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Oral history interview with Mark Lindquist,
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Mark Lindquist on August 12, 2009. The interview took place in Quincy, Florida, and was conducted by Paul J. Smith 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.

Mark Lindquist 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

PAUL J. SMITH: This is Paul Smith, conducting an interview with Mark Lindquist for the Archives of American Art Smithsonian Institution. It's taking place on August 12 [2009], at the artist's home and studio in Quincy, Florida. This is recording card one.

Mark, it's nice to be here. To begin this interview, could you talk about your parents, family life and your early upbringing in California?

MARK LINDQUIST: Great. It's nice to have you here, Paul. And it certainly is an honor to be involved in this project.

I was born in Oakland, California, in 1949 and my father was working for General Electric Company. We moved to San Jose and he was working for GE and we had a lot of relatives in the area. My aunt lived in Oakland. My grandparents on my mother's side lived in Berkeley. I remember a lot but it's very vague right now, essentially.

I mean I, sort of, remember a lot of flowers. I remember — I do remember my grandparents' place in Berkeley and spending a lot of time there. They had these sleds with skateboard wheels on them and roller skate wheels on them. So that was really fun. And one of the neighbors' kids, you know, we used to go sledding down the street. I remember going to stores in Oakland, walking down the street with my aunt and I spent a lot of time at my grandfather's farm in Kingsburg, California, which is in the San Joaquin Valley.

He had a grape vineyard that grew grapes for the Sun-Maid Raisin Corporation and I remember spending quite a bit of time there on the family farm. There was a wonderful old barn there and the house was really, pretty terrific. Of course, there were the grape vineyards, all that sandy soil and those, just, marvelous Thompson Seedless grapes. Peach trees everywhere it seemed like in the yard. My grandfather used to grab a peach and cut it up with his pocket knife and hand it to me. I don't remember an awful lot about him but, you know, there was that.

MR. SMITH: Did you have any sisters or brothers?

MR. LINDQUIST: I have a sister, Catherine Jean Lindquist, and she's two years older. I don't really remember an awful lot about that period from one to five, you know, other than just certain snippets of it. We lived in San Jose and I remember — oddly, the things that I remember are having crashed my bike and it was a big deal. My father carrying me back and then he gave me a little hammer to make me feel better. It's odd what you remember when you're a child, you know?

MR. SMITH: Sounds like a normal childhood.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, yes.

MR. SMITH: And then, I understand that you moved to Schenectady, New York, in 1954 when you were only five years old?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, I was five. I do remember that. It was very interesting because we flew on the — apparently, was one of the first transcontinental flights across the country. Going from being transferred from San Jose to Schenectady, New York, with General Electric, it was, sort of, first-class, kind of, accommodations and all of that. And coming into Schenectady, we were staying at the Van Curler Hotel in Schenectady, New York, and I vividly remembered that I promptly cracked my head open on the corner of a coffee table in the hotel room and had to go get stitches. You can still see the scar.

So it was a series of accidents that I remember from my childhood. Then we lived in a little cabin, actually, for a brief period of time on Ballston Lake in New York while we were waiting for the house to get ready. I remember

that. It was a wonderful place. My father taught me to swim. He put a lifejacket on me and just threw me in. I have a vivid memory of that. I remember playing around the dock and around the pond and all of that. Then we moved to Schenectady and it was really wonderful. Briarcliff Village, which is right outside of — you know, close to GE, and very close to the Mohawk River.

You could hear the boats going up and down the river. We could also hear trains from ALCO, that was a locomotive plant there. We were on Webster Drive, 2171 Webster Drive. And ironically, David Smith lived on McClellan Street at one point in Schenectady, New York, which wasn't very far away. I would walk past there every day on my way to school.

MR. SMITH: What elementary and high schools did you attend?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I went to Craig Elementary School. It was Niskayuna, New York. Niskayuna was a suburb of Schenectady and it was essentially where all of the GE management people lived. There were various subdivisions there and we were in one of the, sort of the, mid-level ones.

MR. SMITH: Did you have any art classes at that time?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, not so much that I remember. I mean, I remember a few things about elementary school that really stick in my mind. One, there was a teacher, Mrs. Robinson, who had a really wonderful and beautiful golden retriever that she used to bring to school sometimes. I rode my bike to school a lot.

She was very helpful because I had problems reading for some reason. I don't know, I must have had some sort of a disability, what they call today. But that school was very interesting from the standpoint that I was very fortunate because I was very much a hyperactive child and very jumpy and difficult, I think. So there was one teacher there, Mrs. Caruso, who — I'm not sure, to this day, whether she really understood me or she just wanted to get rid of me — I think it was a combination. Apparently, when I got a little bit out of hand, she would send me to this room. It was a whole room — no one in it and it had a little shop in it, a little woodshop.

I remember very specifically that it had a wonderful bench with all these tools, and there was wood and everything there—and I began just making all kinds of things. And, of course, I was also very early on playing the drums — there were drums in there too because it was also where the band would play. So I was able to just do anything I wanted and everybody else had class and I was just on my own making things and playing music.

MR. SMITH: So was this the beginning of both your artistic direction with music as well as working with materials?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I had to say, one could look at it that way in terms of having one's own private studio, it was a perfect model. But really, I think probably my first involvement was with my father. He very quickly bought land in the Upstate New York Adirondacks and he was always making things in his shop.

One of the very special things about it was that right down in the basement we had a wonderful place to make things. He was always making just every kind of thing you could imagine from furniture to turnings to things for camp, you know. We actually had a trailer that he brought into the backyard and we totally renovated the interior of it. We built cabins in the backyard in Schenectady, things like that.

So there was a creative element right there in Schenectady, right on the property behind the house because he had several additional lots that he had bought and began clearing out the land and making trails and we used to go on those trails and do all that kind of thing as kids. And one of the other things that, I think, was very important in my early, first creative endeavors was we belonged to a YMCA association called Indian Guides. It was, essentially a father and son program based upon the strong qualities of American Indian culture and life — dignity, patience, endurance, spirituality, feeling for the Earth and concern for the family.

This was really quite an extraordinary group. Actually one of my most important early remembrances — we made a drum completely out of wood, you know, strung it with the raw hide and everything and a beater, a tom-tom and that was pretty important to a young kid. Then in the tradition of Indian tribal custom, Mel had the idea that each father and son would make a totem. So he turned these — he had found this mahogany and turned these round, sort of oblong cylinders that had a mortise and a tenon in each one and gave one to each father and son and they were able to make their own totem. You know, like there would be Brown and Gray Fox. And Mel and I were Black and White Eagle.

So we did this carving together and painting — which I still have to this day. And when all of the tribe got together we each stacked the totem and that would signify the presence of each father and son. And that was really big magic.

MR. SMITH: Was this program run by New York State Native Americans?

MR. LINDQUIST: No. It was run by the YMCA. So it started with a Native American, I believe, some place in Missouri or something like that. I'm not sure; I'd have to look it up. But it was — the program was started in 1927. It was with YMCA and really, quite an extraordinary thing because we used to all go on trips and take field trips and learn things and study Indian lore. It was really pretty much about fathers and sons exploring a path of life that was based on certain core values.

And I feel very fortunate with that because it really set us both on a path of partnering, in a way that doesn't happen much. I don't see it much anymore. And my father and I were very close when I was growing up and we remained close up until he died.

MR. SMITH: Well, that was a very important experience. I'm interested in your music pursuit as you talked about the opportunity to play drums and then you actually ended up making drums at this YMCA program. Could you amplify on that a little bit?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Well, what I remember mostly — probably, what really got me just crazy excited about drums was two doors down the street on Webster Drive, the Potter brothers had a band. They rehearsed in their basement. And, of course, I was just crazy about it. It was just wonderful. I remember them playing Bo Diddley and all that kind of stuff. They had red, patent leather shoes, every one of them and these vests. They had these, you know, sort of, really cool, rock and roll outfits. I would look through the window, down in the basement — because they wouldn't let me in. I tried to get in. They wouldn't let me in.

I was just fascinated by it all. The only thing I could get when I went back home, was a tin waste can, a tin wastebasket and two knives from the drawer in the kitchen. I just started playing. And it was — I could do it. I mean, I watched the drummer there and I went back and started playing and it just — I happened to be actually natural. So then the next thing I did is I brought my own drums and I sat outside the window and I played along with them — I mean my tin can and my knives.

They finally chased me out. Oh, I had to be, maybe, eight or something like that. They chased me away. I'd come back and then Wayne Potter, who was the older of the two brothers, he said finally, "That's not bad. That's pretty good. Come on down, listen." So they let me hang out and, I mean, it was really typical '50s kind of stuff, you know, that this guy — his name was Gleason — and he had a '32 Ford hotrod. And I got started palling around with these guys and I was like their mascot in a way. I would do whatever they needed. I'd go run stuff for them and so my father just, sort of took pity on me and got me a drum. He thought it was kind of cool.

Then, of course, we made the tom-tom and so I had had a multi-level percussion experience very early. And then of course that whole thing that happened at school, the drum happened to be in the room and I was there alone — no one to tell me not to do it. There were sticks there and I just began to play. And it was a natural thing. And then I was involved in band in the junior high school and I remember one incident very clearly that the regional band director — his name was Melvin Schiff — and he was the music director for the high school. But he also did the junior high school work.

I was playing in the band and we were playing Sousa, you know, some John Philip Sousa march, and he stopped the band and he said, "I don't think that that's exactly right. You know, you want to go over that with your music?" And I said, "Huh?" And he said, "Well, you know, that looks like that should be a five-stroke roll there and you're playing a seven-stroke roll." And I said, "Oh, okay, I didn't know that." And he said, "Well, isn't it right there in your music?"

And I said, "I don't have any music." He walked around and he looked and sure enough, I didn't even have a music stand and I was just playing. And so he was really very impressed and within a couple of weeks, he got me signed up to take private lessons with Don Bush in Schenectady, New York, who was a private instructor outside of the school. He had been the percussionist for the Boston Pops and the Philadelphia Philharmonic — a very accomplished musician. So I began studying percussion very seriously at an early age, taking lessons in school and outside in private lessons and it got me out of a lot of classes.

MR. SMITH: Were you considered a child prodigy?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, actually, I was. I was considered a child prodigy but it was problematic because I was also wildly hyperactive. So one cancelled out the other — [laughter] — in many ways. I was just sort of banging around with the drums.

MR. SMITH: How did your parents handle this?

MR. LINDQUIST: Really well, actually. We had a good basement and my father had divided the basement sort of in half — one for the shop, which he had locked, which I broke into immediately and the other side was kind of an area to try to keep me out of trouble, and over the years I had many different drum sets and combinations of things over there and I used that area all the way up through high school for that. But he also built me a little

shop of my own, a little woodshop of my own in an attempt to keep me out of the real thing. That was wonderful because to have your own little woodshop as a kid it's really quite amazing.

He mainly did it for safety reasons. He was afraid I was really going to get hurt and little did he know that I knew where the key was. I would go in and I would use his stuff and clean up and be very careful and then put it all back. Then he finally figured it out and then he just left the shop open.

MR. SMITH: Well, in hearing all this it sounds like the involvement with music and the hands-on making was very therapeutic and very important for your hyperactive tendencies.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, it really was. It was very therapeutic and therapy is a key word there because my mother suffered illness, mental illness, and it was a way for my father to wind down from the high stress work at General Electric and the difficulty in dealing with her illness.

MR. SMITH: So when you went on to high school, do you have a whole series of stories about that era?

MR. LINDQUIST: I'm sorry, I don't quite —

MR. SMITH: I'm asking about your going on to high school and involvement in those years.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, in going on to high school, you know, interestingly the —

MR. SMITH: What was the name of the high school?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh, it was Niskayuna High School, Niskayuna, New York. Music was a very important thing, very important. I played in the symphonic band there and very serious. It was very serious. You know, Niskayuna, by the way, was an interesting community because there was the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory, KAPL there, and a lot of physicists. It was actually New York State's model school. They had computers in 1965 that were hooked up to Union College. It was through General Electric. This was very early.

I wasn't involved with that. But I knew that there were people that were involved with it. They had an honors program. It was a — it was really a very, very good school and I was somewhat of a problematic child and for the most part got into little problems as kids do. But the music was really very important in that I was very actively involved in all of that. And then [I] was in a band. We formed a band called the Vibratos. It was Larry Altrock, David Waddington, David Lambert and myself, the four of us.

We actually played music professionally in the area and we played at like, the Crescent Yacht Club, we played at Teddy's Midway Bar. We used to call it "Midwayskis." It was really quite something because there we were in high school and playing on the weekends and playing things like "Sentimental Journey" and "In the Jungle," you know, "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" — that kind of thing. David Lambert played the baritone sax, David Waddington played the tenor sax, Larry Altrock the guitar and we're talking about Gibson guitars, you know, and the movements that all happened with it, swaying to the music kind of stuff with the saxes and all of that and people getting pretty wild and crazy, doing the bunny hop by the end of the evening.

That was all fun and then after that we formed a band, rock and roll band, called The Backdoorsmen. We were the local band down the street trying to learn the words to that song. And we played — Charlie Rocker was our lead singer and he did Mick Jagger better than Mick — [laughs]. We played a lot of college frat parties, we played dances at the school and I had just gotten some really fantastic drums. I originally bought my first drum set, drum kit, from Don Bush, his Ludwig set that he used at the Boston Pops. Had a 32-inch Zildjian cymbal, handmade by Avedis Zildjian, with sizzles. This was a smokin' sizzle cymbal. And anyway, then I got a really incredible set of Rogers Drums and we played music all throughout high school and it was a really big deal.

MR. SMITH: In addition to your music, were you also continuing with your making interest in your father's workshop? In high school, was there any arts program?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, there was an arts program. It so happened that my high school teacher, homeroom teacher, was also my high school art teacher and he was also the soccer coach. And there were problems because I did want to play soccer, but I didn't really like to run. So he sent me off to the side — his name was Paul Kant, K-A-N-T — he sent me off to the side with a — there was a student, a trainee student from Union College and he said, "Well, go teach him how to be a goalie." And the guy was actually so good he taught me how to be a great goalie and I ended up being critical for this guy and it wasn't enough just to be able to play. I had to taunt the guy.

So I really kind of pissed him off. It was very competitive between this teacher and me. He was a young guy. We got off on the wrong foot and he would, sort of, berate me in front of everyone and I would sass him back. So we each were in each other's faces. And unfortunately, I didn't take any art classes because I was very much

estranged from him because of that relationship. It's really kind of a shame because later Niskayuna High School gave me one of their awards, their famous person awards or whatever. He had to do the presentation in front of a very large audience and I was very gracious about it and he was much chagrined.

By the way this does remind me that I did take industrial arts in junior high school. There was a teacher named Mr. Gleason who was very supportive, really a good teacher. I can't even remember the name of my junior high school. It was Van Antwerp Junior High School. But in junior high school the industrial arts class was very good and for the most part, I didn't go on with industrial arts. I just went into music.

My first woodturnings proper were made at home, making baseball bats. I made a lot of baseball bats on the lathe that Mel taught me how to do. Then I made lamps and things — the things that you do — bowls, and the things that you do in industrial arts. But I was able to bring them back home and work on them and the teacher was very supportive with that.

MR. SMITH: So I understand that your biggest focus in high school was music, but that you were simultaneously interested in making things. Was more happening in your home environment, under your father's influence?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, well, yes it was because every weekend we went to camp in the New York Adirondacks. He had 100 acres up there and every single weekend we were up there doing that and also making — another thing that was happening was very important is my father always had a fascination with mechanical things. I mean, he was a master machinist and aeronautical engineer.

We began making things. We did things together. We did the soapbox derby and made a wonderful derby racer and I participated in that and won several heats. I think one of the most important things that happened during that time in terms of making was that I found this go-kart all busted up in the woods and I brought it home. We started fiddling around with it and he saw that I had an interest in all of that. And I said, I sort of begged him, would he please help me get this motor running?

So we did that and then it just lead from that to the next, to the next. And our next door neighbor, his name was Hugh Rosa, and he was a physicist with GE and he was really a farm boy and he didn't like working for GE. As soon as he got home he'd get into his jeans and come over and we'd just be playing with these motors and making go-karts and mini-bikes and things like that before there ever were those things. Actually, Hugh was really quite interesting because we began working on a project that became very serious.

We had designed together a helicopter that strapped on your back as a backpack and worked on the ball and socket that swung over your head and had a motorcycle twist grip throttle on it and it had a reverse rotation so it would scissor down if there was a problem. And my father saw that I was really serious. When he saw that I got into his trunks in the basement and got out his aeronautical engineering books and started designing the propeller, he knew it was really serious and he shut it down.

He told Hugh that he wanted him to stop the project entirely because he knew I'd kill myself. [They laugh.] And I was very upset about it. I was really very upset about it because I knew this thing was going to work and I knew we could build it. Hugh knew too. And we were doing really good, but Mel just, he just drew the line. He said, "That's it," because he knows enough about — I mean, he was an aeronautical engineer. He knows all about it. And he's seen people get killed — [laughs]. So he just finally said, "No, that's it. Go do something else. Go make another go-kart, go make another whatever."

I was constantly getting pulled over by the police for driving on the street. And the neighbors, they'd see me get out there going, racing my go-karts and stuff and they'd call the cops. Pretty soon, the cops had a regular beat down there and they're waiting for me. I had to walk the thing back up the hill. They thought that would discourage me and it didn't bother me a bit. I'd go a different road. So I was constantly in trouble with them but it was a really wonderful time.

MR. SMITH: Well, that's really fascinating to hear all these personal experiences. In high school, were there any outstanding teachers or influences?

MR. LINDQUIST: In high school Melvin Schiff was very important. And for me, more than anything, high school was about music, really. I do remember one teacher, Charles Foster, who was a math teacher and somehow he got through to me. He was almost like a Marine drill sergeant. He was a tough guy. He got through to me and he managed to teach me some algebra and geometry, which I very much use to this day. I really appreciated that. English was important too. There were a couple of English teachers that were really great.

There was this one English teacher, I can't even remember his name, and he seemed like he was a recent college graduate or something — and an incredible story that he told about a businessman and an Indian one day in a class. I mean, this was — you have to remember we're in the '60s. This was the first time anyone had sort of an open mind about things rather than rigid, you-must-do-this, must-do-that. And he told this story. He

used to say, "If you don't want to be in the class, just go on out. You can go in the halls. It's fine with me."

It was sincere. Because whatever you're doing you need to be very involved in whatever it is that you're doing. That's what matters. And he told this story about the businessman and the Indian. The business man was on vacation and fishing in the stream. And the Indian was there and they met. And the businessman said, "Do you fish this stream a lot?"

The Indian said, "Yes, every day." And he [the businessman] said, "Oh, that's great. Well, I hope to be able to do that when I retire." And the Indian said, "Well, what does that mean?" And he [the businessman] said, "Well, I work every day." And he [the Indian] said, "Well, why do you work?" "Well, so I can come here and fish on vacation." He [the Indian] said, "Well, I don't really quite understand it because I do this every day."

So this story had an impact on me—why work at something that you don't like? Why not work at something that you really do like and do it every day? I remember that to this day. It was a very important thing in high school. This one teacher—I don't even remember his name — it's funny how certain things really resonate.

MR. SMITH: So when you graduated from high school, then you had the decision of going on to advanced education and so how did you make a choice of where to go and what to study?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh boy, there was a guidance counselor. They had all these programs. People were going to Harvard and Yale and Brown and Vassar and Wellesley and all of that kind of stuff from this school. It was, like I said, New York's model school. And my grades were just passable at best — other than band, of course, which, thankfully lifted me up into an acceptable realm.

I hadn't really given college too much thought. They sort of drilled it into me that I was not necessarily college material. I remember taking a Kuder pin test and it said I had a mechanical aptitude. So this guidance counselor said, "Well, why don't you apply to — I remember someone said Utica College was a good college."

I applied there and didn't get accepted. There was another college I applied to and nothing happened. Then, one day, the guidance counselor met me in the hall and he said, "Well, how is everything going? You were accepted at New England College." I said, "What?" Apparently my mother had put the letter of acceptance in my desk in the back where I never go and there it was. I went there. I opened it and much to my surprise I was accepted at New England College.

This was a college for problem kids that potentially would be what they call "late bloomers." I didn't know much about it but what it was, was a very experimental school along the lines of Bennington. It had been established in Henniker, New Hampshire, for GIs coming back. So it turned out to be the perfect college for me. I mean, I can't even imagine going anywhere else because along with a rigid core curriculum, they had a very experimental band. And you have to remember, this was in a time when colleges were beginning to do these encounter groups and very much influenced by the times, the '60s.

MR. SMITH: So you experimented with many different disciplines in the school, in addition to your more formal program?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well this was an interdisciplinary program. It was a humanities program. This was more about the instructors, the teachers, than it was just fulfilling requirements, which we did do. I mean, there was English, there happened to be an English teacher there named Larry Farese, who taught freshman English — literally taught me how to write. He was fantastic, just absolutely fantastic.

There was a science teacher there, taught natural science as part of the curriculum, named Charles Sawyer. He was a math teacher and taught [the] history of science. And he turned out to be tremendously influential. He also taught photography. I took photography with Charles Sawyer, Charlie. The art program was just tremendous. There was an art teacher there who had taught at Bennington College. She had gotten her degrees from Cooper Union, San Francisco Art Institute.

Her name was Marilyn Frasca. She was just a magical person, an absolutely magic person. Really, I have to think about Marilyn in that I was very concerned about percussion not being — not doing it, after having spent so much of my life involved with it. I joined the percussion ensemble and there was a pretty tight individual who expected everything to be by the music and I didn't like to do things by the music so much. I liked to interpret and all of that. I began to become disinterested in it. I just got crazily involved in the art program. Marilyn just sort of gave me permission. She said, "You don't have to worry about the music. The energy that's in the music will flow into the art. It's okay, you can do this. It'll be fine."

It was just, it was just magical permission. So I began drawing and studying drawing and painting with Marilyn. It was incredible because she taught — just do it. Just do it. Don't worry about it, just do it. Don't worry how the hands look, just put them there.

Then the other teacher who countered that, Richard Hooke, who had come from the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts — he was very rigid in his approach. He taught sculpture and he would not have taught painting the way that Marilyn did, but I wasn't taking painting with him. He taught sculpture, introduced me to the work of Brancusi, Arp, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, David Smith, Alexander Calder — all those people.

The idea in colleges was that you studied the masters and then, hopefully, you went on and did your own. He was very important. The school was amazing. It was a place that was growing. It was all about growth. If they didn't have something, they would build it. They didn't just build it, for example, I wanted to study metal sculpture and do metal sculpture. So they didn't have a place to do it. And the administrative vice president, Paul Daum, who was fantastic, just said, "All right, what do we need?"

And I said, "Well, we need a place." "Okay. Well, I know there's a place. We'll get that. Then you're going to need a budget. Okay. What are you going to have to have?" So I began figuring out all the tools, the welder, the all this, that. We worked with the maintenance guy, Steve Conner, an expert welder and he said, "This is what you need to get." Those guys kind of rolled their eyes, you know? Oh boy, "They're going to let these kids loose with these tools." So we built a studio.

I was in charge of building the studio. I told them what they needed for renovations. I bought the equipment and there it was. I ran it.

MR. SMITH: You were a student and you were — [laughs] — building a new studio and program?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. I was a student and a teacher and building a program. That's exactly right. This is what was so incredible about this school. It was a hands-on experience, a hands-on opportunity, I don't think you can find that in education anymore. I don't think that New England College is like that anymore. However, for me, it was a custom tailored education. All of these individuals were all on the same page, they were all on the same track. This is what you do. You get these kids working. Get them with their hands involved in it. You know, just throw them in, dive in. Don't test the waters, just jump in. And each and every one of these people were very important.

Even the librarian, for example, Steven Hilyard— I did get a grant to do sculpture for the January term program that Paul Daum was running. I mean, a grant, you know, money, to do sculpture. Here I have my own house and studio that I built in 1969 and they were giving me money. They said "Look, buy the tools that you need, they're going to go to the program afterwards that you'll run. You use them and go ahead and make the sculpture." So I did that during this January term. Then the librarian turns around and buys the sculpture for the art collection of the school. Unbelievable!

Then they turn around and say, well, let's have a show. They give me an exhibition in the gallery. It was just, phenomenal, because it was doing. It was learning by doing. When I think back about it, I can't imagine anything being more successful.

All of a sudden, from being a ne'er-do-well in high school, essentially, a rock band player, wild kind of kid, turning into a serious pursuit, very seriously dedicated to this work because of giving permission, backing and support and enthusiastic endorsement by these people. It put me on a path that I've maintained. It was a model. It served as a model.

MR. SMITH: What year did you graduate and did you graduate with honors?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. 1971, I actually got the first academic arts award that the college ever gave. I got a full scholarship to Pratt Institute for the M.F.A. program, unheard of in the history of the college. And I did graduate with honors.

[End disc one.]

MR. SMITH: Mark, could you talk about the Henniker years?

MR. LINDQUIST: In 1968, living in Henniker, New Hampshire, going to New England College, my high school sweetheart Kathy [Kathleen Bragg] was at Wellesley College. Her brother was going to Harvard University. On the weekends, I would go down there. I would stay at her brother's place at Harvard and meet her at Wellesley and sometimes she would come up to Henniker and stay. We were very serious and then got married in 1968 in Schenectady.

Then I went back to school and we had an apartment in Henniker and Kathy worked while I was going to school. She left Wellesley. Then very quickly, the next year, we built a house and studio and Mel helped us to do that, and had student loans and I also worked at various jobs — the Student Union, things like that.

Also Mel gave me a lot of work that he had made — vases and things like that — that we sold at a local shop there called The Discovery. It was kind of a boutique-kind of shop, and that helped to get me through school. He had said that he had saved \$2,000 a year for college — anything after that, I was on my own. We built the house together.

I bought an acre of land from a fellow art student who had land there and it was very important because it became the basis of the — and what I consider the beginning, building the studio specifically — the basement would be the studio. The house was right by a stream and we kind of roughed it for several years, carrying water from the stream and using an outhouse and stuff like that. It's really kind of a back-to-the-earth existence, in a way.

MR. SMITH: That was very '60s. [Laughs.]

MR. LINDQUIST: Very '60s. It was definitely very '60s and tail end of the '60s and launching full steam ahead into the '70s.

MR. SMITH: Did you design the house as well as build it?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Designed it and built it and actually, the fellow art student and I tore down a barn in Vermont and used the wood from that and built it, in part, with some of that barn wood.

MR. SMITH: How did you know how to build a house?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, as a child, having worked with my father building many things at camp—from log cabins to the camp itself—he just taught me carpentry and when we worked together, it was more, nah, nah, don't do that, do it like this and just get going and do it. That was Mel's attitude — you didn't really talk too much about it; you just did it and if you made a mistake, you corrected the mistake.

The mistake was bad enough that you would feel that you didn't want to do it again. I think one of the most difficult things was learning about using the level and the square because working with the saw was no problem. I had done all of that. You know what I mean?

He taught me to use the chainsaw when I was 10 years old, when we were doing basically, rudimentary sculptural techniques with the chainsaw, building this log cabin and scarfing out for the logs. So I was fairly accomplished by the time I got to building the house and I built a lot of things, in the meantime.

MR. SMITH: So you graduated in what year?

MR. LINDQUIST: Nineteen seventy-one. I graduated in 1971 and it was — in 1969, actually, a very important area, I met Darr Collins, who was very important to me. He had come from Colorado and he was also at the Zen Center in San Francisco. And he was a Zen adherent. He was a professor at the college and he was a photographer and a potter.

He also taught sculpture and all of that. He was a very interesting person for my sculpture class, which was a studio class. He came to my studio. The interesting thing about it was that he hijacked my studio. Instead of making the David Smith work that I was doing, he said, "Oh, you have a welder. Oh, that's really great. Well, we should do this. Oh, I'll bring some things." And the next time he showed up, he had pipe. We started making kick wheels. It just — we were making kick wheels. He didn't ask. He started doing it. He said, "All right, weld this." You know, okay, so — [laughs] — there wasn't any discussion about it.

We just started making. It was the craziest thing you can ever imagine. So we made three kick wheels, literally cast the concrete wheels— welded the frames, did all of that and I would bring them over to where his place was that he was renting and he started making pots. I was just — you know, swept up in it.

MR. SMITH: Was that the beginning of his working in ceramics or had he done ceramics before?

MR. LINDQUIST: No, he had done ceramics before and he had taught arts and crafts in California in the Army. He had made bowls in this sort of Zen tradition. It really got very involved in making bowls and had made pots and all of that back there. So he really wanted to have his own ceramic studio and begin working along those lines. I became an apprentice and just worked along with him.

We built the studio from scratch. He had no money and we did everything just by scrounging materials. He was really an incredible person. He taught me everything you can possibly imagine about ceramics. He would have photographs on the wall of ceramics by Peter Voukos and Paul Soldner. He had books and books and books on how to build a kiln, all of that kind of stuff.

The most incredible thing is that, once we got up and running, essentially, I was not allowed to throw at the

wheel. He knew what Mel and my background was with wood and he just kept me from throwing at the wheel. I fired the kiln. I had to be up at like 5:00 in the morning and start the fire, get all of his tools cleaned, laid out, everything perfect, and then he would just work.

He'd be up way late at night and then he would poke his head in the studio and if it wasn't just perfect, he'd just go back to bed, you know? So I had to really get things in perfect shape. It was really kind of an interesting thing because there was a bit of the Zen koan and all of that going on in there with all that kind of thing. I learned a tremendous amount about it, but he was teaching the history of ceramics at the same time and drawing and all of this stuff. It was learning by doing.

MR. SMITH: This was while he was teaching at school?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, we got started, and then he left. Once we got the pot shop up and running, he quit teaching and just went full time and started selling his work through the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen.

MR. SMITH: But you were an apprentice while you were still a student?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, while I was still a student. I was getting, of course, credit for it. So I mean that fulfilled all of my remaining requirements for fine art.

MR. SMITH: And did you find this an opportunity to work in clay?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, of course, I had snuck a lot of things into the kiln and I did do a lot of hand building. It was mostly maintenance and running the shop and all of that and learning about ceramic form that when I sort of went on my own, it was a little bit in rebellion. And immediately, which he planned. I mean, you have to understand.

This is a very bright individual. His idea was he would rather have one successful student than a thousand that did nothing. He actually did tell me at one point. He said, "Look, it's too late for me, but you can do something." And it was like, "Okay, look, you've learned everything you need to know. Just go do it."

There was an immediate translation of ceramic form into wood. Then, all of a sudden, the relationship changed from apprenticeship to more like colleagues. He taught me a tremendous amount about photography, documentation of the work, everything that you could imagine about running the studio and all the survival skills that are required. So this was very, very formative, very, very important. It was also essentially a part of the school.

MR. SMITH: Well, it sounds like a very good learning opportunity to have a hands-on experience like that. In Henniker, you were also working on your own and working with wood. You talked about Mel giving you some of his turnings to sell in the local area. But were you also creating your own work?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, at that time, I was doing a little bit of work in turning, not much. The reason why was because I was much more interested in making sculpture. So the things that I made in wood were predominantly wood. I got organ pipes, these huge square organ pipes and made a giant sculpture.

I was more working with metal structure, welding, and in the style of David Smith and working with stone and did do a number of clay sculptures that never did get fired and are lost at this point. So I knew working with clay, but not the production aspect of it.

I did little pieces [in wood], especially when I went back and worked with Mel in Schenectady. That was very important. I did other pieces that were influenced by Paul Gauguin, for example. They were turned pieces that were butternut and carved and they were important early pieces. They came directly out of the ceramic stuff.

So you know, it was a little bit plain. What I learned about the forms of the pots and what I had been doing in my rudimentary shop there. But the studio was pretty much an interdisciplinary studio. I mean, I could do whatever I wanted with metal, with stone and with wood. So I would just make what I was making. I mean I made a lot of constructions in wood that were painted.

One was titled *WBCN at Midnight*. It was — you know, you listened to that radio station and so it was just a sort of a freewheeling time. The work and the translation of the ceramic form in wood was gradual and just sort of happening and then it exploded.

I went to Pratt Institute after I graduated in 1971, and it was a very rigid program, not like what I was used to doing. It was, you show up on time; you spend your time at the class; you go through these horrendous critiques that were just meaningless for me. And I have to say, I felt that I was above it. I was just full of myself and felt that I wasn't getting anything out of it.

Kathy, our son Ben, and I lived in a big loft in Brooklyn on Vanderbilt Avenue because I was just a crazy person. We couldn't really afford it, and it was a little bit difficult. I just didn't feel like I was getting anywhere with the program, with the M.F.A. program. It wasn't in any way what I thought it could be, or should be. I'd been given a full scholarship and I had high expectations, and it just wasn't what I thought it should be.

And of course, I didn't come up through the normal art-school curriculum, so it was foreign to me. Also, I was used to being very close to my professors, and that wasn't the way they did it at Pratt. They showed up; they were very distant and then they left. So it just didn't click, and after three months I left.

MR. SMITH: Who did you study with?

MR. LINDQUIST: At Pratt? There was a guy named Zakarian, I think. I can't remember. He was an okay guy. There was a potter there — he was a wonderfully nice guy. I can't remember his name. I just didn't really respect him because he was making frou-frou little, tiny pots, you know, and selling them at craft fairs. I mean, this is Pratt Institute. Here, I mean, I was making things like Peter Voukos there, and they were, kind of, wow. You know? But it just didn't fit in because he was highly technical with his fancy glazes and stuff like that. It just wasn't me.

MR. SMITH: Did you take any design courses?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, painting and sculpture and ceramics. I pretty much wasted the whole time.

MR. SMITH: It was only three months. [Laughs.]

MR. LINDQUIST: It was only three months, but I wasted that, you know? That's what I felt, and so I went back to get back to Henniker and keep working with Darr, and immediately get my studio going, because I just felt a sense of urgency. Timing was very critical.

Then we really weren't able to live — I mean, I couldn't sell my sculptures. These monumental metal sculptures, I couldn't sell them. I sold one or two. And Mel suggested, "I'm going to these craft fairs; you know how to make this stuff — why don't you make some work and we'll go to a craft fair?"

So I immediately translated everything into the wood, and all of a sudden, it just exploded. It was like a big bang. We would travel to Schenectady, then go off to various craft fairs — Washington Park in Troy, New York, then Fox Hollow Folk Festival. This is where Pete Seeger would go, people like that, and sing.

Up in the woods, they had all the craft people there. I met Josh Simpson there. He was there real early — you know, 1971 or something like that, '72 — and the interesting thing that happened was, my pieces were rough. In other words, I had burned edges of it. They were like Korean Tamba ware, essentially, these bowls.

My father really ridiculed me about them. When we went to the show, everyone bought mine. They all sold out, and his were sitting there. His eyes were opened, and all of a sudden he took me seriously. I mean there was a period when I came back from Pratt, and we stayed with my folks.

Mel and I worked together very seriously in his shop in Schenectady, and it was a difficult time for both of us because I knew where I wanted to go, aesthetically, and was full of all this education — and he knew what you do technically. Both of us knew nothing, really, of the other's area, and we were both really experts at that point.

So there was a clash. Then came a meeting of the minds, and it was really wonderful because it became a collaboration. And so, he was blind boring; he was doing all kinds of things. And his teaching at that point was more, you know, gruff responses, like, "You've got a heavy touch."

In other words, he was talking technical, shop language — a master machinist's language. "That's a heavy touch." It was like he was just admonishing me. It was the kind of thing, like, he would shake his head. He's like a Zen master in his own way, you know? And I was used to all of that, but he was rough. "Nah, you don't do that."

Of course, I was just as hard on him. I'd say, that's from hunger, Mel. Of course, we fought a lot during that period. But then when I went back to Henniker, and we started going to the craft fairs, all of a sudden he really got it, and he began going to the libraries, and getting books, and buying all kinds of books, and studying and really getting into it — studying all kinds of ceramic form. He really got with it. Then we starting bouncing these things back and forth from each other.

He would come to Henniker, and he would pull out his wonderful pieces. And I'd wait until he did all of that, and then I'd bring our mine. It was this friendly competition that was really wonderful. After that point, Darr and I were good friends, and he was just so supportive — just very beamingly proud of my accomplishment with that.

So this whole thing just was flowing — from being a youngster, then the music, then the college and then the

apprenticeship and then going back into working with wood seriously with my father. When I was young and on the land up there, we found the spalted wood together in the '50s, I carried it back to camp — reluctantly, you know, and I saw him working with it. Then after college and during that time, I really got into it. Then we hit the ground running with those craft fairs. And then Rhinebeck [Rhinebeck Craft Fair, Rhinebeck, NY] came and it was an explosion.

MR. SMITH: Well, it's interesting to see that kind of pattern of your father really hating your work at one point and in a sense not understanding it. It was kind of the child growing up to do his own thing, but eventually achieving a mutual respect, I think is quite fascinating and not obviously very easy as an experience, but turned out to be a wonderful kind of sharing that ultimately culminated from it.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, he was a great father because, you know, he put up with a lot of things and not only that, it was, if you can't beat him, join him. We kept that pattern all the way along, always bouncing things off of one another and helping one another with techniques and processes and aesthetics and things like that. It was a wonderful partnership in a way.

MR. SMITH: After he retired from GE, do I recall that he moved to Henniker?

MR. LINDQUIST: No. He retired from General Electric in 1968 and actually it was the year that Kathy and I were married. He had had a heart attack and he took early retirement. He worked in Schenectady. I worked in Henniker and we met and went to the craft fairs together and then we'd each go back — you know, he'd go to Schenectady, I'd go back to Henniker.

Then in 1980 — actually it was probably 1979, he had a pretty bad accident and my mother had cancer. My sister and I decided that they should go with one or the other of us, that we needed to begin taking care of them somewhat. So we decided that it would be us and then I built a house for them, a solar house. Very extravagant project. And then they moved there in 1980 and were there from '80 to '86.

My parents would come to visit and we were sort of a cottage industry in a way. He was in his second career really, with woodturning and I was in my first. They would come to Henniker and we'd go off to the craft fairs or Kathy and I and the kids would go to Schenectady and then go off to the craft fairs.

MR. SMITH: By that point, you had another son. Am I correct?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Ben was born in 1971 in the house in Henniker. We had Dr. Brown who was a really great guy. He had delivered babies in Chicago and it was sort of the fashion in Henniker. You know, I mean, it was just becoming interesting to have home birth. Eventually that led to midwifery and all of that kind of thing coming back. Dr. Brown actually came out and we delivered Ben in the living room on a snowy morning in 1971. Then Josh was born in 1975, also home delivery. It was just an incredible experience. This is all also part of that whole sort of back-to-the-earth time.

MR. SMITH: Yes. Obviously, your explanation and talking about those years, you were definitely a '60s person

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

MR. SMITH: Even though it was the late '60s culture, you definitely were in that spirit of activity at that time, which was an amazing era in terms of the whole change of culture in America.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Yes. The '60s — you know, we weren't really farmers. People that did organic gardening — there were some that were serious, but — and it was sort of the '60s was a little bit — there were the hippies, then there were the intellectuals and then there were the real back-to-earth organic farmer types. And then there were the craftsmen. You know, they were the back-to-the-earth-to-craftsmen. And this was squarely in that vein.

The potter Gerry Williams was just in the next town over. We made trips over there — Darr and I. Vivika and Otto Heino actually came in and worked in the studio that I had built for metalworking at the college. The area was really a big deal kind of thing. There was Vivika and Otto Heino. There was — who were the — ?

MR. SMITH: The Scheiers [Edwin and Mary Sheier].

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Yes, the Scheiers. So important.

MR. SMITH: Were you connected with the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen program and did you know David Campbell?

MR. LINDQUIST: I did not know David Campbell. Yes, I was. I became a member, I believe it was in 1972. 1971 or 1972. Was immediately accepted. Most people — it took them three tries. They immediately accepted me and

they told me not — although not to make any of those that are those one-of-a-kind things. [The laugh.] I said, "Yes, yes."

I did do a number of edition type things, like cutting boards — turned cutting board things — bowls, things like that and did show at Sunapee Craft Fair [Newbury, NH] my sculptural furniture and things like that and attended some of that. But really, what was happening was sort of a more major — New York and throughout the country — things happening. So I was more focused on that as 1975 came around, 1976 — things were really beginning to happen.

MR. SMITH: On a national level, there were more opportunities. The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen was, as you know, a pioneer organization in developing a marketing program and bringing people to New Hampshire and so you benefited at least from the connection with it in the '70s as you said.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. I very much did benefit from it. Again, however, it was a more rigid organization. Merle Walker was there and she was very good and she sort of got me. She understood and she worked with me. She was very respectful because she had gone to some of the events that I was at and she realized that I had sort of a national presence.

So she embraced that and I had a much better relationship with them when she was there. But prior to that the jurying and all that kind of stuff, I didn't do good with that. Anything that was rigid like that, I wouldn't work well with, but the league was very important, yes.

MR. SMITH: In the late '70s and '80s, you had a number of association with schools both teaching and program development. Could you talk about your association with the Worcester Craft Center in 1977?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. I was actually jurying for the Rhinebeck Craft Fair at the Mohonk Mountain House, I think it was, in —

MR. SMITH: Upstate New York.

MR. LINDQUIST: — upstate New York. A ceramic person there — John Heller, I think is his name — I can't remember — a very large individual — told me that Angelo Randazzo at the Worcester Craft Center [Worcester, MA] was looking for a wood instructor to head the woodshop, and would I be interested?

So we drove back together and talked about the whole thing. He introduced me to Randy — Angelo Randazzo. And Randy suggested I apply for the position. I did and he hired me. I became the head of the wood program at the Worcester Craft Center. And it was really quite something. It really forced me to get my game on because, you realize that Jere Osgood was over — and Alphonse Mattia — they were over at the Boston University school — Program in Artisanry.

Here I was, just down the road from them, and I was teaching Clark University students and Worcester Tech students, as well as their program, which was a sort of an evening program for folks to come in. It was really amazing because they were making antiques. They had an antique refinishing place there. I was making Hepplewhite tables and Chippendale pie-crust, tilt-top tables with dovetails.

I had to really get things quickly organized. And it was a very important time there. They allowed me to have my own studio there, working in a real craft organization with — Tim McCreight was there doing jewelry; Leon Nigrosh was teaching ceramics — just a lot of different people, really good people. So that was my first exposure to, sort of, an interdisciplinary craft organization of that kind. So a very important thing happened there, also — we organized a show called "American Woodcarvers" [Worcester Craft Center, 1978] and got woodcarvers from all over the country.

Well, if I could digress for a moment, one time in New Hampshire, prior to this, a large limousine pulled up, and the front guy, with a big, black coat and a cigar got out. He had called me and told me he was coming and his name was Edward Rosenthal. He was at Dartmouth for an alumni reunion, and my work was there and he loved it, but it wasn't for sale. He said, "Kid, you've got to learn to be a better businessman. I'm coming up there to your studio."

So he came and he got out of the car. He waved his arms and he said, "This is it? This is tiny. You need more space. Build on a studio right here. Call them up — just build it on as big as that right on the side there. I'll pay for it; you'll pay me back." He happened to be on the board of Warner Communications. Now, talk about something falling into your lap. This guy was just unbelievable. I did exactly what he said.

MR. SMITH: What year was that?

MR. LINDQUIST: This would have been 1978. Now, I'm a little confused about these dates. I know that — yes,

this was 1978, then. It was just before going to Worcester. We did build it on. And I did immediately pay him back. Then I guess I went to Worcester, then came back to the studio.

Things were really happening, because that show that we did, we organized at Worcester — the "American Woodcarvers" show — he invited us to come to Rockefeller Center in New York City, which we did. We packed it all up — John Russell, who's now director at Brookfield Crafts Center [Brookfield CT] — he was Angelo Randazzo's assistant — Randy's assistant.

And John and Randy and I, we packed it all up in trucks. We had a Wendell Castle piece there that arrived — it arrived at the crafts center broken; Giles Gilson and I fixed it. Wendell said, "Well just — can you fix it? Fix it." You know. [Laughs.] And so we did. Then it went on to Rockefeller Center. It was unbelievable, you know — "American Woodcarvers" in Rockefeller Center.

MR. SMITH: Where was it shown there?

MR. LINDQUIST: In the lobby of Rockefeller Center. So after that, then I left the Worcester Craft Center because things were happening — really happening, because actually, the Renwick Gallery had invited Bob Stockdale, Ed Moulthrop, Mel and myself for an exhibition, which was really the very first national woodturners' exhibition in a major museum ["The Art of the Turned Bowl," Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1978]. We did that. I was at the crafts center — the Worcester Craft Center — when that happened. Things really began to take off. I really had to pursue my career and stop teaching.

MR. SMITH: How long were you at Worcester Craft Center?

MR. LINDQUIST: A year. They were terrific there. The people in Worcester were wonderful. We bought a house; we renovated the house and ended up selling it. With the profit, I bought an entire woodshop on the way home — you know, rented the trailer, brought it back and then hit the ground running with the studio — this new studio, and brought two of the students — three of the students — with me as apprentices and assistants.

MR. SMITH: Then, in 1979, you had involvement with the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts [Deer Isle, ME].

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, in 1979, Charlie Gailis, if you remember him, he was very encouraging, wanting me to do wood there. They had two sort of decrepit lathes.

MR. SMITH: This was when Fran Merritt [Francis Sumner Merritt] was the director?

MR. LINDQUIST: No, Howie —

MR. SMITH: Howard Evans.

MR. LINDQUIST: Howard Evans, Howard Evans. So I started there. We actually did something really interesting. Heikki Sjöppä was there, and he was doing a sculpture called *Haystack Sun*, making "spicula," he called them. All the students would make these things — these long, rolled, pointy cones and then he'd put them on this great, big thing.

He asked me, "Can you make a stand for this?" And I said, "How tall?" And he said, "Well, it should be maybe, you know, like 12 feet or so." And I said, "Twelve feet! In what?" And he said, "Well can't you make that somehow?" And I said, "I guess I could turn it." And so I actually took the two Delta lathes that I had and I put them end-to-end, back-to-back — you know, just drove nails into the floor — and got a great big post — I mean, a great big log — a Hemlock or Cedar log — I can't remember what it was — and started turning this thing.

Howard Evans said he saw the building shaking and he just turned his head and walked away. He didn't want to know. The whole building was swaying with this thing. And so I did this incredible turning and all the students were watching, and Charlie Gailis was watching, and they were all just sort of wide-eyed. Everyone was wide-eyed, you know. And I'm just working away.

MR. SMITH: Was that the beginning of large-scale turning?

MR. LINDQUIST: It actually was. I hadn't thought of it. But you know, in a way, it actually was. Yes, there was this huge thing and of course, I had built my pattern-maker's lathe. And that was really the beginning of the large-scale turning, but however, this piece — you're right — it was. And it worked fine. And Heikki's eyes were wide open, too. He was a tough cookie, you know.

MR. SMITH: In 1980, a year later, it's my understanding you established a woodturning program at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. Can you comment on how that developed?

MR. LINDQUIST: I believe it was 1979 or 1980 — yes, I guess it was 1979 — that Sandy Blaine talked to me

about establishing the program. She asked if I could start a woodturning program at Arrowmont. She talked to me at Rhinebeck. And I said, "Sure, and I think it would be better if Mel and I did the program." And she said, "Okay, well I can't pay two of you." I said, "That's fine; no problem. We'll start it." So we began this dialogue of what was required, and I started getting equipment for them.

We loaded the van up full of equipment and traveled to Tennessee — Mel and I — and met with Bob Skinner, who was the business director, and he helped us to get the program going. We brought all of our equipment, all our lathes, they borrowed some lathes, and we started out. We just started out — hit the ground running, you know. Bob Skinner was fantastic. He got local wood for us and Mel and I began teaching and it was a success. So Sandy, the next year, she thanked us — you know, wrote thank-yous, all of that, and said she'd like for us to come back, and would we continue expanding the program?

So we bought another lathe and, again, brought our own equipment. And it was, again, successful and she asked if we would come again, but now, begin really expanding the program, and asked if I would be able to design an addition onto the existing shop that would be used just for woodturning. So I did make drawings and designed an area for a new building expansion. It was a relatively modest addition to what was the woodshop, which doubled as a maintenance kind of thing. We had been using the outdoor area for the woodturning class.

Several students were there — Stoney Lamar was a student, and went on, obviously, to do really great things. So after the third year, having done the designs for the addition, Sandy asked if there were other instructors I could recommend and I was happy to recommend David Ellsworth and Rudy Osolnik and Dale Nish as the first — my first recommendations. I think that they all did work. I also asked Sandy if she could consider a national woodturning conference, and she said, "Oh, yes, we do that kind of thing and that would be a great thing to do."

So we started planning for the conference, and I think that she brought in David Ellsworth. I had begun turning Sandy onto the General lathes, which I knew Dave had used. I had been, for the most part, using rebuilt, refurbished equipment, because it was affordable, and it was what I was doing. David was using the actual — you can buy the lathe from Canada or whatever. They were General and that's what he was using.

So she was making plans to buy more of those things. So he came on next, and then we had plans for the national conference. In between that and when the conference happened, I had a very severe automobile accident and was unable to really continue being the director of this conference.

David took that over. I asked Sandy if she would just ask David do it because my brains were a little scrambled at that point and I still continued to be involved in the conference. I just didn't want to take the leadership position of it because I just wasn't up to it, frankly.

MR. SMITH: What year did that take place?

MR. LINDQUIST: The conference? I believe it was 1986. We can check that. But so the conference actually happened. I traveled with my lathe and did a demonstration of the lathe and chainsaw technique, which had never ever been done before. David and Stoney Lamar — David Ellsworth and Stoney Lamar helped me with that.

David Ellsworth and Michael Monroe and me — we were the jurors for the exhibition that was at the conference. The conference was called "Vision and Concept." In addition to doing all of that, I worked with getting the awards to the pillars of the movement.

You know, Prestini, Rude Osolnik, Bob Stocksdales and others [Ed Moulthrop, Dale Nish, and Melvin Lindquist] and found a person who did laser engraving in the Midwest and we got Al Stirt to make the plates. Then had the award engraved and then I presented the awards at the conference and accepted Prestini's for him.

MR. SMITH: As this was a national conference, approximately how many people came to it?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh, I mean — there were — it was a lot of people. There were a lot of people.

MR. SMITH: A hundred or 200?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh no, no. Maybe, you know, yes, I'm thinking maybe 250, 300 — between 250 and 500.

MR. SMITH: Sizeable at that time.

MR. LINDQUIST: Very sizeable, definitely, definitely and it was really very successful — extremely successful because a very important thing happened at the conference, which was the formation of the American Association of Woodturners. And there was a — there was a small committee there.

Bob Rubel had come — he was one of these people that did organizations — was involved in making

organizations. I think he lived in Texas and I believe that Ray Leier and Jan Peters were friends with him. They were also involved in the formation of the organization. I was on the committee — the very first sit-down at the table organizing where they voted David president.

MR. SMITH: David Ellsworth?

MR. LINDQUIST: David Ellsworth, yes. I was there and essentially, again, declined to serve, mainly because of my continuing health issues from — consequences from the accident. I was getting daily migraines and things like that from the head trauma.

I wasn't comfortable with it and for the most part, I think sitting on boards is not my mission in life. Plowing the ground and planting seeds is what it's about for me. Bob Rubel asked me if I would consult with him behind the scenes. So I did work very closely with him in the formation of the organization.

Surprisingly, a lot of people don't know this. What I did was I established — I insisted that they have a corporate-level sponsorship and I gave \$1,000 at that time, which was a lot of money to establish that. Then I hooked him up with Edward Rosenthal and Nathan Ancell, the CEO, founder of Ethan Allen.

I had a lot of involvement with the organization behind the scenes that people didn't understand. I think they might have thought it was Mel because they gave him the honorary award — [laughter] — and I got nothing. [Laughs.]

MR. SMITH: He was older.

MR. LINDQUIST: He was older. That's right, but that was always the way it was, you know?

MR. SMITH: I'm curious, when the conference was being planned that was an important event in itself, but was there also the underlying concept, this is the time to explore forming a national organization? Or did it evolve during the gathering?

MR. LINDQUIST: No. It was the former. They had been experimenting with the idea of forming a national conference, I mean — a national organization—and this was a perfect catalyst for it. It was the right time and it came out of that.

MR. SMITH: So was it actually officially formed at the conference?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, yes. Yes. And then they formed the steering committee, which I was asked to be on and declined. And really, again, it was one of those things, just as being at Worcester Craft Center, it was a wonderful thing to be doing it and getting going, but my career was demanding. So I just didn't continue on with it that way. And really, I've never done well with the politics of it.

[End disc two.]

MR. SMITH: Did you have any involvement with the Wood Turning Center?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, I participated in a symposium in I believe it was 1979, and gave a multimedia presentation and discussions about turning burls and got involved with Albert LeCoff who was a wonderful, wonderful organizer. Eventually, that led to the formation of the Wood Turning Center. And I was a supporter, a founding kind of supporter with that.

I have been active with their organization all along. I have not served on their board or anything like that, but have been very active in giving to the organization in terms of funding and also gifts of work and involved in many shows. They have been very supportive to me and I have been supportive to them. A very, very important institution.

MR. SMITH: Did you have any involvement with the formation of the Wood Turning collectors?

MR. LINDQUIST: No, I did not. I didn't. That was Robyn Horn and that group. I really wasn't involved with that. My last really major involvement was the AAW—just the very beginnings of that AAW thing. But prior to that, I was a Northeast region representative for the American Crafts Council. And really what that was is, you went to certain meetings and you talked about the direction that the group would go.

And really Carol Sedestrom, who was running the craft fairs and this was really very important because what grew out of all of that was the various venues for the shows. Rhinebeck had come from Stowe [VT], I guess. Then it was Rhinebeck. Then what came after that was the Baltimore Winter Market, very important.

Then after that was the Springfield Craft Fair, Springfield, Massachusetts. And then in I guess it was 1977 was

the first East Coast-West Coast exchange with the Pacific States Craft Fair, which was at Fort Mason in San Francisco. Mel and I went to that one, the first one. We went to the first Baltimore.

We met David Ellsworth at the East Coast-West Coast exchange, the Pacific States Crafts Fair, also Steve Madsen, a lot of different woodworkers, who then came back east and found a national market for themselves.

So then also what happened beyond that was the show expanded from Springfield. There was an exchange with Paris and Ob'Art. I had a show there in Paris at the invitation of the director of Ob'Art for having helped. We created all of their booth space for Springfield, which was just an incredible project.

A former apprentice of mine who had a construction company got involved and he built all of the booths. Ben and Josh, my sons, and Kathy, my wife, and I, we took care of the whole thing, took it all down. The French made such a mess and we took it all down and we had put it all up. They thought that we were just some sort of a janitor or something. He came over and he saw my work and his mouth dropped. And he said, "Oh, my gosh. I didn't realize that it was you. You must come to France."

So we did that. It was a wonderful show at the Porte de Versailles. There was that. Then the American Craft Council also then expanded into the Armory, Fifth Avenue Armory, and did a show there. I was very helpful with that, you know, getting that organized, spent a lot of time working on that kind of thing.

So the American Craft Council, from the very beginnings all the way through, has been enormously important to my career. Having just been made a Fellow is a big thing for me. And the Museum of Contemporary Craft, the American Craft Museum, following it, and, the director, Paul Smith [the interviewer], was extremely important in my career. He was very supportive. You were very supportive all along, very encouraging. And it made a tremendous difference in my life and in my career.

MR. SMITH: Of course, the credit for this vision goes to Aileen Osborn Webb, as you know, was a great patron, as well as the person who really conceived the need and postured the whole program. Did you know Mrs. Webb?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, I did meet her very briefly. And I actually think that you introduced her to me at one point. Yes, wonderful. I mean, it is so marvelous to have a patron saint on that level. It is also marvelous to have a museum director who recognizes your work and includes you in important shows.

MR. SMITH: Well, you have had a very good relationship with several museums around the country and who have not only encouraged you, but also collected your work.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, well, the Renwick Gallery, in particular. Lloyd Herman was also extremely supportive and very helpful. And very early on, they got an important piece. Also, as I mentioned, did that show with Bob Stocksdale, Ed Moulthrop and Mel and myself. And at the American Craft Council show, Baltimore Winter Market, Penelope Hunter-Stiebel [curator of 20th century decorative arts at The Metropolitan Museum of Art] from the Metropolitan came because she had been following our work from Rockefeller Center, then too, I had been picked up in *Craft Horizons* and reviewed and things like that. And she had been sort of seeing our work around. She found us at Baltimore Winter Market. I suggested she go to the Renwick because there was a show. That show was on, "The Art of the Turned Bowl."

She went and then she asked if the museum could have *Lapping Wavelet Bowl* [1978]. She wanted two pieces of Mel's and two pieces of mine. And also, Penelope Hunter-Stiebel was extremely helpful and supportive at that time. It was very unusual having Lloyd Herman [then director, Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1971—1986], Penelope Hunter-Stiebel and Paul Smith [interviewer and director of the American Craft Museum, New York City, 1963—1987] on my side, essentially championing my work — and Michael Monroe [Curator-in-Charge, Renwick Gallery, 1986—1995]. This was really something, you know, particularly when you considered that in 1978, the Metropolitan accessed two of my pieces and two of my father's pieces. The Renwick shortly after got a piece. The American Craft Museum also got a piece.

Penelope Hunter-Stiebel and Lloyd Herman and a sculptor in New York City, Will Horwitt, all gave recommendations for me to become a MacDowell Fellow. So these connections were vital in developing these next stages of my development.

MR. SMITH: As you mentioned, the MacDowell Fellowship. Could you talk about that a bit?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh, yes. Well, Will Horwitt was a sculptor in New York City who had previously worked in bronze and began working in wood. We were introduced at the Rhinebeck Craft Fair. He was dragged kicking and screaming to the craft fair. Now, you have to understand his background was — he was a real prominent New York sculptor who was in many collections. Nelson Rockefeller got three pieces. There is one in the Chase Manhattan Bank right now. There is only one sculpture in there and it is Will's and it is in apparently London and Tokyo.

His work is also in Pocantico Hills in the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Rockefeller collection. He was a major important influence to me. He had gotten his Guggenheim Fellowship and he was offered the MacDowell, you know, to apply for it. He didn't want to do it. He had a loft in Tribeca and I became somewhat of a technical consultant to him and in a way, somewhat of an assistant. He was a mentor. We were very good friends and used to go to all the museums when I came to New York, all of that.

He suggested that I apply for the MacDowell Fellowship because that apparently is the way it goes. You get the MacDowell, then potentially you can go get the Guggenheim, et cetera. So I did apply. As I mentioned, Penelope Hunter-Stiebel and Lloyd Herman and Will were very kind to give glowing recommendations and I was accepted and given a two-month fellowship at MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire.

MR. SMITH: What year was that?

MR. LINDQUIST: That was 1979. You know, it is a little fuzzy. It might have been 1980. I am not sure. I think it was 1980. It was in the spring. It was March, April. And it was a fantastic and amazing experience. All of the colonists have their own cabins or studios where they work. Because it was the tail end of winter, there were springtime studios that had not yet opened and they gave me the top of the hill, the barn studio. I had like four or five spaces that I could just rattle around in.

MacDowell was wonderful because they bring your lunch to you in a picnic basket and leave it on your front porch. No one is allowed to bother you. You are just there to work. You are following in some pretty heavy footsteps, you know. Aaron Copland who wrote "Appalachian Spring," Thornton Wilder who wrote *Our Town*, which is Peterborough, New Hampshire, Leonard Bernstein. I mean, the expectation is high that you are going to do something.

MR. SMITH: What did Mark Lindquist do?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I confronted myself. The fact that the pieces had been acquired by the Metropolitan sort of signaled an end of an era. All of that polishing and being subservient to the material could come to an end. I was making sculpture within the confines of the bowl, but there was something missing and that was texture and scale.

While drawing and playing around and futzing in the studio, trying to find some direction because there you are, nothing going on all day long except rattling, you know, banging off the walls. Reading, listening to music, thinking oh, this is a wonderful art, you know, thing. I am here at MacDowell. Okay, now what? I am looking, staring out the window. I am drawing. I have a drawing pad in hand.

And this dump truck comes. Beautiful, spanking-new white dump truck comes and it drops off this big load of freshly cut and split cord wood. I just went out because I needed a break. I went out and I went and talked to the guy. In his New Hampshire accent, "Yes, I handsplit it and cut it and put it out there. I am going to dump it. This is the colony's wood supply."

I said, "Well, what do you do with it?" "I just dump them piles here." I said, "Okay." So I ran over to the main MacDowell house and I saw Joe Teller. Nancy Englander was the director at that time. I saw Joe Teller and I said — I had said to him before, I wanted to make big sculptures, "Could I get some logs in there?" And he said, "Well, what are you going to do with the big sculptures?" I had said, "I am going to make them in the field." And he said, "Well, what do we do with them afterwards?" "Well, you cut them up" And he said, "You want us to cut up your sculpture?" "I don't think so." He said, "Why don't you go back? You know, this is what this place is for. Why don't you go back and you think about what you are going to want to do? That is what we are here for."

So all of a sudden — and I don't to this day know whether he orchestrated this with these wood piles — you know, the delivering of it, but anyway, I went back to him. I said, "The guy is dumping the wood piles. Can I stack them?" And he said, "Now you want to stack wood piles?" I said, "Yes, actually, I do." And he says, "Well, what do we do with them afterwards?"

"Well, you do what you would normally do with your wood. You burn it." And he said, "So you mean" — and he was kind of cutting with it. And he said, "So you mean you actually will take it down?" I said, "Yes."

"I am going to stack them in the sculptural form in this area rather than you just leave them out there. And I will just make my art piece. And then afterwards, you will take it down." And he said, "All right."

And so I talked to the guy that was dumping the wood. And I said, "Okay, look, I want you to dump it here. They told me it was okay. I am going to start stacking the wood." And he said, "All right." Everyone had this sort of roll your eyes with a resigned expression — okay. And so I began stacking the wood.

I started doing it in circles, just in circles. I mean, I was just kind of going with the flow. It was energy. It was really kind of exciting. So basically, I started stacking a circle and then it started growing into a column and all of a sudden, the next morning I came out, and it had fallen down. And a couple mornings of that happening, it occurred to me well, it is because we are coming into spring. The earth is moving. The earth is moving. It is shrugging its shoulders and it is shrugging this thing off.

So then I started making a three-wall construction with interlocking the pieces of wood, the split pieces of wood. Then all of a sudden, the piles got bigger than — I was stacking as fast as I could, but the piles — he was gaining on me because it was 40 cords of wood, which is a lot because a cord of wood is four foot by four foot by eight feet. It is a lot of wood.

So every day, the writers would come along because they are running, jogging. And they can only work a couple of hours a day. That is about it. And they would come jogging along and then stop, take a break. "Mm-hmm, what are you doing?" And I am explaining it. And then before you know it, they got involved. I got them helping me, because they needed the exercise, of course.

So I got them helping me and then before you know it, things started moving a little bit faster. And then I got one of my studio assistants to come and help out, too. I began photographing it, did some drawings, mostly photographing and the whole thing began to take shape.

So I developed an environment kind of sculpture called *The MacDowell Woodpiles* [1980] and it was a very important piece to me because, you know, all of a sudden, I was making these huge bowls, really, that is what they were, these cylindrical columns out of three-foot thick walls, stacked firewood, and the little mountain, which echoed the mountains behind. It was in a pastoral setting at the top of a pasture looking down. It was just the most idyllic.

So I began photographing in 35 millimeter, two-and-a-quarter and four by five and Kathy came — my wife, Kathy, came and she helped with the photography. It was a marvelous installation piece. And so from that standpoint, MacDowell was a tremendous success for me because I experimented with texture and with scale.

And immediately following MacDowell, I went back to the studio and started making very textural pieces, using the chainsaw and the lathe. I had a piece of wood that they gave me from MacDowell, a very big old piece of elm, over three feet in diameter and I put that on the lathe and made a huge bowl that I called *The MacDowell Bowl* [1981]. It was three feet in diameter, made with the chainsaw coupled to the lathe. So MacDowell was extremely important to me.

MR. SMITH: Your involvement with large-scale work provokes my question about your continuing interest in structures. When you were very young, you with your father built a log cabin, which was a learning experience. And then you built your home in New Hampshire. It seems to me that was kind of an obsession with not only building, but renovation of structures and large-scale architectural interests. Could you reflect on that continuing fascination and involvement?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, sure. I mean, you know, back at camp we built the log cabins and we would build these Adirondack shelters so that we could get the wood in the wintertime. We would snowmobile the woods trail it out with dogsleds on the back of snowmobiles, cut the wood in the fall and stack it in the shelters. Then we built the log cabin and then the camp itself. I worked with my father and it was just something that I learned very early on to do.

I think the next phase was building the house in New Hampshire. Of course, we had built structures — Mel and I had built structures in the backyard in Schenectady — but then in New Hampshire, built the house and studio beginning in 1969. Then, of course, there was building the pottery studio for Darr. That was a whole nother thing. It was built basically with scrounged materials.

As a kid, I built all kinds of forts. You know, the neighborhood kids ran wild and we built all kinds of forts. Then I got very serious about building — the house beginning in 1969 just continued to be added on. And then, as I mentioned, Ed Rosenthal had me build on the studio and I worked with a construction company then. And there was a local carpenter, craftsman named Forrest Morse who was a blacksmith and a really good craftsman and he helped me work on the building.

I sort of became his helper really. I learned an awful lot from Forest and then I got into building the solar house, which was an enormous project, collaborated with the architect, Duncan McGowan from Concord and we designed this together. There was a huge team, Steve Connor with his excavations and Leon Wilson and we built a wall out of rubble rock. Joe and Art Brennan from New Hampshire were stone masons.

And we built — we spent the entire budget just on the rock wall. It was five-and-a-half feet thick, 20 feet tall and 120 feet long built out of rubble rock set in mortar and then slanted the face, the solar face of it with a lot of

glass — I mean, a lot of glass. And this was an extravagant project involving Italian tiles, Castle tile and all kinds of things like that. It was a really wonderful and marvelous project.

And then coming down here was the renovation of this tobacco packing plant and its annex and the barn. And in 1983, we got this place and I began by entirely emptying it out. And then a friend of mine — well, that involved a studio assistant and a lot of workers, local workers in all of that. The studio itself, which is the packing plant, is a brick building that is 40 by 100 — 40 feet wide by 100 feet long. That is 4,000 feet on a floor. So that is two floors and a half. That makes 10,000 square feet. And there is an elevator. And began renovations on that, rebuilding the brick arches, putting in the windows, taking up the bricks off the floor, pouring concrete floor, putting the bricks on the wooden annex on the outside, designing the annex to be living and studio quarters.

All of that — I guess I was really a sort of self-taught designer in that sense and started off just with pencil and paper and then got into drafting. Certain people helped me along the way. I learned a lot working, you know, collaboratively with the architect, Duncan McGowan. And that was my first foray into real architecture. And that was really a piece of architecture.

And then coming down here, it was just a major renovation.

MR. SMITH: I think the word "major" is understated. [Laughs.]

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

MR. SMITH: I mean, it is an enormous space. And as you described it on the tour yesterday, the building was in really terrible condition and filled with debris and all kinds of material. Just to begin to restore it to something usable or livable was a major undertaking.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, 15,000 square feet. And then the barn is another 10,000 square feet. So there is about 25,000 square feet of usable space. Now, Terry Kori, who was a student from Arrowmont, really was very instrumental in our getting this place. And he helped — he was a studio assistant and helped to undertake the renovations. And so we were all building and all just working like busy bees getting it all together.

And Kenny Gregg from Weare, New Hampshire, a master plumber, came down for three weeks. And we roughed in five-and-a-half bathrooms and three kitchens. And, you know, at that time, we had essentially about three apartments in the building, one for my parents, one for Kathy and Ben and Josh and myself, and then for Terry and his family. So the place was very active and a lot of things going on. And it was meant to be just a winter studio. We would travel back and forth from New Hampshire and come down here for the winters and then go back there. And it was really quite a time, you know, where a lot of work was being sold and I had a lot of assistants.

Things were really going very well up until the point that on the way to Baltimore, the Winter Market, you know, we were all packed and I was asleep in the back in the van and my assistant was driving. And he fell asleep at the wheel and the van drifted off the highway at 70 miles an hour and went over an embankment. He hit a mile marker and jerked the wheel. Woke up, jerked the wheel and it caused the van to roll. And it went into about a five-to-seven times roll at 70 miles an hour and down into where there was a truck weigh station. So there were actually people — officials right there that saw it happen and they immediately came.

Instantly, all of the work, it was essentially ruined. I was trapped in there like a crushed soda can with the van upside down, gas dripping, all of that. Terry Kori was the assistant and he was thankfully not hurt, although he did cut his hand badly trying to pull me out before they had to come with the Jaws of Life and all that kind of stuff and they got me out. Thankfully, nothing caught on fire. I was pretty badly traumatized, really pretty beat up, had a broken elbow. But actually had suffered head trauma, worse than anything — face and head trauma and was taken to the hospital and the rest is history.

And I think of my life as pre-accident and post-accident. It really is a dividing line in my life.

MR. SMITH: So that changed your future path? You then left New Hampshire and moved here permanently?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, what happened was we had to make a decision, because really I was out of whack. It would be many, many years before I would come back to some sort of normalcy, which I question whether I am there today for that matter. But yes, we made a decision. We had to choose one — we could only have one place and since this was the largest place and it was really great in the winter and we didn't like the winter in New Hampshire that we would choose this place.

So then we began to put the house and studio [in New Hampshire] up for sale and ran into a lot of problems. The selectman raised our taxes tremendously, I mean, astronomically and we couldn't really carry it. It wasn't selling because it was a crash in the market. So there I was with this incredible solar home and then this really beautiful

house and studio, original house and studio and they were taxing us unreasonably.

So I had my friend come on a rainy day with a construction company and they tore down the house and studio and put it in the Henniker dump across the street and I wrote the selectman a letter saying that as of 2:30 on such and such a day, the house was razed, no longer exists, and you are now required to remove it from the tax rolls and that was the end of the house and studio. Then the solar house was sold.

It seemed really tragic, almost van Gogh-esque story. But, you know, one has to make certain decisions in one's life.

MR. SMITH: As I was reading through all of your accomplishments and involvement, and in the context of building experiences, I was interested that in 1988, with your son, Ben, you participated in helping to build a house in Atlanta as part of the Habitat for Humanity program. Could you talk about that?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Terry Kori, our assistant, who, again, was one of the students from Arrowmont, who helped us here in getting this place established, after this accident, you know, we sort of went our separate ways, and he moved to Atlanta. He became involved with Habitat for Humanity. He was working on a very special project where Habitat for Humanity was building homes in Atlanta and he called me and said that there was an opportunity, if I would like to work on the house that the president was building, President Carter was building.

I said sure, Terry, I would really like to do that. At the time, I was teaching at the School of Architecture in Tallahassee at Florida A&M University and so one of the professors there, Tom Pugh, rode along with Ben, my son, and I. We went up to Atlanta and we worked literally with Mayor Andrew Young and his wife and President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn Carter, on the house that he was building in Atlanta for that project.

I really got to — It was really quite interesting working with President Carter, getting to know him, you know, his sense of humor and his seriousness and his just sort of incredible bearing, presidential bearing. And it was an eye-opening kind of thing for both of us. He was an amazing, amazing person.

MR. SMITH: As you know, he had a real interest in working with wood.

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh, yes. Exactly.

MR. SMITH: He was a friend of Sam Maloof's and visited his home and studio.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, yes. And he really is amazing — he has visited this sawyer friend of mine, fifth-generation sawyer friend of mine who is up in Iron City, Georgia and he has gotten wood from him. He has never visited me here. But it was quite interesting because he was in Bonn, Germany, when, you know, we were working in the Oval Office on the project to duplicate the desk for the JFK Memorial Library.

MR. SMITH: I wanted to ask you about that because that was a really interesting project and it was during his administration.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Well, Robert Whitley, the master craftsman from Pennsylvania, who had been master conservator of Independence Hall in Philadelphia and had undertaken many commissions for the National Park Service, was given the commission by the JFK Memorial Library to duplicate the Oval Office desk that JFK had used, for the JFK Memorial Library.

This desk is called the Resolute Desk. It was given by the queen of England. It was made from timbers that were — the ship was lost at sea trying to discover the unknown Northwest Passage. It was found floating and it was given back to England. As a gesture of gratitude, they had the desk made out of the timbers of the HMS Resolute when they refitted it and then they gave it back to the United States.

It had been used by — I can't remember the name of the president. I think it was either — who was it? I can't remember. But then it went into the basement of the Renwick. And Jackie Kennedy found it and brought it out and JFK used it. And, of course, there were the pictures of John John, you know, coming through the door in the center and it has been in use for the most part pretty much ever since, except Ford didn't use it.

So Bob Whitley asked me — we were friends, met at Rhinebeck Craft Fair, and he asked me if I would help him and come on in the project to photograph, measure and do rubbings of the desk, rice paper rubbings of the carvings of the desk. This was an extraordinary project. To have this commission is an amazing thing for him. It is really an amazing thing given the history of it all. That desk is really symbolic of the Kennedy Administration, you know. It is a national icon.

And so we went to the Oval Office, spent three days and three nights working in the presence of the Secret Service.

MR. SMITH: I am sure that they were watching every move because if you are making rubbings of the surface or doing anything to it they would be concerned.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, pulling drawers out to measure dovetails and to photograph. It was very odd because we ran into a lot of trouble. It disrupted their tours of the Oval Office and I had to call up to the usher's office. I just took it upon myself. I said, "Look, I need to speak to the usher." And I said, "Look, we are here. We only have this amount of time. It is for the JFK Memorial Library. We have got to have the door closed." And he said, "Hand the phone to the Secret Service agent." And the Secret Service agent snapped a little more straight and then hung up the phone and gestured close the door and the door was closed and then we began working.

These guys were impenetrable. And we worked along photographing and our film wrappers had to be thrown on the floor. It couldn't go in a wastebasket. Every time we opened the drawer, he stood over us watching like a hawk and sort of with his fingers gesturing, counting the pens that were in there and gave a no-no gesture with his finger and we nodded that we understood and we worked in and out throughout that desk.

MR. SMITH: So the desk actually had all of the material that President Carter was using? They didn't empty anything?

MR. LINDQUIST: No, they didn't empty anything. I mean, there weren't any documents out. There were no documents out. That is very clear. But, you know, we were going through drawers because we had to. We had to take them out, actually measure them, turn them over, photograph them, you know. They were a little testy about it. But, you know, we stood our ground and said, "Well, do you have a better idea of how to accurately measure pattern and identify this wood and the grain patterns and the angles of the dovetails specifically and the depths of them? Do you have a better idea how we could do this?"

So they left us alone after that. And Bob Whitley is a very intimidating — he can be a very intimidating person and I was spunky and way too full of myself. And, of course, I had my Nikkormats and Bob had his Nikors. We used a 55-mm Nikkormat lens. I still have it today and still use it today. We had my 645 [Mamiya M645], two-and-a-quarter, and we had the toyo view four by five. This was a huge production. I mean, we had just packs and packs and packs of film.

And everything had to be right. Then all of a sudden, towards the end of the project, all of the politicians began coming in and we had to get photographs of people. The congressman from Philadelphia came in. They were sort of there behind the desk pretending like they are the president. And it was really quite interesting because — so not only was there product photography, was there measuring and drawing and all kinds of aspects of craftsmanship in the design stages, in deconstructing this desk in order to reconstruct it, but there was also photojournalism involved, you know.

It was very interesting because Darr had taught me how critical it was to document your work. So I was very keen on making sure we had documented absolutely every move that was made there.

MR. SMITH: I am curious where the documentation is presently.

MR. LINDQUIST: I think that most of it is with Robert Whitley. The desk itself, of course, sits in the rotunda of the JFK Memorial Library. He built the desk. I was going to do the handles and other things came up and I couldn't do it. But I was there in the formative stages of the project. You have one shot at getting the information. The interesting thing about it, the history of it is that it was the very first time that the desk was replicated and it was replicated by a master craftsman. It has since been replicated many times, but ours was the first time.

I feel so very fortunate to have been, at such a young age, included in that project. It was a privilege and I am indebted to Robert Whitley for trusting me. He really treated me as a peer. We worked as a team. He would bark orders and I would do it. I would say, "What about that?" And he would do it. And, you know, we just worked along. There was a lot of hefting and lifting and shoving and moving and for him to allow me to do the — it was with a crayon, I mean, a large crayon, kind of a lumber crayon and rice paper and make those rubbings of the carvings on the desk.

They were what were used as reference when that was made. And so all of this art training that was in the background just all of a sudden came to this huge test of this deadline, a time that everything had to be done accurately, precisely and in a timely fashion and also very politically.

MR. SMITH: Well, hearing this, it is an amazing achievement. I think you can certainly add that to your résumé having spent three days in the Oval Office with Mr. Whitley. That was really a very unique and special experience.

MR. LINDQUIST: It was.

MR. SMITH: Well, you certainly have had so many different areas of experience. Before we start talking about your work, it would be interesting to hear a little bit about influences in general. As I know, you have had interest in religion and Zen philosophy and Asian culture, art and literature and travel. I mean, those are all subjects in themselves. But could you just speak a little bit about — let's begin with the Zen philosophy and that association.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, when I was an apprentice to Darr Collins, he was a Zen adherent. And like I said, he was at the Zen Center in California in San Francisco and brought all of that. And there was *The Tassajara Bread Book* [by Edward Espe Brown], that kind of stuff, you know. And actually, he got me involved in thinking along Zen lines. And we sat zazen and meditated. And the whole apprenticeship experience was as though being a Zen student, you know, a monk, in a way.

He was very much involved with Zen culture. So much so that he embraced the mystical aspects of it. For example, he had a shelf in the cabin that the first pots that we made that he would put them on the shelf. Well, first, when we first fired, there were five firings and not one pot he allowed to survive. They would come out and he would strike it with a stick and break it and let it fall. The next pot would come out. He would strike it and break it and let it fall.

If there was a good one, he would set it to the side and those would go up on the shelf. Out of like five firings, there were five pieces on the shelf. Then eventually, all of those five disappeared and he cracked those. So the whole floor around the kiln is all ceramic, you know, shards.

So we walked on shards essentially and this whole experience was really amazing because it was as close to being in Japan as one could get while living in America. He was very much in the whole process.

MR. SMITH: Had he been in Japan?

MR. LINDQUIST: I think he had, yes. But again, it was sort of — you know, Zen came to America from Japan and that is where the Zen Center was involved. There was also a guy up in Maine at the Surrey Zen Center — Walter somebody. I can't remember his name. I went up there and had words with him or he had words with me.

So that whole experience with that was just really learning all about Zen and really understanding about the happy accident, you know, serendipity. And what it was — firing the kiln at night with wood, building the kiln fire, just all of these shapes, meditating. I mean, he would sit there for hours and hours and hours on end just studying these pots in meditation and there were aspects of that during the day. It was all about discipline and he talked about discipline in working, a way of working, and always laying the tools out in a certain way. That pattern that you make, you know, will set the course of your day and [there was] a lot of sweeping.

He literally told me— I had this really wonderful brush—and he said when this brush is down to where it won't sweep anymore, then you are done. It was really amazing because a prophet is never recognized in his own home and that is kind of what he was. He took me on as a serious student and I embraced that aspect of it, particularly from the standpoint of what Zen is as a tool for me today.

In terms of the philosophy, it was an introduction to the arts of Japan, which was extremely important to me. He showed me the work of Rosanjin, Kitaoji Rosanjin, and Hamada, Bernard Leach, all of that.

MR. SMITH: Leach was British.

MR. LINDQUIST: Leach was British, yes, right. He and Hamada were involved in establishing the National Treasures program. So I was very aware of that, but he was also instructing me about the sort of California funk thing, [Robert] Arneson and Voukos and all of that.

MR. SMITH: So he was very aware of all of the avant-garde work that was taking place?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh, absolutely. He was on mailing lists. He was getting show announcements, all that kind of stuff. Remember this is '69, '70, '71. A lot was happening back then. We were looking at Soldner's material on building kilns and things like that. As a matter of fact, that first Rhinebeck, Soldner was there. And I met Paul. He was giving — he had a wonderful movie of what he was doing. So that was very exciting.

I came back and talked about how I had met one of the clay gods. But really the exposure to Hamada and Rosanjin was vitally important. And, of course, we were somewhat, a little bit involved in some of the local pottery people. Like David and Cathy Robinson were up there. As I mentioned, the Heinos [Otto and Vivika] were in Henniker.

Then Gerry Williams was across the way. He would stop by occasionally, things like that. And this guy [Darr] was sort of viewed as the crazy Zen guy, you know. I really came to a point where the — I got a little heavily involved

in it and the philosophy wasn't taking me spiritually where I wanted to go and I had a sort of a reawakening, you know, in my search. Zen led me to nothing and I was searching for God.

So I kind of went back to my childhood upbringing. I was brought up in a Presbyterian Church, pretty strict and all of that.

MR. SMITH: You mentioned you had relatives who were ministers.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, my grandfather was a minister in Nebraska, Texas, and California. And then my uncle was a Princeton seminary doctorate. He was the minister of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, California, friends with all the movie stars, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. He actually worked with Cecil B. DeMille on "The Ten Commandments" consulting and things like that.

So it was kind of strange. He was my Uncle Ray and he had a place in New Jersey — Sparta, New Jersey — Apple Hill, actually. We used to go there in the summers. He was really something because he was a big deal, you know, Uncle Ray. So anyway, I sort of came back to the old time religion really and had a reawakening. It was very important and it came on the heels of the Zen thing.

I think the Zen really — I had sort of gone away from my religion and Zen brought me back. So I find it very important that I have still very deep respect for Zen and Buddhism. I don't practice that other than Zen is a tool for me. I mean, as an artist, it is really critical.

MR. SMITH: Have you been to Asia?

MR. LINDQUIST: I have not, but I feel as though I have. I mean, I've lived it. I live it on a daily basis. It's a — how you talk about a New York state of mind? Well, this is a Japanese state of mind. And that has always stuck with me.

I've always wanted to go to Japan. I had an opportunity to go to Kanazawa —

[End disc three.]

MR. SMITH: This is Paul Smith conducting an interview with Mark Lindquist for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. It's taking place on August 12, early afternoon, at the artist's home and studio in Quincy, Florida. This is [SD] card number four.

Continuing our last discussion about influences, I'd like to explore the influence of travel. I know that you've been to Europe and have had some important experiences from your travels. Could you comment on that aspect of your career?

MR. LINDQUIST: When the Springfield Craft Fair, I think it was — I believe it was 1986 — the French had come over as an exchange with the American Craft Council. I was involved helping to get them organized. One of my former assistants subcontracted to do all the booths for the French. And there was an entire aisle, both sides, for the French and I helped to organize that and set it up, and get everything squared away. I was asked by Carol Sedestrom to do that.

So all the while, while doing that because of the language barrier and everything, they for the most part thought that I was just some sort of a janitor or some kind of a worker and didn't realize that I was actually an artist.

So the director [of the French arts organization Ob'Art], Daniel Erdman, came by my booth, which was pretty spectacular, and he was shocked because he recognized me; you know, we'd become sort of conversant. He invited me to come to Paris. He said, "Please come as our guest and show at Ob'Art and there won't be any jury in there or anything like that, just come as our guest."

And so we traveled to Paris. Kathy and Ben and Josh and I all went to Paris, brought many tons of work and it was really a delightful experience. We then traveled from Luxembourg through Germany to Switzerland and stayed with the Erdmans and it was a marvelous time. France — you know, Paris was just marvelous.

MR. SMITH: Was that your first trip to Europe?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, that was my first trip to Paris. And then, at a later date, the art historian Robert Hobbs was giving the lecture at the Tapiés Foundation in Barcelona. And I had tickets — first-class tickets — from a transaction with a vice president of a major airline who was a collector and we flew over to Barcelona — first to Paris, then to Barcelona and then on to other parts of Spain. It was a marvelous trip there too, particularly having an art historian, and we met with Beverly Pepper in Barcelona and Valencia and had a great time. So that — and the second time in Paris was marvelous.

MR. SMITH: I'm sure it must have been very important for you to visit some of the great museums and collections. Were there any important ones?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, yes, there was one very important. We went to the Pompidou and the Beaubourg. And in a corner of the Beaubourg was this little building. And it turned out to be Brancusi's studio. He had given the studio to — apparently to the museum with the provision that it stayed exactly as he left it when he died.

Kathy and I were carrying a lot of gear — a lot of photography gear — and we went inside and there were two attendants and I asked if we could possibly — I told them I was a sculptor from America, that Brancusi was very important to me; would it be all right to photograph? They said, "*Absolument, mais oui, naturellement, d'accord.*"

So for a couple of hours, we had the run of the place. There wasn't anyone that came in during the entire time. I photographed extensively and studied all of his tools and made a lot of personal assessments of his techniques. Kathy took pictures of me in the studio and it was just an amazing, amazing experience. To be able to actually be in Brancusi's studio like that and have the ability to freely photograph wherever was a real treat.

MR. SMITH: Were there any other travels that were memorable?

MR. LINDQUIST: You mean abroad or — no, not really. I think that was it. Those were pretty action packed. I don't really travel that well, and both times was ill. So I was happy to be back — back home. The only thing I regret is not going to Kanazawa, Japan, for the World Craft Conference. I just wasn't able to travel.

MR. SMITH: You were invited to it?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

MR. SMITH: Moving on to another subject, you moved to Quincy permanently. When was that?

MR. LINDQUIST: In 1986.

MR. SMITH: — in 1986, it's my understanding that you taught at Florida A&M University. Was it in Tallahassee?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

MR. SMITH: Could you give a little background on that and what you were teaching?

MR. LINDQUIST: Right. Well, the assistant dean, Larry Peterson, had heard about me being here. And he was the assistant dean of the School of Architecture at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida. He came out here one day, just unannounced and I had no idea who he was and he just put his hand out, introduced himself. And I said, "Come on in."

He was a very interesting guy too and involved with Zen out in California and at the Zen Center in San Francisco. So it was automatically kind of a bond and so he was very excited to meet me here and he knew Pete Voulkos up there.

And he said, "Look, we want you to become involved. Will you come do something at the school?" And I said, "I don't know what." And he said, "Well, look, come first as a kind of a resident artist and do a show or something." And I said, "Okay, we'll do that." And he said, "We'd like to have you come in and be a resident sculptor at the School of Architecture. This is a way to start it and then we'll try to get the money and get things going." I agreed and then we did a big show.

I did another installation similar to *The MacDowell Wood piles*. This was called *Bricks and Burls*. With the help of many students, we took piles and piles and piles of bricks from here, from Lindquist Studios here, and all of my — many of my major large burls. And the floor area in concrete was 3-by-3 panels, blocks kind of gridded in between buildings, under cover, and in walkways — large open spaces.

So I used the grid in a way where I was able to — I would lay a burl down on the concrete and then chalk around it, remove the burl, then build a sort of a sarcophagus out of brick, hollow, and then replaced it with the burl on top and then I would build bases, curved walls, architectural kind of elements, and each one would feature a burl as though it was a sculpture finished.

So it was a combination of architecture and sculpture. It was an environmental kind of setting and having all of the students involved was really a wonderful thing. John Dodge Meyer was a videographer, came and videoed — did a video on it called "Bricks and Burls." And it was really great.

So that was my first involvement at the School of Architecture, very successful, had a one-person show in their

gallery. And then they were unable to find funding to bring me on, so I was persuaded to come and teach design. I taught a year's worth of design and really felt that if they weren't going to gain a position for me as a resident sculptor as was originally intended that I really didn't want to continue just being a professor, particularly as that gets a little — you know, design on a freshman level is a little bit — a little boring.

So I then thought that I might consider teaching, though, at the university, Florida State University. And I found out that if you were teaching that you could go to school without — I mean, they practically paid the whole thing. So I decided I would finish unfinished business and get my MFA. And they immediately accepted me with no reservations at all whatsoever. It was my conditions that I would not go there. They would come to my studio. And reluctantly they agreed.

MR. SMITH: What year was that?

MR. LINDQUIST: That was 1989.

MR. SMITH: And was it for two years?

MR. LINDQUIST: It was — no, I actually did it in one year. I was able to do it in one year. I'll have to go back and check it to be absolutely sure, but it went by very quickly and it was a really packed year. And I was very fortunate because I really didn't have to do all the critiques and things like that. And they asked me if I would teach. And I said, "No, I can't because I have too many things going on." So they were very accommodating.

And the thing that came out of that was that I met Dr. Penelope Mason, who is a foremost Japanologist. She had studied with Edward Kidder and she was writing her book *The Arts of Japan [History of Japanese Art]*. New York: Abrams, 1993.] And so we became very good friends.

This was what was very important about the M.F.A. at Florida State University, was the art history. And she was there. And surprisingly Robert Hobbs was there too. And Robert Hobbs had just come. And we became very close friends.

The art history department at Florida State University was extremely strong. And she had come from New York University. He had come from Yale. And he was a curator at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art. He had done his undergraduate — his graduate work at Yale, stayed in Robert Motherwell's guest home for it. And he'd written *Abstract Expressionism: The Formative Years*. [Ithaca, N.Y.: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University; New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1978].

Robert Hobbs was a very important person too in my life at that time and he knew who I was and we just connected and he became a family friend and remains a family friend. Kathy was editing his books. And so that was important, meeting Penny and Robert.

MR. SMITH: Sounds like that was very productive involvement where you benefited greatly and was able to do it on your own terms.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I'd like to comment too that the interesting thing about that is that I really began a whole new body of work at that point and then began showing it in New York City at Franklin Parish. And Robert Hobbs actually did reviews in *Sculpture* magazine and he wrote for the catalogue for the show. And so it was very — that was very important and I think it also somewhat got the attention of — who is the editor of *Art in America* — Janet Kaplos. And Janet Kaplos did a review of my show then. So it was very important. It led to very important things.

MR. SMITH: So far in this interview, we've talked about your formative years and your formal education and many aspects of involvement, but we really haven't gotten to the subject that's most important. And that is your work, and especially in the area of wood, which you're most identified with.

So what I would like to do at this point would be to have you comment on the evolution of your work. You were exposed to wood at a very early age and became involved with hands-on involvement, some of which you've already spoken about. Could you review how your interest and exploration of wood as a medium has developed over a period of time and the different directions that you took from vessel forms to large-scale works?

MR. LINDQUIST: I really began translating ceramic form into wood and I began by making these bowls. My father was — you know, Melvin was making vases and small bowls out of spalted wood and it was the natural course for me because the spalted wood was really a translation of what was essentially scrafito. The imperfections were basically what would come about from shards, pottery shards and aspects of Jomon pottery, Tamba pottery, all of that. So that's where I really kind of began.

There was an intermediate phase where I was interested in what Gauguin was doing in his wood carvings and I

began carving butternut pieces that way and somewhat mysterious kinds of pieces, *Soyez mystérieuses*. So I was involved in the translation of ceramic form.

Now, I was doing certain things to make money. I made a lot of paper weights, small table sculptures and Bloomingdale's ordered 144 of them. And Kathy and I worked on them. She did the finishes and I did all the forms. I finally got the order to them and then within the first week, they put a lot of them out and within the first week, 33 of them were stolen. And so they put them in cases and raised the prices four times and they still sold. So that's how my prices started getting raised, you know.

MR. SMITH: What year was that?

MR. LINDQUIST: Oh, this would have been I think probably — that year that, that happened would have been probably 1974, I think. And then I was showing — doing bowls and then started doing furniture. I started doing furniture — I think an interesting thing that Jon Brooks, who lived in New Boston who was close by. We became friends and he'd been at the School of American Craftsmen at RIT. And we became friends and we kind of did certain things together. I did photographs for him and we traded things. I traded him a Shopsmith. He gave me a couple of pieces of his. I think there was kind of an influence back and forth there for a while. I really respected Jon greatly for his work and I picked up a few things from Jon.

Then I began doing — I had been doing sculptural vessels, carved burl containers. And then there was a point at which I began looking at the bowl more metaphorically and thinking of the vessel in terms of symbolism. I started doing certain things, sort of imposing conditions on the forms. For example, if Brancusi was to come to dinner, what would I give him, serve wine to him in? And so I made the *Brancusi Cup*. And it was very, very symbolically constructed. The natural-top bowl, in particular was — it was a form that I was working with that it took a long time to break through to that, but I finally did.

And Bob Stocksdale was one person who had interfered with the lip or the rim of the bowl by using the outer surface of the log. I took it one step further really and used the natural surface of the exterior of the burl as the rim or the top of the bowl. I called them natural-top bowls.

It wasn't as though it was absolutely new because there were pipes that had been made out of briar that the whole entire top of it was natural. So there was some connection there, but I did sort of finalize this form, the natural-top bowl, and it's become a staple of the movement now.

And it's been important to me as well. What it was is that for me it was the live edge of the material and thinking of the bowl in terms of its components — the inner, the outer, the foot, and the lip or the rim, and the lip of the bowl speaks. So this was a way that it was speaking of its nature, of its heritage, of its history and that was a way to connect the bowl, keep the bowl connected and rooted to the tree.

In some ways, I was somewhat criticized in the beginning because it was so natural and it was so — it was the shock of the new at the time, and also criticized for bowls that had bark inclusions and imperfections in them. But those things were very important because they were a translation of what I had learned about Rosanjin, what Rosanjin did. He would purposely break a piece apart, then put it back together with gold and fuse it back together with that crack.

And so the crack, to me, became very, very significant, especially looking at Brancusi's work, looking at a sculpture called *The Lovers*, where there's a division there between the male and the female. And all of a sudden — these little things become big things, where cracks — first of all, it's the way that the material is handled. I accepted the cracks just as I accepted the bark inclusion and actually made it an intricate part of the design, included it.

So the crack, all of a sudden it finalized in my mind and I was able to say that the crack signified division, but symbolized union, and that from the standpoint of looking at a vessel as sculpture.

So then I began working with pushing the vessel a little bit more. And there were several happy accidents in making many of those sort of paper weights. One day I was cutting up lots of blanks, and the ones that were no good, I would throw into a waste can. I threw this one cherry burl that had a crack all the way around it into it and it just acted funny when it hit.

And I was a conscious observer and I went back over to it, and I said, there's something odd about this and I just went over to it and I started pulling it apart and it just popped apart and it happened that the burl had grown in over upon itself and made a perfect formation as though it was mould. So then I took that — I was just amazed — and then I took that and put it back on the lathe and made a jar where the natural top was perfect and then a natural-top bowl and it was called the *Natural Fault Bowl*.

So — and that was just sort of a fluke of nature and I happened to be there at the right moment and with the

skills to be able to pull it all together. So it was very important, sort of egg-like piece. And that became — again, the object as metaphor.

So then I began doing small, totemic pieces of covered jars —

MR. SMITH: What date was this?

MR. LINDQUIST: I'm going to say that's probably 1976, I'm guessing. It might be '75. It was fairly early on and then I was doing covered jars. These things were never really utility. I had made for the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen coaster-kind of cutting boards, things like that, but for the most part, I was never really making objects of utility, mainly because of this orientation of ceramics being — seeing the work of Voulkos and Soldner, those things were not for use. They were for display, a different kind of use.

MR. SMITH: But that was also in the context of that break from tradition, where artists in many media were exploring new forms that were not functional, but still kind of rooted in — and reflecting upon some of the tradition. It was very much a '60s, '70s movement in the whole field.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, it was, but there was also — in all fairness, we have to look at the work of Picasso, which was in academia, and his plates and his vessel forms were there and I was seeing those as well. Those were not utilitarian. Those were purely sculptural. So I think there's a balance there because we have to give fine arts its due as well as craft. That what were in it [Picasso's work] were concomitant forms; a confluence of the heritage of utility and the onset of this tremendous influence of fine art and sculpture.

It then became, well, how do you push that envelope? How can you push that farther and farther and farther? How can this sort of lowly — and at that time it was, really, if you were a craftsman, you were really on the low end of the scale, really, the back of the bus of the art world really. And to a large extent, many of us still are. Basically I set out really to investigate how the craft of vessel making could become art. And I deliberately aimed at that target and shot for it.

And apparently some agreed with me because Penelope Hunter Steibel did buy *Brancusi Cup* — I mean, did get *Brancusi Cup* for the collection. And it wasn't that she got it. She said that they might be in a position to consider the possibility of considering accepting a gift. [Laughs.] And I said, but, of course.

And so — but the thing about it is that these vessels I began looking at entirely as sculpture and trying to make vessels within the confines of sculpture and sculpture within the confines of the bowl.

So another happy accident that happened was that around the time that I was photographing, sort of documenting how the bowl came out of the burl, I would cut the blank out of the burl, then turn the bowl, then put the bowl back in the blank and then take a picture of it. And when I did that and started looking at it, it just started registering something; it was very interesting. I didn't know what it was. It was something interesting, like I'd seen it before.

So one day, I was working and I was cutting this piece. There was also a cone-separation technique which was something early on that I was involved with. Mel had gotten me kind of started with that.

And I had cut this one piece, left the bowl in it and was going to separate the bowl out of the block. The idea was that you cut in the bowl and then it would take the bowl out. You could cut in another bowl, take it out. Cut in another bowl, take it out.

And this was a somewhat revolutionary technique at the time. I wrote about it in *Fine Woodworking Magazine*. And that was how I was making things to get the most out of the material. So it was a bowl inside of a bowl inside of a bowl inside of a bowl. And ultimately, you're left with the carcass of the — what's left over.

So at one point — and usually what I did is I turned the bowl and then I would come back with a spoon gauge and tap it out and the bowl would just drop out or pop out. So I was cutting the bowl out of — trying to get a large shape out of the carcass of the bowl and it got caught in the band saw. The blade got stuck in the band saw. I had to take it all apart and then I had to pull the blade off the band saw. I was really kind of upset about it and just frustrated. As these things happen, it sort of spoils your flow and you just think, oh, boy, I must be tired or something's wrong. So I set it down on the shop bench and left for the day.

The next morning I came in — and I had set it sort of haphazardly, just sort of balanced it there. And I came in the next morning fresh and I saw it there and I said, you know, it's perfect. It's absolutely perfect just the way it is. And this was one of the things that Darr had taught me and I had learned also in sculpture, learning sculpture, that you must know when to stop.

So it was a bold move. It was a really bold move because there was — there were even rust marks or I don't

really know. There's markings from this fight that I had with the band saw blade and the screwdriver that I used to sort of pry it out in this frustration and I'd left it. And then I went back and I sanded a flat on it and it became the first *Captive*.

And I realized, wow, all of a sudden, everything came together. It's sort of like all these things are floating around like almost invisible balls being juggled and then all of a sudden they're in your hands.

And so the pictures of the burls, that happy accident coming in fresh and seeing it, it all gelled. And then I had the *Captives*. And all of a sudden, I knew what it was.

MR. SMITH: And *Captives* was a series of work.

MR. LINDQUIST: *Captives* was a series. It became a series — *Prisoners*, — *Captives* and *Prisoners*. And it was basically — I went back to Michelangelo, you know, his unfinished — the bondservants, the slaves. And I had been so fascinated by them and had studied that when I was studying stone sculpture and it just sort of all came together.

But oddly, it came together in what you would almost say now in hindsight was somewhat postmodern. And it was probably one of the most — the first postmodern episodes in the work because it was clearly somewhat poking fun at that.

It was a pastiche in that sense because there they were — Michelangelo's work. That's the basis for sculpture and yet here this is and it's a lowly bowl yet it had this tremendous power as well and it also had this incredible metaphor, here we are stuck in this thing. And it would turn out to be more profound than I even knew when I had the accident, there I was, a captive in that shell, of that carcass, a crashed vehicle.

And then I began making even more *Captives* that way because I was stuck. I couldn't move. And that's the essence of life sometimes.

MR. SMITH: One thing I wanted to comment on is the privilege of a tour of your very impressive, vast studio prior to this interview. It's really a visual feast of so many pieces of very technical equipment and a variety of technical apparatus that you've used or employed.

Perhaps the most surprising for me was the robotic elements that you actually created to assist you after your accident. Could you talk about that aspect of your tool-making? I know that you've adapted many traditional tools to serve your needs but I think especially interesting is the fact that you actually made by hand robotic controls to meet the requirements of things that you were not able to do from your health conditions.

MR. LINDQUIST: Right. Well, you know, after the accident I really couldn't bend properly. My elbows weren't working and just all kinds of problems, you know, head trauma, dizziness, all of that. So I had to be seated.

One of the biggest problems with sculpture is moving and holding, positioning, the material. So, of course, going back to the go-kart days, you know, working with Hugh Rosa, the physicist, and having learned that, I had that technology and I wanted to find a way that I could position the wood so that I could be seated.

Having had the experience of rebuilding and refurbishing many lathes, raising them up for larger diameter, and having the experience of having machined a lot of things — you know, my father was a master machinist after all. He helped me with a lot of things and taught me certain things, and he was a toolmaker so I was a toolmaker too. And that's been a very, very important aspect to the work — the technical side of tool-making and tool-inventing — inventing a tool to do something that you can't do.

So I began with the whole robotic thing by just making it so the faceplate was still on the piece and on a waste block and glued onto the piece of wood. I wanted to be able to have it rotate and to lower, to raise and to rotate again.

Somehow I got back into this sort of go-kart phase. And there's a salvage — a surplus and salvage yard that's close by — Hootie Parramore, Parramore's Salvage, and I started getting materials, mostly gear boxes and things like that. He had World War II things, all kinds of stuff, incredible. So I began working with these things and I found that the gear box was a vitally important element and could do many things in terms of positioning.

Mel, when he retired from General Electric, he was the manager of SAC — of quality control for small AC motors. It was all motors. It was all about motors. He was an electronic aeronautical engineer.

And so I somehow went to the next level and DC motors were out there with controllers and those are four-quadrant variable-speed motors and they use SCR, silicon-controlled rectifiers, and I started by coupling motors to gear boxes and then just sort of adapting faceplates to shafts.

It's parts and pieces and fiddle with this and fiddle with that and then one thing goes to the next and then there's a "eureka" moment and then that's followed by a lot of hard work and then there's more motors, more gear boxes, then you've got, like, six motors hooked up to 20 gear boxes and you've got controllers on a flat board and everything out of hand.

Then finally everything's working and you say, wow, now I've got to do this so that the dust won't get in there and I've got to make it so that it's all consolidated. And then I began wiring everything up very meticulously inside of a controller box and making a panel so that it was all available by hand. So it was an instrument panel essentially.

And each one of these controllers, the face of the controller was on the outside of the panel box, so that I was able to basically rotate forward and reverse. There's not a clockwise — counterclockwise really. It's essentially reversed rotation. It's one way then the other way.

I began experimenting and finding — distilled it down in my mind that there are only two kinds of motion. There's linear and circular. Well, actually, there are three: there's circular, there's linear and then there's circular.

Once I got that and started understanding what linear motion was in the machine world and how circular motion translated — you can just move your arm up and down and turn your wrist and if you hold then a ball in your hand, turn your wrist around and pivot by the elbow — this is what I wanted this machine to do.

I wanted it to bring the bowl to me where I could sit and I could then triangulate into my body by using the best of ergonomics. I was beat up not only from the accident but from all the prior work.

So essentially I began building these primitive robots with outdated robotic technology. I found an old welding robot and then retrofitted it with the DC motors and I called it ASTRO, Assigned Specific Task Robotic Operative. Then I made another one. It was an XY type of thing with an in/out router that would fly.

Then I had another robot that goes on a turntable type of thing and then it has a full-swing axis and the bowl rotates at the same time. And I called that OPRA, Omni-Positional Remote Articulator.

That's part of what it is, part of the robot speak. It's naming the robot with an acronym. They just take on their own personalities so that's all part of it. The idea of it was to create a distance between the control and the object, to make it more intimate, to be able to position, but yet, when working with the chainsaw, for example, to do it safely from a distance, remotely. So this would be end effectors; it's what they call in robots an "end effector." That is the last tool on the end of the robot arm. In many cases, I would have the chainsaw or a dye grinder or a grinder itself or whatever and I would couple that with the lathe.

This was an evolution from those early days with the *MacDowell Bowl* where I just had the chainsaw sort of bolted to a stand. That was an evolution from walking up to the shopsmith with the thing on, with a gas chainsaw running and finding out that that didn't work and that I was lucky to be alive afterwards.

So each time it was a refinement of the process to the point where I gained control and then precision and then a mastery. The beauty of it is that in working with the machine and these tools in tandem with the lathe there was a gift of the machine, something unforeseen in terms of texture with this precision control in cone-cutting that it was phenomenally staggering in effect.

This aspect of robotics — I enjoyed working with metal to begin with. I mean, it's go-kart technology at its highest, kind of. It's not that sophisticated but it's well done and because it's well done it's very reliable.

MR. SMITH: But it also serves a function. It really helps you.

MR. LINDQUIST: It really did help me because it enabled me to go back to making sculptural forms that I wasn't able to do by standing all day long and moving stuff around in a sandbox type of thing or whatever. This was like the ultimate in problem-solving for work positioning. I'm just — I feel every time I go to it as though I'm getting into a Ferrari. It's such an extravagance really.

MR. SMITH: Again, my impression from walking through and seeing your vast collection of found things and industrial parts, you actually have several thousand feet of found things that you hope to use one day.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I did actually use — at one point I had all kinds of hard drives. I had the hard drive, huge computer from the Governor Martinez administration that was discarded — it was surplus — and I bought it from the Tallahassee State surplus and brought it back here, took it apart and it had a wonderful hard drive, huge platters on it. This technology was phenomenal.

Then I was using the robotic lathe, turning these wooden pieces out of walnut and found out that these colors kind of worked really well together. Over the course of a year or so began building up and using different

materials like Corian, turning Corian and stainless steel and all of this stuff, even ceramic elements, all of that and combined with wood so that there was this ultraprimitive and ultramodern push-pull going on.

I did this piece that was — had a tilt to it and I called it *Taciturn*, because it was literally, purposely not speaking. It was all that information that was on there never to ever be read ever again.

And it was really — it became really quite ironic because they presented this piece to the James Renwick Collectors Alliance — Arthur Mason — and he saw in it the lean of it, really sort of parallel, the way the tower was falling and the fact that all of that stuff was trapped on these discs and everything, all of this information just never to ever be, whatever. So they bought this piece for the Renwick and it was a very important purchase for me. They bought it in memory of our nation's loss on 9/11.

So the materials from building this work have found their way into sculptures. I want to do more. I just don't know. It's sort of — I can push it in that direction but I really go kind of where it flows.

MR. SMITH: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. One can conclude that you have a love of wood and other materials but you also have a love of tools.

MR. LINDQUIST: I definitely do. I have a tremendous amount of equipment but I also have a lot of equipment that I've built. So when you can build a robotic piece that is wired to controllers and it comes alive, it is something very special. It's beyond just getting a Birmingham lathe, a 16-by-60 lathe — which I have — or a Bridgeport milling machine. The Bridgeport milling machine — all these things they make it possible to make it — but this invented tool, this robot is so much an extension of the self.

MR. SMITH: While you are most known for your work with wood, certainly it's the image that you are known for in terms of collectors and museums that have acquired your work but you also have a passion for photography.

And again, on my tour before this interview, I was really surprised to see the depth of your involvement with photography and all of the activity that you're exploring with digital photography equipment and printing.

So could you reflect a bit on when that interest in photography began and how it evolved? Could you give some insight to how that has developed and how important that is in terms of your current interests?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, of course my father and my mother were always taking pictures and I was taking pictures at a very young age with a Brownie camera and a little camera, and the plastic camera that had two-and-a-quarter film in it and because they were always taking pictures that was something that I just kind of grew up with.

But then when I went to school I studied photography with Charlie Sawyer — Charlie Sawyer who actually did the authorized biography of B.B. King. And it was really wonderful. Again, you know, it was 1968 — I started working with him and through around 1970.

Then I worked with Darr Collins who really taught me how critical it was to document your work and the quality of the photograph. So I got my Nikon in 1972, I believe it was. It was Nikkormat and 55-mm macro and started taking pictures of the work and then just even more and more, started taking nature photos. It was just — hey, a camera, a Nikon camera. What can you say?

So then along came that opportunity to have this dialogue with Robert Whitley about photographing work and sharing techniques and things like that. Then finally, getting more equipment, more professional equipment, the Mamiya 645.

Then came the project to document the desk of the Oval Office for replication. Then it became just that much more serious and then I began also doing more work with Whitley, for example. We took pictures in the and some of his national park commissions like the Silas Derby house in Salem, Massachusetts.

Kathy and I had a fine-art darkroom, black-and-white darkroom in New Hampshire, and Kathy began photographing professionally. She studied with Ron Rosenstock in Worcester in 1978, and he had worked with Minor White at MIT.

We were doing fine-art printing of the work. It was always really critical to me to get the best reproduction of our work. It was a tool. It was a business tool. I realized that the photo was the ambassador of the studio and whenever I had a show, they asked for a few photos. I gave 20. So they went out to 20 different papers and maybe one would hit.

It was very important, really. Ours were the best photos and we knew what they were looking for and we gave them out freely and it was very wise. A lot of people would be paying to get that done but we were doing it.

MR. SMITH: So you used it as a public relations vehicle to promote your work.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Yes. And then also I had other photographers doing the work, learned a lot from them. That was another thing. I mean, actually working with professional photographers in collaboration because they would never know the angle to put the piece at and their camera was never tilted exactly right to frame the piece because the piece always felt like it was leaning. So I would always have to say, no, no, let me frame it and let me position the piece. And they would let me do that and then they'd take it and it was simply a technical thing that they were doing. I was for the most part framing the photo.

I had a lot of collaboration with a lot of photographers, Paul Avis, Bob Ande, Tim Savard; New Hampshire photographers, really good people, even Seth Joel who's the son of Yale Joel, a Time-Life photographer, I think, and he did a piece.

So I had a lot of exposure to a lot of photographers and it was just something I kind of was working with a lot and lighting and all of that kind — under the lights. And then began doing more of it — Kathy and I began doing more of it, but I always worked with other photographers because I just couldn't do it all.

Paul Avis was just a terrific photographer. He had started as an apprentice really for me in wood and developed allergies to sawdust and then he really didn't want to photograph and I had to let him go. And 10 years later he came back and said, look, I'd like to take another shot at it. And he did that it and it was really wonderful.

[End track one.]

MR. SMITH: Continuing. This is Paul Smith conducting an interview with Mark Lindquist for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. It's taking place on August 12 in the afternoon at the artist's home and studio in Quincy, Florida. And this is [SD] recording card five.

Mark, I want to continue with your talk about your involvement with photography. I'm specifically interested in your going from traditional photography techniques and entering into the digital world and your excessive involvement with computer technology.

Along with my observing all of the tools of your woodshop, I was equally impressed with what I'd call toys you have in terms of computers, the state-of-the-art printers and all of the really very best technology to work with. So could you reflect on that?

MR. LINDQUIST: After having, you know, used photography to document artwork such as *The MacDowell Woodpiles* in 4x5, you know, and having worked with Paul Avis with 8x10 chromes, you know, transparencies, I was really spoiled with photography. That's the best kind of photography that there was, state of the art back then.

And really there was a point at which photography became digital and the cameras — for example, there was a Kodak camera that used Nikon lenses and it was 30 grand. So I was interested in continuing to work in this new realm with photography.

Actually, we had gotten our boys involved with computers. One of our clients was a researcher at IBM and he taught the kids to get working with computers early on. And we bought a Commodore Amiga and it had the capability of doing three-color scans to make color images in the computer and to do video and titling and all kinds of things. So early on, we were all experimenting with all that stuff.

Of course, then Josh went on to work at Microsoft as a software design engineer and Ben went on to form his own company. He also worked at Microsoft and all of that. That early involvement with that technology, all of us as a group, as a family, again, was very important and it turns out to be very important today.

Now, the photography — it was always a dream at that point: Could I archive — you know, sort of catalogue all the work and have a catalogue of available work? Well, it was almost within reach but not really.

Then finally some new equipment started to come along — scanners that were really pretty good. And then a great camera was the Polaroid PDC-2000 which was a digital camera that looked like a Buck Rogers spaceship and it was really fantastic. And it was a really nice little camera, digital camera.

This stuff was tremendously expensive. We're talking about \$3,500 for a camera back then. And that was not just a computer. You'd spend that much on a computer as well so by the time you're just getting rolling, you've got \$10,000 invested. It's a lot of money.

MR. SMITH: What year was that?

MR. LINDQUIST: This would have been — I'm going to say probably — sometime '88, '89, something like that.

We had gotten all the computers, like, around 1985 — the Amigas and the IBM clones and things like that.

We had a lot of connections and we were able to get software pretty cheap and things like that and trades and whatnot. So it was something we really kind of worked on. And we had kind of the technology going with the IBM Selectric before all of this stuff, Selectronic actually.

So I began this foray into digital photography and then gradually began getting better and better cameras. I ended up getting a Canon 10-D which was a really nice camera only it just didn't quite work fast enough for me.

I met a photographer [in 2005] on one of the forums — photography forums on the Internet — and this fellow's name was John McFadden and he was an assistant to a professional photographer who did all the photography for Ranger and Minnkota boats — Greg Silker. And Greg's father had been an architectural photographer and had a long-time family history of it.

And John was his assistant and he had made the conversion to digital many years before and had been really very seriously involved with it. And John's background as a sound technician, a sound engineer translated — it turned out it translated identically into the digital photography world. So he was able to take this knowledge that he had from working as a photo assistant in film and his sound background — and it just popped into digital and he was then teaching his teacher.

And I met him on this forum and I was complaining on the forum that is — I said that 10-D and this Canon lens — is this sharpness? Is this all there is? And he said, well, you know, number one, you ought to be using a Nikon and it started that and I said, he's absolutely right. Why am I not using my Nikon stuff? Well, because I got the Canon because I thought that that was going to be the thing.

Well, it turns out I had my lenses, and there are differences between Nikon and Canon and I respect both companies. I did then get a Nikon D2H which had a lot of speed and I was able to then begin experimenting and using — the way I'd use the chainsaw as a stylus to do drawing, I was able to use the camera because it was doing — the D2H was doing seven frames per second.

I always had over the years saved the ends of the roll of slides where you're winding up the film and the camera is at an odd angle and it's moved and there's some weird, funky picture. I saved all of those and I found with these cameras that you could just do that and the film was already paid — prepaid for. So I started experimenting back into really getting into motion blur and really dialing it in.

John McFadden sort of encouraged me to really figure out exactly what was happening rather than —

[End disc four.]

MR. LINDQUIST: So actually John McFadden encouraged me to dial it in, figure out exactly what was happening so I could more control this happy accident and I began doing that. He also helped to make the transition from film to digital, which was not easy. Really it turned out that it was simply you have to look at the digital image as though it is transparency film.

It's not like regular film. It has to be like slides. You have to nail your exposures. That was what was very, very important.

So then I began doing the motion-blur and dragging the camera along, hooking onto the speculars and pulling them along by moving the camera itself while the object was stationary and then I was able to take those images and then start printing them and I began printing with an Epson — well, first an HP CP1700D, which was a good little printer but it couldn't really be calibrated.

Then I started understanding color workflow and that was really very technical.

Again, John McFadden, who became studio assistant, helped me with that and once I got my teeth sunk into that and got my head wrapped around it, having to calibrate the monitors and be able to understand color space and all of that, then I was good to go and so you have a closed loop kind of system where you've got a calibrated paper, monitor, everything, cameras, all of it's in line in a carefully managed color workflow.

MR. SMITH: And once you have all of that skill in hand, you in recent times have been exploring some very interesting expressive large-scale two-dimensional works on canvas that are very interesting.

So is this a new direction for you in your work?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I've been working with Photoshop for 10 years now and it's — once I had these really wonderful images that I was being able to make using this motion-blur technique that is based on panning, I then began combining and flipping the images in Photoshop.

So I would take the actual frame that is this incredible image, shooting like five to 10 gigs just to get one image and in the perfect end-of-the-day low light in the winter outside. So these things are not easy to come by and being really very obsessive about getting the exact perfect thing in one frame, then putting them together, flipping them, and I call them quads and duals and I'm able to make these objects that then are printed on canvas.

I have a Hewlett-Packard HP3100 44-inch-wide printer that does archival printing on canvas and with, so they say, 200-year longevity inks and this one that we're looking at here is called *Conga* and the one behind us is *Ascension of the Cones*, and these things are printed on canvas and stretched and they are works of art that are a product of digital photography. People are doing all kinds of things in this realm today, printing on canvas and doing all of that, and mine are different from the standpoint that it is a process that I've worked very hard to master over a long period of time and specialized in a particular niche area.

MR. SMITH: Seeing them for the first time, one would not think that they were digital photographs.

MR. LINDQUIST: No, they're very painterly.

MR. SMITH: They're very painterly and a second impression that I get from them is the fact that aside from the meticulous technical process that you've mastered so well, that they have an amazing illusion and depth to them.

Each one of them has something that is quite masterful and it's the illusion. I think obviously an area of achievement that you're continuing to explore. Is that correct?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, it is and from your mouth to the museums' ears and collectors' ears. Actually, it is — all kidding aside — one of the reasons why there is such clarity there is because of the carefulness in managing and not defiling the image in its raw file and that is something that, again, has been John McFadden's influence.

We have been photographing together, as well, artworks and we recently did a catalog for a show of six different artists and we were hired together to go down to Miami and shoot the work.

We spent three weeks shooting it and then three weeks back here in Lindquist Studios editing all that work and it was — we really set out to raise the bar for digital photograph and in many ways some of these photographs are the product of 25 layers per photography and it's working with the lighting and photographing and bracketing in certain ways to rebuild the image in layers by using up to 50 different exposures on a single image.

It is crazy but the idea of it is that it is possible today with digital photography. And just as photographers of the past pushed their limits to try to get the best that they possibly could, that's what we're doing here and I view photographing a work of art, as an object, equally an art form as making an object in wood.

So I do see — I do see the work with photography now for me it's now going 40 years now and I'm finally getting to the point, as you mentioned, with the equipment I have, we're all a Mac studio now.

We had eight PCs throughout the studio at one point. Now we have dual-duals with 30-inch cinema displays. We have a quad-quad with cinema displays. We've got the older Macs throughout the studio that are playing the music and interspersed throughout this 15,000 square feet.

So they're never gotten rid of. They're hand-me-down and their function is to play music or Internet for research or whatever. But the idea of the technology particularly, and for example the Hewlett-Packard, it may seem extravagant but this is the first printer that has an embedded photospectrometer and it calibrates the paper, it calibrates everything and it's that whole carefully managed closed-loop workflow.

So that stuff and really working with the objects, working with them as raw photographs in Photoshop and manipulating that and then knowing how to push it without destroying, no destruction of the original file. Keeping file integrity, that's the whole point, never destroying that and then being able to push it beyond into another realm, break on through to the other side, essentially.

So that technical aspect of it, it may seem like I'm bleeding edge but only to the point where it serves my purpose to get what I want to get and getting that image out there.

I don't want to — I mean, I've been taught not to defile that image and so that's why that thing is so sharp, clear, crystal, and all of that and it is a beautiful thing to have quality equipment. I like quality equipment on every level and I'm shooting with — I still have my D2H. I've got my D2X. I've got all Nikon glass, really their best glass, and so —

MR. SMITH: I was curious as this was a family affair and your children were brought up with computers and

you've had interaction, were they a big help to you in exploring some of these new venues or did you lead the way with it?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, at one point I had a commission to do a table for the Friedlands, Jack and Annette Friedland, who were in Jupiter, Florida.

They are also in Philadelphia, or outside of Philadelphia, and they have a Richard Neutra house in Philadelphia and they have the last house that Franklin Israel did before he died and they commissioned me to do a table and I had these flitches that I had cut when I was a kid really with my big 5-foot bar Alaskan mill chainsaw.

And they were close to 4-feet wide and in an irregular pattern and I had to make a presentation and my son Ben showed me that I could take a photograph and then from an 8-by-10 actually plot the points on it and then get it into a CAD program.

So I worked very closely with them. Josh, who's at Microsoft, they're not so much in the graphic arts. Ben can do anything. Josh is more — well, although now he's working on the Halo team at Microsoft, which is one of their elite programming team, and Ben has got his own — he's the CEO of his own company now and he's been involved with a lot of companies that have really gone big.

The last one he was with Yahoo bought for \$800 million. Now, he didn't get much of that but this company maybe and I'm actually working for Ben a little bit doing some Web site work and I do design work for him and do some recording stuff and filming stuff and photography and whatever he needs. I'll help out any way I possibly can.

MR. SMITH: You're really a Renaissance person. I know the other thing that I saw while here is your very sophisticated skill at graphic work, very professional looking, the publications you've designed, the Web sites that you seem very comfortable creating, and as you told me, this is really self-taught, which is another amazing thing that you have achieved all this really professional results without a lot of formal training.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, thank you. I think that the thing of it is that you know really you have to — I have to give it to people like Kiyoshi Kanai. You look at his work and if you can only —

MR. SMITH: He was the graphic designer of *American Craft* magazine.

MR. LINDQUIST: *American Craft* magazine, you look at Kiyoshi Kanai's work and you see its clean, pure design and clean pure design, which is just simple, keep it simple, has always been what we have tried to do and Kathy has been instrumental and we've worked together on some of that and over the years I've just — I understand clean and simple is the key and so I'm glad that you say it's professional but I want it to go — I want it to transcend beyond professional and be art.

So that's problematic obviously because everything you do is — it just makes it all just crazy. But if you do have the equipment you can get there. Most people can get 75 percent pretty easy. Then if you want to go 80 percent it's a real struggle.

Now if you want to go to 90 percent, it's exponential. If you want to go to 95 percent, you're going to kill yourself and beyond that it's insanity and that's where I live is pretty much beyond killing myself and insanity.

MR. SMITH: Fabulous. I wanted to go back to your work and some things that were important in your career. We will not go into all of that but I would be interested in knowing where some of the early places that you exhibited.

You already spoke about the Metropolitan and selling at craft fairs, but things that were really pivotal in terms of your getting exposure on a national level. I'd be interested also in knowing about who was the first collector to acquire your work, that's a very specific question.

MR. LINDQUIST: Right, well you know, going to the craft fairs, I mean I do remember a collector, David Wachs, and he worked for a software design company in Princeton, New Jersey, and he became kind of a collector. He bought pieces from Fox Hollow.

There were a lot of people like that that I really didn't even think of them as collectors. At that point I wasn't thinking about collectors. I just — people appreciated the work and I was really thinking, golly, we can eat, and gradually things happened, like selling through galleries. For example, Fairtree Gallery in New York City was really important, a very special gallery there and I remember Tommy Simpson talked to the director — what was her name? I can't remember [Dora Lianis] — talked to her and I was in and a lot of work was sold there.

A whole lot of work was sold there and a lot of different collectors bought it but I didn't know who they were because it was the gallery keeping the records.

Then also another gallery at the same time, which is kind of unusual, was Julie Artisan's gallery, Julie Schafler, and she was very good and sold a lot of my big burl bowls but I never knew who they went to and then there was Florence Duhl and those were very important early galleries in New York City I think, and particularly Florence Duhl.

She was right across the back side of the Museum of Modern Art and it was a fantastic location and she did things beautifully and everything about it was just wonderful. It was as close to a fine art gallery in the medium of craft that there was at the time and I mean thinking that you get like three or four *New York Times* articles, reviews out of those shows within a couple years period, it was phenomenal, really phenomenal.

I began to wonder maybe if someone at *The New York Times* wasn't a collector. I don't know though. There was work from "The Elements" was out there. I became aware that people were collecting the work and one of the first museum shows that I had was the Greenville County Museum of Art. Actually they had bought — Edwin Rits was the director at the time. He bought a piece from me at Rhinebeck. It was a bowl and a spoon.

MR. SMITH: It was acquired for the museum?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

MR. SMITH: And was that the first museum acquisition?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes, I think it was, yes. I think that it was. Possibly the Schenectady Museum bought a piece from Mel and me together but I do remember that that was the first major museum acquisition, Greenville County, and then on the heels of it I guess was the Metropolitan Museum. Is that a good place?

And then the Renwick and it just sort of snowballed after that and whereas I used to sort of look at museums like notches in the belt or on the gun handle or whatever, now, like George and Dorothy Saxe have just given six pieces to the de Young and I don't even — I mean, it's a struggle to put it on the résumé at this point. So I guess you get to the point where those things are not as — once you have — if you don't have what you want then it's important. But if you have it then I guess it's not.

But I really do appreciate that the work, so much work is in museums where it's well-housed and taken care of.

MR. SMITH: Yes. Also the fact that a lot of your works are in collections that ultimately will be given in the future.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Well, for example the Masons, Jane and Arthur Mason, they have just — they bought a ton of work of mine and of Mel's and Fleur Bresler was another one, Fleur and Charles Bresler.

I think that there are a number of collectors that — Nathan Ancell for example, the founder and CEO of Ethan Allen was a fabulously supportive collector, literally would after the accident I brought an entire show of my totemic pieces and just a full booth, a double booth worth of work and he was a little rough and he said, how much for the whole thing.

He took his cane and he smacked it, sort of tapped it on the side, "How much is this one?" I'd tell him. Then he goes, tap, tap, "How much is that one?" and meanwhile these — you could see this calculator just going on in his head and he said, all right, I'll give you \$50,000 for the whole thing. What's your answer and I would say, uh, uh.

He turns to Kathy and he says, "Does he always take this long to make up his mind." I said, "Well, I guess I'll have to look at it and think about it."

He said, "All right, I'm coming back in a half an hour. Your answer is yes or no, understand?" So he comes back in a half an hour and he says, "What's your answer?" I say, "Uh." He says, "That's not the answer. What's the answer?" I said, "Yes," and he said, "All right, you're a very wise man." And thus this sort of thing happened and he became — we became very good friends.

As a matter of fact, because he did buy that whole booth I was able to go to Paris and take the whole family and it was a really wonderful experience.

There was a marvelous collector in Dallas, Louise Kahn, Edmund and Louise Kahn. They gave like in one year \$13 million to the symphony, \$13 million to the library, and \$13 million to the museum, Dallas museum. This is just one year and she was very supportive and bought several pieces and was a wonderful, wonderful person.

Jan and Robert Skinner up in Arrowmont, very supportive, bought a lot of work. Frances and Richard Winneg in New Hampshire, extremely supportive and many pieces and developing a relationship along with it and Robert Roth who used to own the *Chicago Reader* and he has a marvelous collection over the years.

Miriam and Alan Lubarr, Alan is a periodontist in New York City who taught at New York University and bought

many pieces early on and William Clark, he was the chief counsel for Rockwell International and he had many pieces and some of those pieces, they are given to museums.

Like he gave pieces to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and a lot of the work does end up in museums. Like for example, a very important collector to me was Helen Benjamin, Mrs. Robert M. Benjamin, and they had one of the most fantastic collections of art in New York City really. Her husband was a lawyer and he helped to get Noguchi out of internment and they had a lot of [Isamu] Noguchi work. They had [Mark] di Suvero. They had Picassos. They had Gonzales.

They had — just you name it. They had everything, I mean just everything. It was incredible and she, Helen Benjamin, lost her husband and Will Horwitt lost his wife and they were very good friends.

She was a collector of his work and so they used to get together and go all around New York to all the museums and that's what I would do too when I would go visit and we would all sort of traipse around together and then we'd go have something at the New York Deli or Carnegie Deli or wherever and, "You'll have the peas," you know.

We'd go to the Whitney. We'd go to the Guggenheim, we'd go — just made the rounds and she bought three pieces and they were recently given to Yale. So all this work somehow seems to find its way into the museums, which is very nice.

MR. SMITH: I'm curious that many of these collectors you became friends with and so that they would acquire one work and then say, well we love this so much that we would like another work.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, yes, it is a little bit. There's for example Dennis Rocheleau who was the chief of labor union relations for General Electric and he saw the show at the Renwick, recognized the name, and said, Lindquist, I knew Mel Lindquist from General Electric.

So he came to the show. Then that's how he came down here, visited, and began collecting the work and one time I had a piece that I'd done on commission and the piece turned out not to be what the person really was expecting and it was a marvelous piece.

They thought it was too heavy for their dining room table. So I said, no problem, it's no problem at all and I called Dennis and I said, Dennis, there's a piece I've just finished and it's available. Would you like it? He said, send it and that's kind of the way it's worked.

With the Masons, they've just been so supportive. They've bought work from galleries, from me directly, done a couple of commission pieces.

I have to say I don't really do well with commission work because I go way above and beyond, way too far above and beyond. I mean, nothing's ever good enough and I'm afraid it's not going to be good enough and then I sometimes get stymied and then I've had to have a studio assistant, Gary Stevens, fly out from California and sort of I'll get the hair shirt on and the flail and I'll get it done and he's there just sort of like, all right, now look all you have to do is finish it up, get out there and get going.

So commissions aren't — and although I've done many commissions, particularly in furniture, it's not a good idea.

MR. SMITH: Well, everyone has their way of working so I mean there's no formula, as we know.

But also in terms of the area of wood in general, especially wood furniture in the earlier days, beginning with [Wharton] Esherick back in the '20s, as you know a lot of it was people-to-people contact. In other words where somebody became familiar with Wharton and asked him to make something quite modest, loved it so much, came back and it continued as a relationship.

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

MR. SMITH: And I think this is somewhat characteristic of the craft field compared to the fine arts field in general where often there is a camaraderie between the maker and the acquirer because there is something about understanding and appreciating what goes into the making of the work, knowing the passion that you're involved with, that gives them more appreciation and nurtures actually the marketing, not across the board always but I think in general that has been a pattern and you certainly have done that obviously.

Also in the fact that wood turning per se, having been involved with the field I have observed how it has come into its own appreciation. As you know, there were a handful of people in the '50s who were turning something and most of it was appreciated by a very small community and that has escalated enormously into serious and focused collectors of wood art, what I expect you have benefited from. Is that correct?

MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. Well, yes, to a degree and when you consider that there were at the time of the inception of the American Association of Woodturners, at that conference there were a handful of people really practicing professionally and now there are close to 15,000 members of the American Association of Woodturners and collectors of wood art, there's a core there of people.

Beginning sort of with Bud Jacobson, Edward Jacobson, was really a very important collector and I kind of worked with him on that collection. I actually — he asked me who would be good to write an essay and I told him he should talk to Lloyd Herman and Lloyd said, no, he wouldn't do it, and then the next thing I know Bud has persuaded him to do it and he did the essay.

I also introduced Bud Jacobson to Prestini's work. Of course, Penelope Hunter Steibel introduced Prestini's work to me, handing me a piece of his at the Metropolitan, a good way to see it, a nice, thin, unbelievably elegant thing and then with Jacobson it was really an amazing thing to help him, as others did, I know David Ellsworth really helped a lot, to put that whole collection together and it was the very first time that wood had a national prominence that way.

And you know here's something really very ironic and that is that the show that Michael Monroe put together and Lloyd called "The Art of the Turned Bowl" happened to be the title of Edward Jacobson's book, *The Art of the Turned Bowl*.

It was a catchy title I think and so then the Masons saw the Jacobson collection and then I worked very closely with Arthur and Jane and if you read in the preface to the book, they say that they asked me one day what they should do and I said, keep it together and give it to a museum and have a tour and whatever you do, do incredible photography and make a wonderful book and they did and they did.

That, I have to say that those two collections really were in my mind the golden age.

MR. SMITH: Well, they were the pioneer collectors.

MR. LINDQUIST: They were the pioneer collectors but they were also the pioneer artists as well. You know, Franklin Parrasch did a show in Washington that the Masons were involved with, that they sort of sponsored. It was called "The Grand Masters of Wood Turning," and it was David Ellsworth. It was Rude Osolnik, Bob Stocksdale, Melvin Lindquist, and Mark Lindquist. No, I don't think Rude was included in that but it was just a small group of us.

And you know, I will say though that the Mason collection represents the golden age of woodturning and I think that it was wood in its purest sense at that point, where artists were more balanced with the material and the work that was being done was balanced. It was a reverence for the wood, a concern for the material, and for the forms that were married to the material and there was a dialogue between the material and the maker and it was balanced.

And I think that for the most part, after that, things began to change and particularly when — I mean, there were certain things that happened.

Again, I don't mean to be pontificating or anything but when Giles Gilson began putting paint on the wood, it sort of gave permission to a lot of people to do a lot of crazy wacky things and as Mel said, they began pasting stuff on the wood.

That's — I guess it's a good thing and there are wonderful things that have happened but to me it's more about fashion than it is about design and fashion from the standpoint that it's vogue on the outside and vague on the inside.

MR. SMITH: As we are nearing the end of this interview, I wanted to give you the opportunity if there were any people that you wanted to talk about as mentors or influences. You've already identified so many people that you've associated with, that have inspired you, or have been helpful to you in various ways.

But if there's any people that you would identify as the most influential mentors it would be interesting to hear.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I think certainly I've had a couple of — I mean, there are minor mentors and major mentors, if you will. I think that of course my father was a real major mentor and friend and all of that and partner in working on and off over the years.

My wife Kathy was a major mentor in many ways, just keeping me on the straight and narrow in so many ways and I've just such an incredible respect for her intellect and her abilities as a writer and just her eye and her integrity. She's the most ethical person I know and that has been very helpful to me.

Then of course there are many teachers that were very important to me: Marilyn Frasca, Charlie Sawyer, Darr

Collins particularly.

Darr Collins was a real mentor, a teacher, in the best sense of the word and what he gave me is really very amazing and then Will Horwitt, the sculptor from New York, really got me focused on where I should be working and that is in the realm of sculpture.

That led to the MacDowell Colony thing and so beyond that, you know, I have to say that there have been a lot of influences. There have been a lot of influences and there have been a lot of important people.

I regard you as a very important person. I regard Lloyd, I regard Penelope Hunter-Steibel as people who have made a difference in my career. Gallery people, Mike Mendelson, very important person who did a lot for me, but Robert Hobbs, a very good friend in many ways and an advisor, when he curated the show that went to the Renwick, "Revolutions in Wood" ["Mark Lindquist: Revolutions in Wood, Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1995"] and Penelope Mason who really helped me with titling my ichiboku pieces and Japanese art.

It just really goes on, associations with people, special people, they influence your life and it makes it all the richer.

MR. SMITH: You've received several awards. Were there any that were especially meaningful to you?

MR. LINDQUIST: That's a funny thing because every award I've ever gotten has been extremely meaningful and extremely gratifying and I've felt honored to receive it and sort of working backwards, most recently to be a fellow of the American Craft Council was a dream really and I never imagined — I had hoped it would happen and I felt it sort of came a little late. But I'm young yet at 60 but I'm very honored to be included in that college of fellows.

It means a great deal to me to receive the POP [Professional Outreach Program] Fellowship from the American Association of Woodturners. It was gratifying to have received the distinguished alumni award from New England College was terrific. I mean, knowing that they haven't forgotten, to have received NEA grants and fellowships, very important, but, you know, and a purchase award meant a great deal to me.

But I think one of the ones that really meant so much was the MacDowell Fellowship because it's not just something everybody does or gets and it was in the realm of art and there were many people associated with it that made it very special and the time was very special and that was an award where I got something from it and most of these other awards I've had to go to work and do things.

Like, okay, we're making you — giving you the POP Fellowship. Okay, now spend three months doing a multimedia presentation and ship it all out to Portland. You know what I mean?

So that meant sort of work, you know, rather than — I've already done the work. But I do so much appreciate it and I do also so much appreciate having the opportunity to even speak about it. I really feel that this is an honor, that is a distinguished honor and I very much appreciate this opportunity.

MR. SMITH: Since you began your career in the late 1960s, the studio craft movement has expanded and many changes have taken place. Could you briefly reflect on the past and comment on changes that you observed and talk about your impressions of the current environment?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, beginning in the late-'60s and the early '70s, through the '80s, it was a very small world and I felt that it was a contained world where there were ground rules.

There were institutions that had directors who pointed those programs in an academic manner that was extremely significant and there were ground rules. You had to accomplish something to be recognized and if you worked hard, it was good but you had to also work hard and also be doing something.

I do have the feeling today that it's a very large world and I also feel that there are — you have to remember that from the period of, say, the mid-'60s to the '80s, there weren't that many people doing work because the programs hadn't developed into the schools and so many workshops and all that kind of stuff. I mean, remember, I'd started the program at Arrowmont in 1980. So that's sort of when things — and 1979 or '78 and there I am at Worcester.

There's the Boston Museum program of artisanry. Things are starting really to kind of hit and that means people are becoming educated formally in the realm of craft specifically, not just fine art or art history or whatever and there are workshops happening and everything going on and people really began attending one-week workshops.

Then going out and running their business and that's not spending three years doing an apprenticeship sweeping the floor and getting up at 5:00 in the morning and making sure all the stuff is laid out and staying up

until 3:00 in the morning firing the kiln for three years or working in the woods with your father growing up the whole way.

I mean it's like go to a workshop and then start selling and your patterns are already there. You just copy what's out there and then sell it.

MR. SMITH: Do you think this is market-driven?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, market-driven is an understatement. I think that the way that people put work out there — these things now are lures.

They're lures and collectors are consumers and often when you talk to a collector these days it's how many pieces do you have and when someone, a collector never says that and discusses that they only have a few pieces and they tell me what they are and they're very special. Then I pay attention.

I'm somewhat disappointed that money trumps content today, that if a collector has the money to build a wing on a museum, that whatever work that is in that collection, which is very uneven, is automatically included and much of it being derivative work or very poor quality.

It's very disappointing that a museum would degrade to the state that they accept the money over the quality of the art and the history of it and the historicity of it, for that matter.

That's what's changed in my mind and what's changed too is that there are certain collectors out there that have a corporate predatory practice, if you will, where they are manipulating the market on many different levels, playing this game. It's just that artists can ill-afford to play that game and it's very saddening to see many artists being taken advantage of.

I'm very fortunate because I just simply go my own way. I mean, I've made enough, everything is paid for, and the work is selling for a lot of money and that's partly my way of guarding of where the work goes. If they want it, they have to pay for it and of course I hurt myself in that way but at least it's some way for me to maintain integrity and some control.

I mean, look at Clyfford Still. I mean, you had to go through a background financial check before you could even apply to get one of his pieces and I've thought about it myself. It seems that so much work is derivative today and there are so many doing it that I'm concerned. I'm concerned about it because it pollutes and it dilutes.

MR. SMITH: Of course there are exceptions.

MR. LINDQUIST: Absolutely exceptions. There are absolutely exceptions and these people are the true patron saints and for them that's what it's all about really and I think that that's the beauty of it and I don't mean that it's all that way. I just see a pattern developing and of course throughout history one can look and see that money talks and that's the way it is, you know.

So I'm not in any way saying sour grapes because I'm so happy with where all my work is and all of that. I'm just concerned about the future. If we have so many people doing all the same thing, then where does it go and I also see that there are only a few patternmakers. They make the — they make their patterns and then everyone copies it.

[End track one.]

MR. SMITH: This is Paul Smith interviewing Mark Lindquist for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This is the last recording session that's taking place in Mark's home and studio in Quincy, Florida, in the afternoon of August 12.

A final question I would like to ask you, Mark, as we've covered so much area about your fascinating and impressive career is what new projects you are exploring, what are some of your dreams, and things that you are excited about for tomorrow?

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, I have a lot of things that I'm working on. There are some immediate things that are happening.

There's a project coming up where there's a burl tree in Georgia that looks like there's going to be a major project coming from it from a foundation and it's very exciting because there's a fifth-generation sawyer that I've made contact with in Blakely — I mean, in Iron City, Georgia and I'm really hoping that this project will become something really special.

I'm working with Ken Browne, the videographer, in New York City on several different things and I'm hoping to

continue working with Ken. I really enjoy working with him and he's been sort of documenting a lot of things lately.

I'm looking forward to continuing to work with John McFadden on photography projects, of photographing fine art, photographing objects as fine art, and I'm also very interested in pursuing my work of the motion-blur photography printed on canvas and possibly sandwiched between glass, some things that I've been exploring.

And you know, there are many things that I feel at this point are unfinished. For example, the studio needs finishing.

I would literally like to finish the renovations if possible and I'd very much like to build a few different machines that I have in mind that will make new work and I would really like to — I would really like to explore what work I might want to do by going back and revisiting some series that I started as a student and never really continued with.

Like I'd like to work a little bit more in steel or in metals, let's put it this way, in metals, and possibly in combination and I've also wanted to find out some way that it can all come together, the photography, the wood, the metal, everything all coming together in one thing.

I've had in mind also what I see as sort of unfinished business. I have an awful lot of archival material that I would like to put together in sort of a codex, Da Vinci kind of codex book. I mean, I have technical drawings and things of my secret robotic stuff, machines that I've designed and built.

I'd like to photograph that stuff, possibly look at those machines as being exhibited or cataloged or something like that at some point, maybe revisit some of those machines, some of those ideas, things like that.

So yet on the other hand I'm so intrigued by the photography. I don't know. That may go that way instead rather than focusing on the wood. Put the camera in its place and start using robotics photographically or something like that.

So I'm not sure which way that's really going. I'm very interested in what my sons are both doing in their careers and kind of maybe helping them the way my father helped me somewhat, although really they are so much more financially better off than I'll ever hope to be.

So I think I'm just always looking for the unmet friend and that would be a collector person who sees what I'm doing, that believes in what I'm doing and gets behind me and just sort of, again, commenting on collectors, if I may, there was a time in my life where there were collectors who sort of really invested in an artist and it seems now that they're investing in objects rather than in artist and there's a big difference.

If you're behind an artist, it makes an entirely different — a difference to their career, involves them developing work in a nurturing environment and otherwise it's very difficult to survive.

So I've had to over the years do certain things, like, well, photography in one sense allowed me to make some money and real estate, a little bit of real estate and web design and things like that.

When things got a little tough you'd just have to do something else and lord knows we've had some ups and downs with the economy in this country for sure. So I've also wondered what I'm going to do with all this place here. Does this become a foundation? Does it become a museum? Does it become whatever?

So that's weighing heavily on me now with potentially 500 pieces here or more between Mel and mine and there would be thousands of photographs, literally thousands and thousands.

So that is a concern. What happens with all of that and how do you set that up because I've seen so many, like the [James] Prestini Foundation started and then it just folded and I saw Nathan Ansell who really was interested in doing a museum and he never did.

So that's something to be concerned with and sort of in the near-term I'm getting involved a little more in the local community and doing a show here coming up and I'm exploring the work in ways that I'm comfortable with right now and the main thing is I think to also then begin kind of focusing a little bit more on health.

After having had a heart attack after that big show in Chicago, again, slowing the pace a little bit and learning what pace is because in my mind I don't feel that I'm doing anything. I'm not doing enough. I'm just not working hard enough.

Yet other people are amazed at what all I'm doing. But it just — what it is, is it's 40 years of doing the same thing. It accumulates, you know, and it just looks like a lot.

MR. SMITH: Well, Mark, that's an understatement. For me, as you know I've known you for many years and exhibited your work but this is really my first visit to your studio. It's been a very privileged opportunity to understand so much more about the breadth of your development.

I think most people do not realize all the different things that you have been involved with and your obsession to do things so well.

I mean, it is really a tribute to your standards of professionalism. So I think that I'm just expressing that I want to thank you and secondly to say that it's been a learning opportunity and it's also been really an inspiration to see all of this activity that you are involved with and expect you're going to just continue at a great pace to expand what you've already been doing and will continue to do.

So thank you.

MR. LINDQUIST: Well, if I may Paul, I want to thank you too for coming all the way down here from New York and again, all these years for being so supportive of my work and it is very meaningful to have you here to do this interview because you were there when I was a kid struggling along and I think that this program is a wonderful program and I'm thrilled that you were able to come all the way down here.

It means a great deal to me that you were here to do this and I appreciate being a part of this program.

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you, and on behalf of the Archives of American Art, because it is their program that has made this possible and is continuing to document individuals' careers and the art field in general. It is really important for future scholars and curators.

MR. LINDQUIST: And I'm looking forward to getting our papers and photographs and all of that in order for the Archives of American Art. And, again, that's a privilege as well.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]