that was quite a project. I think I did six of those aquarium tanks, and I think they're still there, and I did some things down in Southern Oregon. I did some things for banks, done most with big wall tiles. But no great major architectural commissions, I've never done anything like that.

I — first of all, I've never been asked to do it. Secondly, I'm not sure I would be up to that kind of scale. I don't think that way, and it'd be very difficult for me to translate to something into like a 12-foot wall.

MS. RIEDEL: Have the commissions been satisfactory to you? Has the work been interesting? Certainly, they're completely different than your personal work, the commissions.

MR. SHORES: The commissions? Yeah, they have been. Most of them have. They weren't in a particular area that I was working at the time. They were done expressly for that — although the aquarium parts were organic. They're very similar some of the things I did from my graduate program at school.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MR. SHORES: But the masks, the gargoyles were entirely different kinds of things that I've done before and they're all interesting. And the wall tiles for the churches and the baptismal ponds were obviously my work. They're more organic and it kind of fitted into the things I had been doing, except some of them were very narrative and more graphic, more realistic, I suppose in a sense. I did some garden commission work too in Seattle and somewhere around here, but —

MS. RIEDEL: Were those for private homes?

MR. SHORES: Private homes, yeah, fountains and things like that.

MS. RIEDEL: Ceramic?

MR. SHORES: Yeah. Done in pieces and put together. Large basins and spouting organic forms.

MS. RIEDEL: And you found that was satisfying enough to continue to do commissions because —?

MR. SHORES: Well, I did, but I must — I really never — I never felt very comfortable doing them. I was — I always felt stressed out because I wanted the client to feel happy and it was their major project. When you're

doing your own work, you feel, well, if it does — if it isn't successful, that's my problem and I've got — I'm stuck with it, but if it's a client, then you have to do it over again, or you know, they're not quite happy about it. I've been pretty lucky along the way that things worked out, but I guess I found commission work kind of stressful.

MS. RIEDEL: Have you turned any down?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I have a few things in the past. People have suggested that I might do something for them and I just said I think I'd rather not at the time. In a way, I'm sort of sorry because some things I probably would have done but I was busy with other things and I just didn't have the time. But there are a lot of crafts people, as we know, do nothing but commissions. They like doing it and it's very rewarding monetarily, if it's major — if it's a major commission.

MS. RIEDEL: I think conversely there are some who just don't want to touch it because they think they're just so problematic.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I think that — I feel that way, pretty much. I've been pretty lucky that they've come true, but I measure other kind of work from what's inspiring me at the time, and because you've got an idea and it begins to take seed inside and you begin to think about it, and it develops, and sometimes you think and think and think it over and you don't have the opportunity to actually get in and work because you're busy doing something else. So over a period of two or three weeks, I've already thought it out, designed it, made it and finished with it in my mind and don't even get round to doing it. [Laughs.] That's happened several times.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MR. SHORES: You overthink things, and I've tried to stop that now when it happens because there's a point where you have to really get in and actually start to execute. I can't think about it too long and I just sort of over-think it.

MS. RIEDEL: So you — there's a certain point at which you have to stop thinking and get in and start actually doing it.

MR. SHORES: And doing it, or else quit thinking about it for a while and put it aside, because it's — you can just over-think it and then you don't even want to get into it. It's boring, you've solved the design problem and just hasn't been executed and you lose interest, at least it's happened to me a number of times.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] In any particular series, and does that — is that true for both clay and painting?

MR. SHORES: Mostly, it's been in clay because I haven't had a chance to get into — at that particular time to see it through, and I just lost interest in it. I think that happens a lot. People they — they think of something and they lose interest. And I've always felt this because I just put too much thought into it and I just got bored with it because I think I've solved it— I'm not interested in seeing it through, or it didn't work out too. Sometimes you think, well, that really wasn't such a good idea after all, after I've thought it through. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: How have your sources of inspiration changed over the years?

MR. SHORES: Well, I suppose travel has done most of that. There's some things you see when traveling and you get ideas while you're traveling. You think I'd like to utilize that concept in another way — but that imagery.

MS. RIEDEL: So early on it was the ruins in the Yucatan, for example, or architecture in Europe?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, or — yeah, right, or sometimes, it was things you see in books and magazines when — especially whenever I hadn't traveled, or I hadn't done much, I think — I — you're constantly searching for ideas and that's why Antonio Gaudí really impressed me because I'd first seen pictures of what he'd been doing and then I took out every book I could find that had any of his work in it. And really studied it and looked at it carefully. And so not that I copied his work as I — first of all, I couldn't do it, and secondly, it wasn't that, but it was kind of the essence of the organic growth forms that intrigued me and that's what set me on that pathway and direction. So that — I think, inspiration can come from reading books, pictures.

MS. RIEDEL: What was the inspiration for the chalices, the feathered chalices?

MR. SHORES: Well, I —

MS. RIEDEL: I think of colonial churches, I think of the feathered work you saw in Latin America.

MR. SHORES: All the chalices I've seen all through — the ones in Europe and in South America, and then the concept of the chalice in — what is it — was it *Raiders of the Lost Ark* [1981] — there was one — one of the

movies, he was looking for the Holy Grail [*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, 1989]?

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MR. SHORES: Did you see that movie?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, a long time ago.

MR. SHORES: And there were just hundreds of chalices, and he picked the clay one, which was the Holy Grail, the simple, humble little clay chalice, although there were gold and silver and jeweled ones. That always intrigued me. I never forget that scene in that movie, thinking how, what a vast array of chalices in this movie, and that was years ago, and then I just put it aside and never thought about it. But then I was thinking about the ones I'd seen in Europe, and that all came back and I guess then I was working at feathers, and then I also had some jewels I picked up in India, some rubies and some other things, and I used those in some of the fetish bowls and also two or three of the chalices. And I thought it'd be a nice a idea to do some multimedia, and I still have ideas using other things besides jewels into the chalice, embedding them as well as feathers, if the right form — takes the right feather, you know, to find the right connection. But, no, I'm still very interested in doing something with that — hope to get some things done.

MS. RIEDEL: And then what inspired the shift to the Shiva series?

MR. SHORES: Well, I guess — as I've mentioned before, I guess it was that — there are landscapes in Rajasthan and elsewhere in India that were so graphic, especially like in the twilight or early morning, these stratas of desert, just up hills, and sometimes very bleak, sometimes very austere, but the colors were great. And I guess that's why I thought that paint would be the answer to some of the color problems.

MS. RIEDEL: And the idea of insetting the fired clay into the wood panel.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, I still wanted to keep clay into it and then — and clay seemed to be appropriate for suggesting that a landscape ground level or geographic kind of level, and it took various forms over actual similar clay shapes that were cut and from extrusions, some were just crumbled bits of clay, some were circles, but some were gold leaf, some were glaze and some were just painted. But it was — it was a fun series to do because it had all the latitude of the paint, going on and then getting texture from that and the coloration, and then the texture from the clay pieces, and yet keeping it in a simplified composition and format of just stratas of areas of — that would have contained these shapes or these colors.

MS. RIEDEL: Were they all square?

MR. SHORES: That whole series, all three feet square — four feet square.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MR. SHORES: Four feet square. Yeah — and thoughto the horizon levels and the strata levels varied a lot. Sometimes it would be one to three, or two to one, and they were divided in different ways.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] There was a conscious decision clearly to have them all be the same size and shape. Why was that?

MR. SHORES: I don't know. I just thought it was an easy format to work with, and I wouldn't have to make decisions — I wanted them all to be kind of similar, but the idea for — and similarity would be the — I guess, the outside size because they were all quite different, color-wise and texture-wise.

MS. RIEDEL: Your square feels like a very charged shape.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, and there's a lot of power to a square shape, because I thought about it, doing an oblong shape, but it seemed — I just decided that square would be interesting.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, for — especially for a landscape, one would think of oblong and so the conscious choice of a square was interesting.

MR. SHORES: Exactly, yeah. They were kind of heavy because they're on half-inch boards. [Laughs.] I had to put them board because of the clay, otherwise it could have been on canvas. But it was an interesting thing to do and I enjoyed it. So I did the one series, then I did the next.

MS. RIEDEL: The Rajasthan?

MR. SHORES: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: And what was the inspiration then for that shift, from the Shiva to the Rajasthan?

MR. SHORES: Well, actually not much. They're just a different series and I'd given a different name, but I think there was probably further development with the clay parts, and I kind of — I did more elaborate clay pieces for that idea. But it's still primarily the modular breakdown of the composition.

MS. RIEDEL: Some of them — it's very obscure in some of them, it's very subtle. Some of them had almost more of a volcanic feeling than a landscape feeling, I think.

MR. SHORES: Oh, yeah. Well, that's interesting, yeah. Well, they're all varied a lot too, and — they were pretty sturdy. They have — once in a while, a piece would fall off — [laughs] — but I — they were pretty well secured, but you're dealing with sometimes it's several hundred pieces on each panel, so it's kind of a challenge to get them to work.

MS. RIEDEL: And then it was a huge shift from that to the Temples.

MR. SHORES: Yes, it really was. Yes, completely different. It does sound like I've kind of jumped around from style to style, but clay —

MS. RIEDEL: I wasn't thinking about that —

MR. SHORES: — clay was a thing that really kind of tied it all together. I guess it was just experimenting with different forms and ideas. That little Temple series, it was — it was a one and only kind of series of that sort, and it was fun and it was — I really enjoyed doing it. I don't know how profound the work is. It's more decorative and that's more fun.

MS. RIEDEL: Colorful.

MR. SHORES: But it was — actually, it was fun to do and I'm glad to have done it. It was interesting to do. And some good things came out of it, but that was a one-time —

MS. RIEDEL: But it seems in some ways that was what preceded the Structure series, in some ways.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, it might have led on to that, because it's — well, because those were really architectural in concept and very hard-edged. They were not organic at all; they were pretty much architectural.

MS. RIEDEL: And small pieces of clay now on three-dimensional clay structures, as opposed to wooden paintings.

MR. SHORES: Right. But I — when you start to think about why and why it happened, it's hard to remember. In fact, you don't think about that when you're doing things. It just happens, and then somebody says, why? Then it makes you wonder why — why did that come out? And it has to come from somewhere, but I know the challenges that we've just talked and that are the things I've been thinking about quite a while, and the feather things, over the years, it was a lot of thought on why and studying the history of feathers and combining them in clay, and what the results were. That was very thoughtful and premeditated, wasn't just a spontaneous thing.

That first show, it was huge. I had — must have had 50 pieces, a lot of them were small bowls but I remember working right up to the day of the opening, and my old army buddy was still alive then — Alfred Riedel, and he came over and helped me make the boxes together where he had all these plastic boxes and bases and cemented them down. We worked night after night till three or four in the morning getting that show ready. I've never worked so hard to get a show together — [laughs] — than that first clay and feather, because first of all, it was new, it was a new experience for me assembling all of that. I didn't realized how involved it was.

MS. RIEDEL: And this was with the mirror bases and the plexi tops, and this was for Oregon Ceramic Studio?

MR. SHORES: And they were — some of them were doweled in into the base, and then the base and the tops had to be bolted in with screws to the black bases and the black bases had Formica on them and that had to be covered, and it was — it was a complex time, but through his help, we got them done and got the show up, and Gordon Smyth, who was the director at the time — he took my place as director — did a fantastic installation. He made, like, little walls of felt with wood frames to hold them up. They were like little voting booths, only it was all beautiful brown felt and lighting in each one — and he had — he'd set up like a jewelry shop, in a sense. Each little fetish or piece had its own little space, with its own line.

MS. RIEDEL: Almost a little niche.

MR. SHORES: And as I walked around the gallery, it was like a bunch of little booths, and some of the free-standing pieces were out in the center of the gallery. It was — it was beautifully installed, very elaborate, and he worked very hard on that. So it was — it was a nice first show for the clay and feathers.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: I think the gallery has some pictures of that taken from the installation. It was a nice show.

MS. RIEDEL: And now you're getting ready for another major retrospective that's going to open in April, 2008?

MR. SHORES: Yes, in April. And it's kind of exciting because I hadn't planned this. It was the gallery's idea, and they're going to be borrowing back pieces from people who have bought things in the past and things that I have, and we're going to do some wonderful things over life-size photographs of the interior of the house, showing the antiques and bringing some of the pieces into the gallery from the house. I think if the installation pulls through, as they talk about, it's going to be pretty spectacular. [Laughs.]

And then they're doing a book, which is wonderful. So hopefully, it's going to be an exciting time. I'm looking forward to it. I used to say when they first talked about it a year ago, we'd better hurry, it might be a posthumous — [laughs].

MS. RIEDEL: No, no.

MR. SHORES: But I think I'll make it.

MS. RIEDEL: And it is interesting sitting here in your house, which is filled with probably thousands of objects. I think it's pretty safe to say, don't you think? Well, certainly, well over 1,000 — that — what an important part collecting has played in your life. So you've really sat on this, both as a maker and as a collector. You had an antique store shortly after you retired, for nine years.

MR. SHORES: Yes, right.

MS. RIEDEL: And really worked primarily with Indian and — was it primarily Indian antiques and objects?

MR. SHORES: Well, the shop had a lot of European things too, but a lot of things from India because we were going to India a lot, and some Chinese things, a lot of oriental, and at that time, I had a lot of pre-Columbian up for sale in the shop too, because I had changed over at the gallery. And so it was an interesting time. I enjoyed it, but it took a lot of time, and just wasn't time to do the work that I wanted to do, and so I just —after a number of years gave it up, but it was — it was a nice experience, and we had a good time. My partner at the time was pretty knowledgeable and went to India with me a couple of times and we bought things together. He had been, throughout the years that I've known him, in the travel business and actually did a lot of the travel, the escort travel things that I did in India, and a serious travel agency that we were able to do some of these trips.

And then Shireesh joined in and so with Tom — it was Tom Law, his name — and Shireesh, we were able to do these extraordinary escorted trips. And then Tom helped me out with the gallery too, and he would — it was a lot of fun, but it was just another experience.

I guess — I think of people sometimes saying I've been antique dealer all my life, or I've always been a scientist, or I've always taught school, I've always done this, and I kind of admire the tenacity that some people have to have stayed with one thing, not that I got tired of it, but I was — I'm really happy that I was able to do so many different things, because I think it's all tied in together making me what I am and making my work what it is. And I — I guess if I did just art teaching forever or just ran a shop forever, I'd be an entirely different person.

So I mean, I think I've been fortunate that I've had the opportunity to do a lot of different things, and not fail at them, but just gone on into something else.

MS. RIEDEL: Actually, done them for long periods of time — everything, yeah.

MR. SHORES: Sometimes, yeah, it was. The gallery was a 10-year episode and the shop was about eight years, and teaching was 30 years.

MS. RIEDEL: It's interesting when I look at your collection, I've been trying to think over the past few days of what relationship it is I see between your collection and your own work, if there is one, and the thing, of course, that comes immediately to mind is that — that your house is pretty much filled with religious artifacts from one religion or another. I mean, there's a very strong ceremonial quality to them.

MR. SHORES: It is. Yeah, I think it did not start out that way, and as a collector, I picked up whatever I could afford at the time it intrigued me, and had all kinds of things like most people do. And that's a good way to collect, I think. Then I got into Art Deco and bought all that cheap Art Deco stuff that was so available at one time, and had walls full of it. And it was interesting, but it wasn't very profound and I got real tired of it quite quickly, and then as I got more seriously involved, I started collecting pre-Columbian, and picked up a lot of interesting things over the years, both in Mexico and in auctions and in other places.

And then I had that for 25, 30 years, and the gallery here at the house, and finally some of that went into the shop, but after that I was acquiring things in India, and Buddhas from everywhere. I'm beginning to sort of focus in and narrow it down, and then, of course, I was always interested in Santos and Christian religious art. So I — all of a sudden one day I sat back and I thought — and I wasn't even aware of it. Everything I have is pretty much religious art. And I hadn't really thought it out, and it hadn't meant to be that way, but that's just the way it turned out.

So practically with many exceptions, but practically everything in the house is of one religion or another, and I keep adding to it and these Jewish Torah page pointers and the Jewish hanging in the bedroom, and because some religions have very little religious artifacts that can be collectible. That's one area that there isn't very much to collect, whereas with Santos, they're prevalent, and lots of Buddhas all over the world — [laughs] — and with Christian art too.

So it was interesting. I feel now that the house is pretty much a religious art collection, and one of the things I've always said I liked about religious art, most of it, is that it's unsigned, that it's egoless, not that that makes art good or makes it bad, because we're all used to signatures on things now, and as it should be — it certainly helps historians — [laughs] — it'd be nice to know about all these temples and sculptures in India, who did them? And we'll never know because they were never identified. But, on the other hand, in a kind of benevolent, philosophical way, it's nice to know that some art is egoless and religious art probably is the right thing for it to be because it's the sense of purity about it that as Sri Ramakrishna, the Hindu saint said, "When the ego dies, all troubles cease."

So ego, in a sense of, kind of purity, and I think that rings true in both religious art. Even the recent crucifixes I'd gotten from the — [inaudible] — that came from Spain — from France and Germany, there are no signatures on them. You'd think a couple of hundred years ago, people would start signing things, but I don't think that ever occurred to anybody. They were done for a purpose and that was it. And some of them were beautifully done and carved. So it's interesting, it's just a different approach.

MS. RIEDEL: And that leads me to thinking about what we were discussing, I think, yesterday about any sort of functional quality to your work, and the sensibility if there is a functional sense to it, it is of a ceremonial spirit.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, it is now. Yeah, I feel that way, that I think all artists serves a function of some kind, but to be really functional, I think mine would be ceremonial or — yeah, in that — in that direction and not literally functional in the sense that you'll actually be making use of it. I haven't done that in years, except in school for demonstrations. We did a lot of functional work, but — and I admire it and I — like my mentor Marguerite, practically all of her work was functional. And the old form follows function cliché rang true in her work as — in any functional, good functional artist. It was just a different approach to things.

I'm certainly not against functional art. I like the idea of being able to use things that people make, but I just don't happen to be that interested in doing it to that extent, and I have done it and saw it as something I have experienced, but it — it's interesting how people make decisions in their lives, the kind of work they want to do, the kind of direction they want to go in, the kind of influences that causes that to happen, whether it be personal or philosophical or visual influences, or — it's — I — there are always reasons why people do what they do. Sometimes we don't know why subconsciously. Sometimes it takes somebody else like an historian to tell us why we did it — [laughs] — and sometimes that's true.

But that's what makes it all fascinating in going into art history and trying to make judgments of why certain painters did what, even as late as something like [Vincent] van Gogh, we know quite a bit about him, but we don't really know how he thought about a lot of things and why he did things. He was obsessed, of course, but the vision and that was overwhelming to him and his paintings show that. They were so vigorous and obsessive, but we just don't happen to have the — we don't have the knowledge over why people did certain things, especially further back in the past, except for, like, religious art, we know the reason for that, but then we come across things in Greco-Roman periods that may think, well, maybe there were toys, maybe they were just decorations, maybe they were functional, and maybe most of them were quite religious too. I think they were for temples.

So it's nice to have someone like the Smithsonian getting this down in black and white of why people are doing what because that really —

MS. RIEDEL: As black and white, as good as it gets — [inaudible].

MR. SHORES: There's real information that other — maybe other people can use later, because it's the unknown in the past, in many cases. So it's different — so it's a different world that we're —

MS. RIEDEL: And it's interesting to hear what you're thinking about when you're working on the work as opposed to what other people might see in it or might associate it with.

MR. SHORES: Exactly. In many cases, we just don't know this at all, unless it's obvious like when Gauguin was painting in Tahiti, he was thinking about Tahiti and he was trying to portray that. But sometimes, you'd finally see it. I often wondered — and maybe it's known and I just don't know about it — what Rothko was thinking about when he did those beautiful paintings, and I don't know enough about him. I should do more reading. I don't know that he was a particularly religious —

MS. RIEDEL: For the chapel, you mean?

MR. SHORES: Yeah — or a philosophical person, but they just — they just reek with an essence in his spirituality that it would be interesting to know exactly what was in his mind when he did them. Was he just obsessed with color and in the juxtaposition of his color seeping through, or was he really trying to portray something else in another dimension? And I — I mean, maybe there are art books about this. I don't know. I must look into it.

But I think that's true of a lot of artists who just don't — not sure. Like Jackson Pollock — we know that he was interested in the energy of throwing the paint and what would happen with the gravity, and it was a little more obvious what his ideas were about, but still underneath that, there were probably other things going on that —

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MR. SHORES: — we just — we will never know, and that's probably the way it'll always be. We don't really know ourselves why we do some things and why we think some things, let alone for somebody else to dig in to find out what we're doing.

MS. RIEDEL: Sometimes that takes years to figure it out to even see it to make it happen in the first place.

MR. SHORES: Yes, I think that's true. [Telephone rings.]

[END MD 03 TR 05.]

MS. RIEDEL: Your work — you were just saying — has really changed quite significantly since you started going to India.

MR. SHORES: Yes, and I — you know, one's not really conscious of it. You don't think of it at the time that I've been to India and now my work's going to change, but it — looking back, in retrospect, it seems like that first trip to India was so awe-inspiring that I've started going back time and time again after that, and the work began to change and part of it, as we talked about earlier, the use of gold leaf and so much gold and silver in India, in their art, and jewels; the opulence of Indian art is just incredible. And then even the clay work, as simple as it is, it had a very strong, powerful fundamental quality to it that combined with the opulence of the Indian sculpture and the Mogul — the Mogul work too. It's just amazing. So that began to be a direct influence.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you doing the lusterware — luster glazes before India?

MR. SHORES: Yeah, well, I've done a little, but not — like, that's one of the reasons I got back into lusterware was the fact that not working in gold and silver or platinum or copper, I could achieve that same effect with the lusters. And having then seen so many jewels and inlaid — I was able to find quite nice, inexpensive rubies and things like that that I could inlay. But it was not only that, it was — it's the whole — I think it was the color of India that changed my feeling of painting, and of the color of that I used, glazes and paint on the sculpture and on the forms.

It just bound — it's bound to influence anybody, I'm sure — that would — that paid attention to India. And I have had so many people, as I've just mentioned earlier, this young man who'd been to India three times. His work had changed completely from what I thought was rather ordinary work to brilliant, really extravagantly beautiful work, and it's just that it's such a visual place that you can't help but be inspired and attracted and question the work you do at the time and how you could enhance it or change it or make it another kind of statement.

But that's true of every country. I've had that happen to me in Europe, turning to religious art, and certainly it's true in South America and in Mexico, and then those were great transitions too, but I think the biggest was India, because it's just overwhelming, and it's a visual treat to the eye, not only for the opulence but for the color and the grandeur. Sunsets in India are just like no others that I have ever seen.

And the terrain, and it changes from North India to South India, and the temples and the color of the temples inside and out, and the markets and the bright saris that the women all wear, the clothing and the fruit stands, the color is everywhere. And in a country so poor as India, where you think of everything as drab and poverty-stricken, and it is in the slums, but in the midst of that, you'll find these very poor women in brilliantly colored saris — [laughs] — because they love color, and if they could afford it, they have some either brass or gold jewelry, lots of jewelry on most of the women.

But it's a country where people really do appreciate color and a sense of what I've come to think art should be, a sense of taking color from nature and applying it, because flowers are important, there're the marigolds, hibiscus, all the great — bougainvillea, all the great colors are brought forward into the markets from the fruits, the flowers, the saris, the sunsets, everything is colorful in India. And I can't think of another country that's quite like that, maybe it's because parts of India is so drab that this color accentuate — is accentuated, it stands out, but I don't think of color in Europe on the streets. I don't — maybe Morocco, but even then it's not — it's a more subdued color than I've experienced. And certainly, down in South America, the wonderful ponchos in Guatemala there are colorful, and — but they're not — it's not that brilliant.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, saturated, sort of gem colors. Yeah.

MR. SHORES: Yes, yeah. So it is inspirational. I think any artist going to India would find some sort of — bound to find some sort of inspiration there. Any kind of travel should do it for some people, for better or for worse. You might be appalled and repelled. [Laughs.] But that can be inspiring too, in a kind of distraught way.

But I think to sum it all up, I think travel can be one of the most educational and inspirational methods of achieving some sort of direction that I'd like to take or do, whether it be individual arts or whether it be in whatever, dance, or certainly writers know this, they've traveled the world over and gotten inspiration from their travels, and the visual artists had to, they could afford it. Travel's so accessible now. It's too bad it couldn't be government-sponsored mandatory that every youngster or late teenagers have a chance to go somewhere for six months or a year just to experience another lifestyle, another culture. It would mean — broaden their whole world, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MR. SHORES: Or anybody, for that matter.

MS. RIEDEL: Their entire perspective, sure.

MR. SHORES: We, in the United States, have been such isolationists and it wasn't until after World War II that people really began to travel, except for the very wealthy, they'd get their grand tour and people that had jobs overseas. But after the advent of the airplane coming into existence, all of a sudden you began hearing about people taking a week's trip to Europe, or secretaries taking 11 days off and taking a tour to Europe. Unheard of ten years before that. So it is accessible and it has helped broaden our life and our culture, and we're not the isolationist, puritanical country that we had been before.

MS. RIEDEL: That great Mark Twain quote about travel being fatal to small-mindedness, prejudice and bigotry — or something along those lines.

MR. SHORES: Yes, yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: I think that's true.

MR. SHORES: Uh-huh [affirmative], that's true. No, I would advocate it for anybody that they could do it. Travel is hard work though. It's not easy, but it's fun.

[END MD 03 TR 06.]

MS. RIEDEL: This is Mija Riedel interviewing Ken Shores at the artist's home and studio in Portland, Oregon, on November 14, 2007, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This is disc number four.

I wanted to go back and revisit briefly your long association with Oregon Ceramic Studio — and you just said something we hadn't talked about on tape yet — that you first stopped by when you were still in high school.

MR. SHORES: Yes. It was — it was just an accident. I was asked to come to Portland with one of my high school chums and he and his parents were driving up for the day and it was a treat for me because I'd never been to Portland. So we drove up and on the way home, we stopped in this funny little neighborhood in South Portland, because I didn't know Portland at all, and it was a gallery and it had clay objects and I can't quite remember what, I think were some woven pieces too. Turned out it was the older Oregon Ceramic Studio that they had known about, and my friend bought a clay piece. And I was sort of intrigued by the whole thing, that a gallery was given over to things like crafts, because it never occurred to me that that sort of thing existed. And then — not ever forgot about it, but I just put it out of my mind after that, and —

MS. RIEDEL: You actually met Kay McNab back then?

MR. SHORES: And that — one of the pieces that he bought was done by Kay McNab, who was an artist at the time and also a volunteer. And when I started work at the gallery many years later in '57, she was one of the

people that I got to know and became a good friend. So it's a déjà vu, or — and it's kind of interesting that something like that would happen and full circle back again, and it was such a part of my life from '57-'68, but I think it's interesting that that was the first introduction.

But when I finally did get to the gallery in '57 and became the technician, it was run by women— all volunteers and they were — it was a wonderful group, dedicated group. The gallery had no money. Every time there was an opening, people would bring food that they'd cooked from the kitchen. [Laughs.] There weren't such things as wine being donated because there were no wineries around at that time. It was a very kind of simple existence. And actually the gallery was kind of known at that time as a woman's tea party because it was mostly made up of women, volunteers and they had silver teas to raise $100 or something like that. It was all women. And seen by many people in town, it was, like, oh, that woman's organization, and it wasn't meant to be that, but that's just the way it was because it was run by and organized by women.

So I plunged into the middle of that, and into this technician's job and the circumstances, Lydia getting sick and finally dying. It was a fulltime job. It was really almost seven days a week, almost all the time. But I was also working on my work and times the gallery was closed, but it was ten — at least ten years being with the gallery and it seems in a way like a 30- or 40-year part of my life. [Laughs.] And it —

MS. RIEDEL: Well, it has been. I mean, starting from that first visit when you were a teenager to 2008 when your retrospective opens.

MR. SHORES: That way — it would be leading that way, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: That's 50 years.

MR. SHORES: The tragedy — not tragedy —

MS. RIEDEL: Plus.

MR. SHORES: — but the difficulty for me was because there was so much responsibility and we had to rely on volunteer help and there was very little money to help out with anything. I felt such an obligation to make it successful to be there all the time, and I remember Pete Voulkos came one day visiting about noon, because he never gets up before, and he was important and he came and he said, we came by last night. It was about two or three in the morning, and you weren't there. How come? [Riedel laughs.] Because he's so used to working all night. I said, well, I was probably here till noon — midnight, but I finally had to go home. He said, well, we thought it would be opened at night. And I was laughed about that because I thought, well, that's all I needed, to be there day and night.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. SHORES: But it was — it was a demanding job. I made it that way because I felt that was expected of me, but I — I got so possessive of the gallery that I almost treated as if it belonged to me. I knew full well it didn't and I wasn't absolutely responsible for it, but I wanted to make it work and we all did, but the others were volunteers and I was so-called paid. [Laughs.]

So it became ten years of almost seven days a week. I don't remember taking a vacation, except a brief time when I went into Mexico. Other than that, I don't think I had a vacation every year. It never occurred to me to take it because the gallery needed me, or I needed the gallery. [Laughs.] And the time I did go to Europe, I took six months off. I just was so reluctant to leave because I thought they'd never make it without me, and they were so thrilled that I was leaving, mainly because they were all good natured and thought I needed to get out of there.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: But they also felt that that'll let somebody else take on the responsibility, which was true. But I missed it terribly and I thought they're not going to manage without me, so I instead of staying a year, I came back within six months, just plunged into it again. But I was only there for a couple or three more years, I think, before I finally decided I was going to teach part-time.

MS. RIEDEL: And what was the motivation to do that, to begin to teach?

MR. SHORES: Well, I think part of it was the fact that — it became to be kind of repetitive and I really felt personally that I wasn't getting anywhere with my own work, and financially it was a standstill because they didn't have the money at the time to raise my salary and it was still a pittance, and I was at an age I thought I should be making more money, and my family, particularly my father said, why are you staying at a job like that? You should be making ten times the amount of money. And I had to defend that by saying that I really

liked it, it's been good for me and my career.

But I began to think, it really is time to — now or never — to move on, and I really kind of wanted to stay in the area because I was so involved here. Then when the job — teaching job came up at Lewis and Clark; I applied for it and they immediately said I could have it, because I've met the president Jack Howard had known of me and we'd met once before and he said, we'll be thrilled to have you and I was pleased and began to think that that was what I wanted.

So that was an encouragement, but I said I can't leave to fulltime because the gallery needs me. So — I was paid on halftime anyway, even though I was working fulltime. So I taught halftime classes that first year and in the afternoons I spent at the gallery. And it was awkward because I really felt I didn't belong either place. So after the end of that year, I told the board that I really wanted to teach fulltime and they said reluctantly they will accept my resignation, but I think they all felt that it was time for my own good too that I moved on. We were all such close good friends and it was such a close-knit group, and there was such a kind of personal feeling of possession about the place that I guess, in a way, it began to become unhealthy. It really was no longer a business and a gallery; it was kind of my place. The board was my board, and it was a ridiculous thing, and I knew at the time it was, but I just felt the pressure of making it succeed, partly because I know Lydia wanted that too, and partly because I felt it just had to had to keep going there. I was very sentimental about the place.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, you must feel incredibly proud to see where it has arrived today?

MR. SHORES: Well, yes. I'm really pleased because once I'd left, a good friend of mine took over the position — Gordon Smyth — and he was a very good director. His background was interior design, but he was good doing installations. He's a very gregarious person. And he was there a few years, and then as I watched new directors come and go, some of them I didn't know and I began to drift off, I didn't see much of the place. I think I had a — may have had a show there, but I was busy teaching, busy doing some new work, and I kind of alienated myself from it. I didn't feel any volunteers were coming in, the old ones were leaving.

So I lost — a little bit lost track of what was going on there. And then it began to go downhill. It was really, really struggling, and they had a director for a while and she was very good, but she became quite ill and she stayed on regardless, and she just didn't have the strength to keep the place going and developing and enlarging. And it really almost closed up under her tutelage after she was there a long time.

MS. RIEDEL: Who was that again?

MR. SHORES: Marlene Gable. She's an artist in her own right, a very nice person. And it was well-thought of by many people, but she again was so attached to it and it was too late for her to get another job, and she was trying to raise two girls and she needed the work. But as a result, her interest in the gallery diminished, and she didn't have the strength to keep it going when she got quite sick. And it really — it was floundering. And I heard about that and I was really upset about it because there wasn't anything I could do.

And then finally, part of the members of the board — after Marlene got so sick she had to go home and she finally died — the board members rallied around and went through a series of a couple of trial and error directors until they found a very successful one, Jan DeVries, and he was worked there a number of years, kind of helped build it up, and getting it back into the community because for a while the community used to say, well, I think it's closed, we don't hear about it anymore, I used to hear about it all the time in the paper.

Anyway, he helped bring it back, and finally called a meeting and when he left somebody else came in and then briefly and David Cohen, who had been in Portland at the PCVA [Portland Center for Visual Arts, Portland, Oregon] and worked — he worked in the Bushbarn in Salem and he was very successful, very knowledgeable, very talented guy and very pleasant person and he took on the job, and began to kind of bring it into the limelight again, within the community, got stronger board members on, and they began to arrive with more money. And it just began to thrive.

And then there was the decision a couple of years ago that they would sell the property. At first, they were going to rebuild a new gallery and maybe a business structure that they could rent out and make money. But it was just so much money involved in it and the board didn't want to undertake that kind of thing. They weren't a board for running a co-op and an apartment house. I think there were other reasons. I don't know what they were, but they decided that the best way would be to sell the property because it's valuable property and there was a real building boom at the time, still is.

And they asked me what I thought about it. David and I became good friends. He looked at me as an old-timer that had been around the gallery so long in the past and we talked and visited. He asked advice about various things. He said what do you think about it? And I said, oh, no, you can't sell the gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: It's an old beautiful old space.

MR. SHORES: It's too historical.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MR. SHORES: And he said, well, you know, we don't get many people out here. Well, they never did.

MS. RIEDEL: And it was way out there. It's true.

MR. SHORES: It's too far out; hard to describe to tourists how to get there. But it was so historically a part of the community out there, and such a beautiful place. I said, what about revamping? He said, well, it would cost a lot of money, need a lot of work. And I said, well, you know best. I'm not involved, but I just hate to see it happen. And he was kind of disappointed that I didn't rally around.

But the more we talked over the next few months, I began to see the possibilities of what could happen if they did move, and then they focused in on to the DeSoto Building and other galleries are moving into there too. It will be quite a — quite an art center. It's great location on the edge of the Pearl and on the park blocks. And finally, I was so convinced, because he took me down and showed me the revamping and what was happening, and I commend him for he had real vision.

MS. RIEDEL: He did.

MR. SHORES: Because he had — it was the right thing to do, and he said recently, within the first three months, they had more attendance and they doubled the attendance and had the full year of — [inaudible]. That was just within three months. It's getting lots of publicity and they have all kinds of activities there. The staff has increased from halftime one person as I was — [laughs] — to, I think, they may have 20-some people there, part-time and fulltime. It's absolutely a phenomenon. It's a thriving organization. It has lots of attendants. People are talking about it. It's in the paper a lot. It's advertised. It's — it just couldn't be more successful, and we hope it continues that way.

I think people are beginning to realize that it's a real museum and it's an integral part of the art scene in Portland now, as viable as the art museum, only in another vein, as the crafts world. And its history, of course, its legacy of being the most outstanding craft organization in the United States at one point and the earliest, has helped it along too, because it has this great background that has fostered so many crafts people and famous people over the years. Their first introduction to exhibitions and the history of different various organizations and shows having originated there, and it's just phenomenal kind of, well, historical background for an organization to have, and yet not having been that successful.

So combined with its new success, I think it's really going to get even more far-reaching on a national scale and maybe international. It already has in many of its circles, reached out and made attempts to bring back information from East Coast, and part of the staff now is attending SOFA [Sculpture Objects & Functional Art fairs],they attend regular meetings with the American Crafts Council. There are voices to be heard.

And I'm really excited and thrilled about it. It just shows how much sentimentality can thwart progress. I was so wrong, but I see how right it is for them to do it and I'm really very pleased that they asked me to be a part of the celebration next year in the retrospective opening next April, and they're publishing a book. And David said they want to have their first birthday party in July for their first anniversary, and that my show will be ending then so that would be a big celebration at the end of the show. And lots of people will be there. They'll have an outdoor dinner in the tents.

So it sounds — lots of excitement going on there, and there are plans for the future, nothing but big and progressive, and I think it's going to keep expanding because it's a unique organization, and it's now, as I've said, getting more and more support money-wise and attention-wise.

And people realize it. I think most people in the past thought it was a gallery and they lived from the sales of the little sales gallery, not knowing that that never paid the overheard, let alone the other bills. And now they realize it's a museum, the sales gallery is an adjunct feature like most museums have, but it's certainly not how they are funded and they realize it's a nonprofit organization that needs to be funded as a part of the arts community, and they're getting grants and lots of help and I hope it continues that way. I'm sure it will. We hope for the best.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, I think we've think done an excellent job really of covering just about anything, everything. Is there —

MR. SHORES: I'm sure there'll be all kinds of things that we'll think of later. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Exactly. [Laughs.]

MR. SHORES: I think the highlights have been covered and it's been really fun for me to go back through all these periods of time and realize that it is just one lifetime because I always think of it as different lives. There was a teaching life, a gallery life, the life in California. So it's — time flies so quickly, but it — a lot was crammed in to all this time.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MR. SHORES: And it's nice to know that it's documented so I can remember — [laughs] — and brought back a lot of memories too.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] I would imagine that's part of the process of getting ready for the retrospective as well. So the timing seems good.

MR. SHORES: Yeah, that's — because working that — I mean Namita Wiggers, the curator, is plowing through scrapbooks and they're going through photographs getting things ready for the book, as well as she wants to do some photo things for the gallery, or for the show. And she's been a real inspiration to all of us. Such a dynamic person and lots of great ideas. So I'm looking forward to the show, not because it's about my work, but to see how she's going to create it, because she's got some great ideas. It'll be interesting. And we hope you'll be back for it too.

MS. RIEDEL: I hope so too. Thank you so much.

MR. SHORES: Thank you.

MS. RIEDEL: It's been a pleasure and thanks for making time.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]