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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Jerre Murry, 1965
Apr. 8

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Jerre Murry on April 8, 1965. The interview took place in Los Angeles, CA, and was conducted by Betty Lochrie Hoag for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

The poor sound quality of this interview, particularly in the second half, leads to an abnormally high number of inaudible and cross talk sections in this interview.

Interview

BETTY HOAG: The voice of Mrs. Murry appears in the background in some of this tape. She was a model at the Arts Students League to some of the great artists of the time, and some of the things she says are quite interesting.

[Cross talk.]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER [MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY?]: —or was it after [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: This was where—[inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER [MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY?]: Do you remember—

[Cross talk.]

[Side conversation.]

JERRE MURRY: This is when I was there. [Inaudible.] Is the tape on?

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER [MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY?]: [Inaudible] in LA [inaudible].

[Cross talk.]

[Side conversation.]

[Laughter.]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER [MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY?]: I didn't remember at all. [inaudible] I don't know where this was taken.

BETTY HOAG: This is Betty Lochrie Hoag on April the 8th, 1965, interviewing the artist, Jerry Murry, and that's spelled J-e-r-r-y—

JERRE MURRY: E.

BETTY HOAG: J-e-r-r-e-y.

JERRE MURRY: No, just J-e-r-r-e.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, thank you. I've seen it so many ways I didn't know which one to pick out. And the Murry is M-u-r-r-y?

JERRE MURRY: Right. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG: In his home in Los Angeles. Mr. Murry was on the project in Los Angeles and later with, I believe, in Idaho—we'll find out—and was in—

JERRE MURRY: Washington.

BETTY HOAG: —in Spokane, Washington.

JERRE MURRY: Spokane.

BETTY HOAG: And before I start asking you about the project, which is what I'm here for, Mr. Murry, I'd like to ask you a little about your life, where you were born and when.

JERRE MURRY: I was born in Columbia, Missouri in 1904.

BETTY HOAG: And did you go to school there?

JERRE MURRY: I went for about two years at the university.

BETTY HOAG: Were you taking art courses?

JERRE MURRY: No, just arts and science.

BETTY HOAG: Okay. And did you go to an art school at all. or—?

JERRE MURRY: I went to Detroit Academy in Detroit. Let's see when I was about 24 years old I went two or three years and—

BETTY HOAG: That would be about 1930?

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative], '29.

BETTY HOAG: Just before the project

JERRE MURRY: I think about '29.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. 29. Well, before the federal art project started, then, you probably hadn't done any work at all. You'd been in school up until that time.

JERRE MURRY: Yes, up until then.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: I was down in Texas at the—at the flying cadet school for a while.

BETTY HOAG: How did you get to Los Angeles?

JERRE MURRY: Well, I—you mean how did—

BETTY HOAG: How did you happen to be

JERRE MURRY: —I travel or—

BETTY HOAG: No, how did you happen to be here?

[Recorder stops. Restarts.]

BETTY HOAG: —wasn't working. It went off on the last one. I don't know if it's the tape or my machine. This Betty Lochrie Hoag on April the 8th, 1965, interviewing the artist, Jerre Murry, in his home in Los Angeles. When our tape ran out the last time, Mr. Murry, you were telling me about your schooling, that you had been to the Detroit Academy in 1929 and for several years. And then that you joined the flying cadet school in Texas. And then I ask you how happened to come to Los Angeles.

JERRE MURRY: Well, I had been out here—this was my third trip out and I liked it out here and decided to come back.

BETTY HOAG: Because of the painting you liked it or just—

JERRE MURRY: Well, I liked everything about it—

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: —compared to back east for a change.

BETTY HOAG: What did you do when you got out here? Were you just freelance painting or—

JERRE MURRY: Well, the last time I came out I got on the project fairly soon—

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: —and started painting pictures for easel paintings.

BETTY HOAG: This was—you were here at the times of both Mr. [Stanton Macdonald-]Wright and Mr. [Lorser] Feitelson being in charge, weren't you?

JERRE MURRY: I have a feeling that I got on a little before Mr. Wright—

BETTY HOAG: Mmm-hmm [affirmative].-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: —but I can't be sure about that. There was somebody else in charge at one time, I think before Mr. Wright, but I might be mistaken about that. But soon afterwards, Mr. Wright took over.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. How did this work on the easel project? Did you do things at home, or did you have to be down the center for it?

JERRE MURRY: Well, I was lucky in that respect. They let me paint at home and bring my pictures in to the—

BETTY HOAG: You had to bring in one a month, didn't you? Wasn't that—

JERRE MURRY: Just about. But I brought just about one a week [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Oh, really?

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG: Were these all oils?

JERRE MURRY: All oils, yes.

BETTY HOAG: Because I know in one—

JERRE MURRY: It was wonderful because they furnished the paints and canvas, even linen canvas. Most of the supplies they furnished.

BETTY HOAG: Did you have your choice of kinds of paints or—

JERRE MURRY: Yes. Oh, the paints, well, yes. And you also had your choice of subject matter, which was wonderful. You could paint just what you want. I think I was lucky in that respect because Mr. Wright, he encouraged me to paint just what I felt like doing.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Were you doing many landscapes around here at that time?

JERRE MURRY: No. I went in more for just more or less imaginary things, paying more attention to the composition and the mood of the picture rather than subject matter and too much realism.

BETTY HOAG: I noticed one of the Los Angeles Museum catalogs in 1939 had three of your oils in it, "Dancer", and a reproduction of a portrait, which was a girl at a table with a lemon, and an interior. Do you remember any of those?

JERRE MURRY: I think I have a—I remember—I probably have the photographs.

BERRY HOAG: Good.

JERRE MURRY: I have quite a few of my photographs. I must have about maybe 75—50 —75 photographs.

BETTY HOAG: Did they—did the federal arts project give you copies of photographs here? In San Francisco, they gave all the artists their own photograph of things. I haven't found anyone here who—

JERRE MURRY: Usually they did.

BETTY HOAG: Did they?

JERRE MURRY: Yes.

BETTY HOAG: I haven't talked to very many easel artists.

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. There was another fellow on the project, Victor Proboscic [ph], who used to take some photographs of my paintings.

BETTY HOAG: Incidentally, I'm trying to find him. He's around someplace. You don't happen to know, do you?

JERRE MURRY: I haven't seen him for years and years, maybe 15 or 20 years.

BETTY HOAG: The latest I heard that Merle Armitage [ph] would know. Of course, he's out in the desert someplace.

JERRE HOAG: He probably would.

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible.]

JERRE MURRY: He was a very fine photographer.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: He might be in the book. Am I allowed to speak?

BETTY HOAG: Oh yes, of course

[Laughter.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Well, I didn't know. He might be in the book.

JERRE MURRY: Have you looked in the book for him?

BETTY HOAG: In the phone book? Yes.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: The phone book's been chopped up, so [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: There's many different areas.

JERRE MURRY: A lot of these paintings that I did were mostly experiments. I didn't paint the same style all the time. I kept changing.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: I was criticized for that, too.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Jerr, why don't you tell her when you went native. I think that would be interesting to know.

BETTY HOAG: When he went native?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: When he did a Gauguin in the Bahamas [laughs].

JERRE MURRY: Well, that was before I came out here. I just went down to the Bahamas on an island down there, Eleuthera, and stayed for about six months and did some painting down there.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible] make it interesting.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: I've got a reproduction of one of those. In 1937, Stendhal [ph] showed your [inaudible]—

JERRE MURRY: Oh yeah.

BETTY HOAG: —and it was reproduced in a magazine. That was an interesting—and it was reproduced in a magazine. That was an interesting—

JERRE MURRY: It was reproduced in the New York World's Fair. I have that one here. Well, no, this isn't much to tell about because it's far from being as exotic as Tahiti or anything like that

BETTY HOAG: [Laughs.] Sounds exotic to me. Look at the rain outside.

MS. MARIA: [Inaudible]so hot that the natives [inaudible]. I think it's interesting.

JERRE MURRY: Then a cyclone came and blew the little hut away—

[Laughter.]

JERRE MURRY: —and that's when I came home soon after.

[Laughter.]

BETTY HOAG: How did you happen to go there in the first place?

JERRE MURRY: I really don't know. Just kind of a wild idea.

BETTY HOAG: Wanderlust?

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm.

BETTY HOAG: Was that before or after the flying cadet school?

JERRE MURRY: Oh, that was much later. I was down there when I was about 20—21.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: But you went there to paint and you did paint the time you were there.

JERRE MURRY: Yeah. [Inaudible.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

BETTY HOAG: I hope that you have some of those that I can see, paintings from that period.

JERRE MURRY: Oh, no, I don't. I didn't have any photographs of those. No—no.

BETTY HOAG: Well, at the same time, that is 1939, these still lifes from "The Dancer" were in the show at the Los Angeles County Museum. They said they spoke of something that was a modernistic panel design, an architectural design for mosaic, broken horizontal and vertical grout glazed tile. And I wondered what that was all about. Do you remember?

JERRE MURRY: I think one of them was named—titled "Sunbathers." Did you see the—

BETTY HOAG: I didn't see that, no.

JERRE MURRY: That was over at Art Center School for quite a few years. Mr. Wright had two of those made into mosaics using the paintings that I had made as a design for them. I have those photographs.

BETTY HOAG: Good. Were they installed in the school?

JERRE MURRY: They were at the Art Center School there on Wilshire.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: It was at the Otis Art Center.

JERRE MURRY: —and then they—

[Cross talk.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: It was the Otis

JERRE MURRY: Yeah, it was Otis. And then they offered them to me, but I didn't have any—when they were changing their setup and doing some building. But I didn't have any place for them, so I don't know what happened to them. Another great loss.

BETTY HOAG: Well, we'll have to ask down there. Maybe they're still using them someplace.

JERRE MURRY: I think they gave them to somebody, but I don't know who.

BETTY HOAG: You know, right now the federal government is trying to track down all these things that disappeared[inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Oh, really?

BETTY HOAG: The new art consultant to the President [Johnson], I think his name is [Roger L.] Stevens [Special Assistant to the President on the Arts], has a big project underway, and they're finding all kinds of very important works that have been hidden away in closets and were given to people. It shouldn't have been because paintings, for instance, were sold for five dollars and didn't belong to any tax supported institution for a period of 99 years is the way these things were supposed to be [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Oh, they were sold for five dollars?

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I don't know about mosaic works of sculptures. I suppose they were more. But some of the artists have told me that lithographs went for about twenty-five or thirty cents.

JERRE MURRY: No kidding.

BETTY HOAG: Did you—

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Some good artists have come out of the project—

BETTY HOAG: Oh, yes.

MS MARIE: —that have become—

[Cross talk.]

JERRE MURRY: Wasn't Pollock on the project?

BETTY HOAG: They have unearthed some of you.

[Cross talk.]

JERRE MURRY: That's what I thought.

BETTY HOAG: And who?

JERRE MURRY: Rothko.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Rothko.

BETTY HOAG: Rothko? I didn't know that.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: There were quite a few.

JERRE MURRY: Was Tobey, Mark Tobey ever on the project?

BETTY HOAG: I don't know if he was on the project or not. I would imagine he was.

JERRE MURRY: Those are—those are the two that I—I like very much. I'm not too familiar with the very latest trends now, but I always liked Pollock because he was so original. And I liked Tobi because he was so mystical. And I liked Tobi because he was so mystical.

BETTY HOAG: Yes.

JERRE MURRY: He was over in China [inaudible] for a long time, calligraphy.

BETTY HOAG: I wrote a paper on him once and so learned quite a bit about him. And then one of my artists has a tape that was made with him in her home at a party in Paris before he was important here. And she's offered to loan or give it to the Archives a copy of it. And we made the copy but we have to get his permission. And I've been in correspondence with him in Switzerland and then in Seattle and then in Oakland and back in Switzerland trying to get this thing caught up with him. I have a transcription of it and every time it gets mailed to him, he's moved on someplace. Switzerland trying to get this thing caught up with him. I have a transcription of it and every time it gets mailed to him, he's moved on someplace.

[Laughter.]

BETTY HOAG: But awfully nice—

JERRE MURRY: He travels around a lot still?

BETTY HOAG: He seems to, yes. And I was surprised; she says he's a very big, heavy man. And I'd always thought of him as being small because of his paintings.

JERRE MURRY: Is that so? I always—yes—I did, too. I always thought he was—

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Well, I knew Jackson Pollock years ago at the Arts Students League in New York when he studied with [Thomas Hart] Benton—[inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Oh, you did?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: —and he was just a shy young man. He doesn't look like his paintings, tall, if you know what I mean. Some of the stories can't be told but—

[Laughter.]

BETTY HOAG: Well, if there are any of them that can, I wish you would because these are the things—I mean the reason we're doing this is all these things that does never get written down that are interesting and important.

Are you sure you can't remember anything?

JERRE MURRY: Well, he was rather rambunctious.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Well, I can but I don't think it ought to go—should go down in history.

JERRE MURRY: Well, that would be art history's problem.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Well, his wife is still alive and, I don't know. [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: Well, if it's anything—

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Well, I mean, nothing terrible, no. Nothing worse than reading about other artists' lives. I think what impressed me most was the fact that he was very shy. And then seeing him come out with these huge paintings and—

BETTY HOAG: Was he doing any Egypt paintings at that time?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: He was still a student. He was studying with Benton at the Arts Students League and was quite good there, and we knew each other. I don't think he was the one that would have been written up in the class voted most likely to succeed at the time, no.

[Laughter.]

MS MARIE: You never can tell.

BETTY HOAG: I just recently interviewed a man down in Laguna Beach who's 80 years old who was his first art teacher. Telegians [ph], do you know his work? [ph], do you know his work?

[Cross talk.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Oh, Telegians. I knew a Telegian years ago. That Armenian fellow. Did you ever meet him Jerre? Is he still around?

JERRE MURRY: I don't remember.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, did you? Right, [inaudible] friend. And he's painting the most beautiful things. Extremely academic. Yeah, over in Woodland Fields.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Oh, I'll be darned.

BETTY HOAG: And he doesn't show and he just paints and invents things. He's invented the first electric easel, and several of the artists have them. It's quite a gadget. It's quite a gadget.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: That's very interesting.

JERRE MURRY: Was he on the project?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: No. I met Telegian in New York. I guess—I don't know whether he was doing [inaudible]. I suppose so. [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: He did and he was on the New York project. That's why I interviewed him.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Oh, was he? I know he was out for a while. I don't know how long. You know, this goes back very many years, over 30 years. They were all starting together, you know. It was quite a hoot.

Did you—I know about Guy McCoy. Have you—

BETTY HOAG: I have written to him and haven't heard from him yet. I'm hoping.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: He was in the crowd there.

JERRE MURRY: And James Redmond. He did that cat. He was killed during the war.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, I know.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: He was on the project.

BETTY HOAG: That's a beautiful one. Mr. Stevens has one of his cats. And I cut up one of the—a reprint in the newspaper of one of his cats about 30 years ago. It was reproduced and just loved it. And I've had that thing all this time and didn't have any idea who he was. I think he must have been a very—

JERRE MURRY: By the way, have you seen Bob Bogue?

BETTY HOAG: No. The last I heard he was still in France. Is he back do you know?

JERRE MURRY: He's back.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, good. Is he in Redondo Beach still?

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Same as—no, not the same address. Mary Craig, or some [inaudible]. What is this?

BETTY HOAG: Very nice.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: You know, his wife's name is Betty, and that's Betty Bogue and you're Betty Hoag.

BETTY HOAG: I have her name anyway, and I thought it would be interesting to talk to her because she had modeled for so many of the murals here. And—

JERRE MURRY: What was her last name?

BETTY HOAG: I would have to look it up in my files. There's too many names to remember all of them.

JERRE MURRY: Yes.

BETTY HOAG: She wanted to be an artist herself and Bucky McGarrum got her started. And she did so well, she ended up an artist in the Oakland project—.. And she did so well, she ended up an artist in the Oakland project.

JERRE MURRY: Is that so?

BETTY HOAG: —and did some of the murals.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: She had never done any [inaudible]. She had never done anything before.

JERRE MURRY: I knew a Mary Craig and another Mary but I didn't think they were models.

BETTY HOAG: Well, she may have been, you know, the very early of part of that when this happened.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: I didn't know they had models down at—models, Jerre, professional models?

BETTY HOAG: They had one on the payroll.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Oh, is that so? [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: That was for the Sender [ph]. And I think she was used by—kind of loaned out on different groups where they were working—the Stendhal all west show had a lot of your things and they mentioned that you worked in oils, watercolors and lithography. Is this correct?

JERRE MURRY: Yes, I did. I worked in those mediums.

BETTY HOAG: Did you do any of those for the project?

JERRE MURRY: Mostly oils. Just a couple of the lithographs. I don't know where they are. I might have a photograph, but—. I might have a photograph.

BETTY HOAG: Were you in that lithography group at the Sender [ph] that was so much fun? Everyone's told me —

[Cross talk.]

JERRE MURRY: I was for just a couple of weeks. They wanted me to make one or two so I did—

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY:—but then I went back to easel pictures. They wanted me to make one or two so I did, but then I went back to easel pictures.

BETTY HOAG: And I presume that this was about this time that you did a mural for the Water and Power Building or was that after the project?

JERRE MURRY: Yes. No, that was—I must have the date, but it was towards the first couple of years that I was—that I did that.

BETTY HOAG: But it wasn't done for the project probably, was it?

JERRE MURRY: Yes—

BETTY HOAG: Oh.

JERRE MURRY: —it was done through the project, yes.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, good. Well, I have the address. I'll get that on the tape. Then I'd love to have you tell me about it. It was at 205 South Broadway in that building that's been destroyed.

JERRE MURRY: Water and Power. Yes, it's been destroyed. And Charles Menar [ph], who was—who contracted for the project, called me up about a year ago and wanted to know where he could find it, but I don't know where he could find it. He wanted to have it put back up there I think in the new building—

BETTY HOAG: Yes.

JERRE MURRY: —but I don't know what happened to it., who contracted for the project, called me up about a year ago and wanted to know where he could find it, but I don't know where he could find it. He wanted to have it put back up there I think in the new building, but I don't know what happened to it.

BETTY HOAG: Donald [inaudible] told me that and said he told you—

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG: —and that he thought maybe they would want you to do another one for the new building. And I was hoping that—

JERRE MURRY: No, I haven't heard anything.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: May I make a suggestion, Betty?

BETTY HOAG: Yes.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: I wonder if Betty looked through your scrapbook—

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: —she might have some idea of what you'd like to ask him.

BETTY HOAG: That's a good idea. Why don't I finish the questions I have and then look and then we'll tape some more. That will give the machine a rest, too. It's a good idea because you miss a lot not having those.. It's a good idea because you miss a lot not having those.

I know only what the subject was, Aquabene—I can't—it's Spanish.

JERRE MURRY: Aquabene [inaudible] I think.

BETTY HOAG: Blessed waters?

JERRE MURRY: Yes.

BETTY HOAG: What was it about?

JERRE MURRY: Well, it's kind of hard to say. It was kind of a symbolic interpretation of what the title implies,—

BETTY HOAG: A missionary?

JERRE MURRY: —the blessedness of the water when it was needed, you know, and what it did in the way of running power.

BETTY HOAG: Well, it wasn't a historical picture, the blessing of the waters, then?

JERRE MURRY: Oh no.

BETTY HOAG: I supposed it was a padre blessing them.

JERRE MURRY: No. It just had symbolical figures you know playing [inaudible] a waterfall. If you can see—if you see the photograph, you'll get an idea. It's nothing very concise about depicting any particular event. Nothing that's very concise about depicting any particular event.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. It was an oil on canvas, 6 by 10 feet three I believe.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Did you do that in the old studio and [inaudible]?

JERRE MURRY: Yes, I did it in the old studio. I had a fairly good-sized studio.

BETTY HOAG: Did you have any help with that [inaudible]?

JERRE MURRY: No. No, I didn't. I did it all and gave them a sketch for [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: It's certain a great compliment to you that they called you and wanted to find it again for the new building. It's certain a great compliment to you that they called you and wanted to find it again for the new building.

JERRE MURRY: Well, yes, in a way. He happened to like it. Frankly, some of the others didn't [inaudible], didn't care for it. It was in some very bright color [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Was it quite abstract?

JERRE MURRY: Not really.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-Hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: It was sort of—they might have considered it to be semi abstract or [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Probably for that time it was abstract and now wouldn't be.

JERRE MURRY: Probably.

BETTY HOAG: And then I didn't understand Mr. Cotton whether you helped [inaudible] murals or whether that was—

JERRE MURRY: No, I had nothing to do with that.

BETTY HOAG: Oh. That was in Grant's pool, the one that he did that also disappeared.

JERRE MURRY: Oh, did Don Cotton do that?

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: No, I didn't do anything on that.

BETTY HOAG: I didn't know whether you did or you hadn't because he was talking about you right after.

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG: I think Jimmy Redmond helped him. [Inaudible] Bakersfield. [Inaudible.] I don't know.

JERRE MURRY: Well, now wait a minute, Don and I did work on another mural that was kind of a western scene —

BETTY HOAG: Oh.

JERRE MURRY: —covered wagons and pioneers. It was quite a—quite a good-sized mural. We worked on that at the project. mural. We worked on that at the project. We worked on that at the project.

BETTY HOAG: That wasn't [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Sounds like it might be that one. [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Oh, now he mentioned the fact that you had [inaudible] in Boise, Idaho [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I'm pretty sure that [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: He didn't tell me that [inaudible]. He said to ask you about it.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: I just wondered why [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Well, I don't know. It might be that he [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Did you go [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible] that's why.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible.]

[Several minutes of inaudible material due to poor sound quality. Recorder stops, restarts.]Recorder stops, restarts.]

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible] Jerre. This is Betty Lochrie Hoag, interviewing Jerre Murry, on April 8th, 1965. Part Three.

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

BETTY HOAG: Now, I didn't hear a word you said. Can we start all over? I want to get it on the tape.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: What were we talking about?

JERRE MURRY: We were talking about Donny?

BETTY HOAG: Yes, Mm-hmm [affirmative]. You said that you went—you roomed with him here or something.—you roomed with him here.

JERRE MURRY: Yes. We had a studio and lived together for maybe a year. I always thought he was a very fine painter. Very nice gent.

BETTY HOAG: Well, the reproductions of things certainly look like he was.

JERRE MURRY: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BETTY HOAG: And then how did they—how did they pronounce his sister's name? Mine? Or Minnay [ph]?And then how did they pronounce his sister's name, or Mine?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Is it Minnie? Minnie

BETTY HOAG: It's spelled M-i-n-e with an accent on that e.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: She was on TV quite recently. Unfortunately, you missed it.

BETTY HOAG: Oh.

MS MARIE: What was the program? I don't know what they were going through, which museum it was in New York. Or—anyway, that won't tell you. I don't remember but she was on. We didn't know her. We knew Donnie quite well.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: He was very quiet and very shy and—I think what—one of the things that amused me was the way he—someone had taught him a lot of naughty words in Yiddish which—

BETTY HOAG: [Laughs.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: —he would say in a Japanese accent, you know, and it was quite funny. — someone had taught him a lot of naughty words in Yiddish which he would say in a Japanese accent, you know, and it was quite funny.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, it must have been.

[Laughter.]

BETTY HOAG: Well, Mr. Murry, did you work on any other murals for the project at all? Well, Mr. Murry, did you work on any other murals for the project at all?

JERRE MURRY: No. That's all. That's all I did. That's all I did.

BETTY HOAG: And then I know that you were sent up to Spokane. Were you in charge of the arts center there or just teaching?

JERRE MURRY: Well, I was—I was the Director.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: Mr. Wright got up there through him, through the [inaudible] up there. And it was because of his recommendation I'd say that I got on there.

BETTY HOAG: And you said it was 1942 when you went up?

JERRE MURRY: I believe it was. I happen to have it there in a clipping. I happen to have it there.

BETTY HOAG: Oh, good. That was a—really quite a terrific center. I thought it was perfectly amazing the different classes they had for the public.

JERRE MURRY: Yes, it was a great deal [inaudible] painting up there in the center. They were all very active. It was a very fine building.

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: I remember they had learning to make [inaudible]—.

JERRE MURRY: Yes.

BETTY HOAG: —[Inaudible]. And then a model. And one of your instructors married that beautiful model. I'm trying to think of the name of that fellow who was teaching. I'm trying to think of the name of that fellow who was teaching.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible.] Those are nice photographs. Do you remember how many teachers there were in the center? Do you remember how many teachers there were in the center?

JERRE MURRY: All together—let's see. Do you remember how many teachers there were? Do you remember how many teachers there were?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: At Spokane?

JERRE MURRY: Yes. [Inaudible.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Something like that, between 6 and 8 teachers. [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: They had live drawings.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible] drawings and then still life and once in a while models they'd use. [Inaudible.] More still life I believe [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Did they have any jewelry classes, too?

JERRE MURRY: I'm not sure but I don't believe so. I don't believe so.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: I'd forgotten about that.

[Cross talk.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible]. It was a beautiful [inaudible]. Is it still there, do you know?

BETTY HOAG: I don't know. I haven't been back for years.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: How did they get that building I wonder? How did they get that building I wonder?

JERRE MURRY: I don't know too much about that. But some of the businessmen were very interested in [inaudible]. They might have taken an interest. [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible] our article [inaudible] for many years. I think many people in Spokane [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG: I remember the [inaudible] were asking [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Yes, I remember [inaudible] Jenn's mother and father.

BETTY HOAG: No.

JERRE MURRY: Oh?

BETTY HOAG: She was his friend.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible] a blond girl who was quite unhappy because [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: The one that had the cats?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Oh, no [inaudible]. Her father was [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible.]

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible.]

BETTY HOAG: She was an only child?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Yes. [Inaudible] to their expectations. [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Something [inaudible].

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Yes. [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: My husband always wanted to [inaudible]. He had, among other things, he had radio all fixed [inaudible] come on certain stations at certain times of the day where he was going to be [inaudible].

[Cross talk.]

BETTY HOAG: Another person I wanted to ask if you knew [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I don't remember the name.

BETTY HOAG: She did a lot of [inaudible] paintings which were around in that area [inaudible]. There were a lot of [inaudible] drawings, and I didn't know if [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: How long were you with the project?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: You mean in Spokane?

BETTY HOAG: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JERRE MURRY: Oh, up there? [Inaudible]. Something like that.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I can't think of any other that [inaudible].

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: There was a Jane up there who was [inaudible] and her husband worked in the [inaudible] up there.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Diana Mollot is the only one [inaudible]. Did you leave because of the war coming along or did the whole thing—

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: The war had already started. [Inaudible] 1942. But it was getting worse [inaudible]. I mean [inaudible] cut off. I mean it could have been very easily, you know [inaudible] railroad running out or something like that. My family was getting [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: It's continued [inaudible].

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

JERRE MURRY: —don't have any [inaudible] at all it sounds like.

BETTY HOAG: I think it's because of that whine, too, it doesn't sound like it. I just noticed while I was looking through your scrapbook a couple of things you didn't tell me before you were in Los Angeles about, working for *The Detroit Times* and *Freed Press*.

JERRE MURRY: Oh, yes, that's when I was going to art school. I did some portraits that were bad. They're very bad.

BETTY HOAG: Were these for the society section of the paper?

JERRE MURRY: Yes.

BETTY HOAG: I don't think they were bad.

JERRE MURRY: They are supposed to be fairly prominent people, I think.

BETTY HOAG: Another thing says is that you taught at Stevens College. Isn't that that art school on [inaudible]?

JERRE MURRY: Well—yes. That's in my hometown, Stevens College..

BETTY HOAG: I see. Have you done any—

JERRE MURRY: First Director at Stevens College. It was just—

BETTY HOAG: Since the project was over, you came back to Los Angeles [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I'm teaching—I have two or three private classes out at [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I'm surprised that Don didn't have me [inaudible] because he—

BETTY HOAG: He didn't have—he had his son doing—[inaudible] and ask him to go through this again because I knew he [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I got [inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Is there anything else you can think to tell us about the project [inaudible]?

JERRE MURRY: I really can't except that we all thought it was wonderful [inaudible]. I can't—I'm not very good at recalling an instance things like that. But we had a wonderful time. We felt very fortunate.

BETTY HOAG: I always like to ask the artist one question before we finish taping, and that is what they think the overall benefit of the project was or the [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: I don't see how you could say that it held it back. It was I think very planned. I [inaudible] which were very good painters.

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

BETTY HOAG: Certainly you [inaudible] Spokane and [inaudible] and models [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible] makes people a little more interested in painting. [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Well, I think so. [Inaudible].

[Recorder stops, restarts.]

JERRE MURRY: Yes [inaudible] kids are.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Maybe that will [inaudible]—

BETTY HOAG: Everyone says they think that [inaudible]. And then George [inaudible]—doing very well [inaudible]—

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible] doing all right?

BETTY HOAG: I don't know. I haven't talked to him. He came down [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible] very, very well. [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible] and that's how I got his address.

JERRE MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible]—at all?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Did you?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible]. He [inaudible]—

BETTY HOAG: You must have been in New York at the time of the riots when the artists had [inaudible].

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: I [inaudible]. This was in '31, '32 and '33. [Inaudible] party. [Inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Who's the abstract painter you posed for?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Did you model for him too?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: I did two of them, yes.

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible].

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: Was it because they [inaudible] or [inaudible]?

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Well, no, he was—well, I guess it was [inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: Even though they had models, all our paintings were still fully abstract.

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: [Inaudible].

BETTY HOAG: I didn't realize [inaudible]. Did you see that [inaudible]—

MARJORIE BRONSTEIN MURRY: Oh, really?

BETTY HOAG: [Inaudible]—colors—orange and blues—[inaudible].

JERRE MURRY: That's a very strong contract like that in all of his paintings.

BETTY HOAG: He was the first, I think, modern painter [inaudible]. I think he [inaudible] he got the AIA award [inaudible].

[END OF TRACK AAA_murry65_5680_r.mp3.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]