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Oral history interview with Paula Colton Winokur, 2011 July 21-22

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Paula Winokur on July 21 and July 22, 2011. The interview took place at the Artist's home and studio in Horsham, Pennsylvania, and was conducted by Mija Riedel for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

Paula Winokur and Mija Riedel have reviewed the transcript and have made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

MIJA RIEDEL: This is Mija Riedel with Paula Winokur at the artist's home and studio in Horsham, Pennsylvania, on July 21, 2011, for the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art. This is card number one.

So we'll dispense with some of the biographical information first, and then move into – [inaudible] – itself and teaching. When and where were you born?

PAULA WINOKUR: I was born in Philadelphia in 1935.

MS. RIEDEL: What was the date?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, May 13. May 13, 1935, so I was considered a Depression baby.

MS. RIEDEL: And your parents' names?

MS. WINOKUR: My mother was Elizabeth Blumenthal Colton, C-O-L-T-O-N. And my father was Samuel Colton, C-O-L-T-O-N. I have a brother; his name is Bob Colton. He's four years older than me.

MS. RIEDEL: And just the two of you?

MS. WINOKUR: Just the two of us.

MS. RIEDEL: What did your father do?

MS. WINOKUR: My father was a shoe manufacturer. He emigrated from Russia in 1911 with his father and two sisters, and then was followed a couple of years later, or a year later, by my grandmother with the rest of the kids. There were originally 10 children in the family. One, the oldest brother—his name was Joseph—was shot by a Cossack on a horse riding through the village during a pogrom. And then the youngest brother, whose name nobody knows, died at 13 from pneumonia or something like that. So there were eight kids that came to this country.

My father came with his two oldest sisters; they established residency, and then they got the rest of the family over, and they came in steerage. It's a typical immigration story.

MS. RIEDEL: Wow.

MS. WINOKUR: My father initially—I think that in Russia his father was a leather merchant. I can't be absolutely sure about that. My father went to Lowell, Massachusetts, where he learned to make shoes, and he had a very successful business until the Depression. He and my mother married, I think, in 1927. My brother was born in 1931.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Anyway, the Depression came and my father was completely wiped out, so all I knew during my childhood was that we were poor; there was never any money. It was during the end of the Depression, the beginning of the Second World War. The war was over in '45. I was 10. I remember the Second World War being over. We all marched around in the streets with little American flags. How much does a 10-year-old know?

I had one cousin who died during the war. He was on the *Dorchester*—the ship with four chaplains that went down together. At Temple University they have the Chapel of the Four Chaplains. I think the ship was

torpedoed in Greenland.

These four chaplains gave their life vests to the soldiers, but my cousin wasn't one of them and he drowned—a family tragedy that everybody—it was a very close-knit family as I was growing up. In fact, almost all social relationships had to do with my father's family. My mother had only one brother; her parents died early on. I never really knew them. Her mother died when I was five days old.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, my goodness.

MS. WINOKUR: My father's father died very young—I think 45 or 50—I know there's information that was very vague—and left my grandmother with this bunch of kids. Most of them became quite successful in one way or another.

MS. RIEDEL: So when you were growing up, was your father a shoe manufacturer then? Had he—

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, he was a shoe manufacturer.

MS. RIEDEL: —started the business?

MS. WINOKUR: He started the business. He kept going with the business, but it just never really got off the ground.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, but he struggled with it for years.

MS. WINOKUR: He struggled with it and my mother worked.

MS. RIEDEL: What did she do?

MS. WINOKUR: My mother was a secretary, and she ended up working for the government, writing contracts. She was the one who basically supported us, and she worked very hard. She was a very sweet, lovely woman who was, I feel, never really given her due.

MS. RIEDEL: And so you grew up with this very extended family on your father's side. Did everybody live in the general Philadelphia area?

MS. WINOKUR: In the Philadelphia area, and there was always dinners and parties at one house or another, but most of them were professional people. They were doctors and druggists—no lawyers. Second generation, my cousins were lawyers, but everybody did pretty well, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have cousins you were close to?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, I did, and some I still am close to. Some of them have died already.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MS. WINOKUR: One of my favorite cousins died just a couple of years ago, and she was one year older than me. Then another cousin is one year younger. Her sister, who was three years younger, just died. So that's been tough—

MS. RIEDEL: I bet. I bet.

MS. WINOKUR: —to see my generation going.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: There was one point where we said, "Oh, my God, we're the older generation now." But that's just life; this is what goes on.

MS. RIEDEL: So as a child, was there a strong incentive to be very successful in school? Do you remember, was there any interest in art in the family, be it nuclear or extended?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, right. My mother was very interested in making sure that I had a career. She was one of these women who, had she been born even 10 years later, would have gone to college, but it was a big deal for her to finish high school. She was the one who pushed everybody. My father was really not educated. That was

the way it was. He was a really sweet guy, but he was just not—he wasn't stupid; he just wasn't educated.

MS. RIEDEL: And hadn't had the opportunity.

MS. WINOKUR: He didn't have the opportunity. Work was what he had to do.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: . . . As a child, I drew all the time.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I also remember living in a fantasyland. We didn't have a lot of toys; you had to make up your own games. You had to make up your own toys, and I remember loving books about fairies and brownies. And I would look under the grass—I was a little kid—for the brownies.

We didn't have television so we listened to the radio. Listening to the radio as a child, I was always doing something with my hands: drawing, or I was making beadwork or whatever.

MS. RIEDEL: Beadwork?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, stringing beads. There were these little bead kits that you could buy, or making paper dolls. I did all those activities that kids now do, I think, on iPods.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So I was really encouraged to use my hands and to be a maker of some kind of—so when I was about, I think, 11, I started taking piano lessons. My mother managed to buy a piano.

MS. RIEDEL: Wow.

MS. WINOKUR: And I started taking piano lessons, of which I was not very good. I studied for four years, and it was really sad. I can read music; I could play something. If you give me the music, I can play it on the piano, but I just don't have an ear—so I'm visual, not auditory—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: —which is one of these things you discover about yourself, I guess, at some point.

So my mother had a friend whose name was Florence Polis, and she saw [my] drawings and she said, "You should really take her to get art lessons."

So my mother would take me on the elevated train downtown to what was then called the Graphic Sketch Club. It's actually the Fleischer Art Memorial now—

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —which is now connected to the museum, but in those days it was called the Graphic Sketch Club. She would take me, and I would go to my class, and she would sit in the mother's room and she would draw, too. We learned to draw from plaster casts. That's what you did then.

So from 11 onward, I became interested in doing art. I drew and I painted and I did all those things, and I went there for several years. Then one summer I got to go to the art museum and take a class there. I think I was 13 or 14.

MS. RIEDEL: Philadelphia Museum of Art?

MS. WINOKUR: The Philadelphia Museum of Art. It has a wonderful children's program still, and it was the first time I did anything in clay. I did a head, and it wasn't fired or anything. I don't think they knew what to do with it. That was the first time I ever touched clay.

MS. RIEDEL: And how old were you?

MS. WINOKUR: I think I was 13. Something like that.

MS. RIEDEL: Any sense of it at the time?

MS. WINOKUR: Not at the time, no. At that time we were so programmed. Girls were programmed to behave in a certain way. I wasn't very gutsy. I was a very shy little kid, and I didn't have the gumption to turn around and say, "This is what I want to do. You're going to let me do it," blah blah blah. I didn't know at that point what I really wanted to do.

When I went to high school, I didn't do the art class thing; I took the academic course. The art course was a commercial art course.

MS. RIEDEL: They were separate? You couldn't do both? You had to be one track—

MS. WINOKUR: You couldn't do both. You could take an art class, but if you're going to be in the art program, that was one track. I was also very interested in science, and had I been better in math, I probably would have gone into biology, I think, which I found fascinating.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: I had a teacher in—it was probably junior high school. I'll never forget. His name was Dr. Bardy.

MS. RIEDEL: Bardy?

MS. WINOKUR: Bardy. B-A-R-D-Y, I think. He wore the same suit all the time and we called him B.O. Bardy because he smelled.

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

MS. WINOKUR: But he drew the most beautiful examples of flowers in colored chalk on the blackboard. I still remember this. We're talking about 60 years ago, and I was captivated by that.

MS. RIEDEL: Especially realistic, or especially colorful?

MS. WINOKUR: No, they were realistic, botanical drawings of every flower, so that we could study the [pistils] and stamens and different configurations.

MS. RIEDEL: He was a biology teacher?

MS. WINOKUR: He was the biology teacher, and that half of the year was botany. The second half was zoology—

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —in which we had to dissect frogs and stuff—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: —which I didn't mind doing. Most of the other girls were squeamish, but I didn't mind that stuff.

The problem in those days was that you could start out being interested in these things, and then you had to take home economics, which was bed-making and Red Cross practices and stuff like that. So there was no super-encouragement. But anyway, somehow or other, I got through high school and—

MS. RIEDEL: Was there art throughout high school for all four years?

MS. WINOKUR: There was. I was making art, and I guess I was going to various Saturday classes.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Because I remember going to the University of the Arts, which was then called—at that time, it was the School for Industrial Arts. Then it became the Museum School. I think there was another one—another permutation [Philadelphia College of Art], but when I went, it was the School for Industrial Arts. I remember taking an illustration course and, I guess, other stuff, but—

MS. RIEDEL: All primarily 2-D?

MS. WINOKUR: All 2-D, no clay.

MS. RIEDEL: Certainly no woodshop or sculpture or anything like that?

MS. WINOKUR: No, it was all painting and drawing. Who knew about clay? It was a foreign material at the time.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So then I graduated from [high school]. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: And that—which school was it?

MS. WINOKUR: It was Olney High School, which at the time was a very good school, academically, in the city.

MS. RIEDEL: And that would have been 1950—

MS. WINOKUR: January of 1953.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: So I applied to go. My parents said, "Do you want to go to college? You - have to go to college here because we can't afford to send you anywhere." So I applied to Tyler [School of Art, Temple University]. I had this—when I think about it now—this pathetic portfolio of ballerinas and pots of still lifes with flowers, stuff like that—very romantic, very girly.

MS. RIEDEL: But you were interested in a degree in art?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And were your parents supportive of that?

MS. WINOKUR: The deal was, you could go to art school, but you have to become a teacher.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. That sounds familiar. Yeah, yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: So—

MS. RIEDEL: That was common at the time.

MS. WINOKUR: —and when I think about it, I can totally understand it.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MS. WINOKUR: I came from a family where there was no resources, and you can't just go—and not only that, at that time . . . I wasn't gutsy enough to say, "I'm going to go to New York and become a famous artist," because I had had no clue.

MS. RIEDEL: And it's actually—it seems it was—it was supportive of your parents to be supportive to that degree.

MS. WINOKUR: They were very supportive.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: My mother especially, but my father was like, "This is the deal. You become a teacher and you can earn a living and that's fine." My mother even said, "You have to be able to take care of yourself."

MS. RIEDEL: Right. Well, that's interesting, too. It wasn't the idea that you were immediately going to get married and have somebody else take care of you, but that you needed to able to support yourself?

MS. WINOKUR: You need to— she said, "You need to support yourself." And she said, "I don't want you to ever be bored."

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: I remember that.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: Before she got married, my mother was a singer, actually, and she said that she had won this contest for the Lyric Opera Company to become a student.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, my goodness.

MS. WINOKUR: But she never could follow through with it because she couldn't afford to do it.

MS. RIEDEL: But—so she had that sensibility?

MS. WINOKUR: She did have that sensibility.

I always think that it's very sad she died before I really became successful. The art museum bought a piece of mine in 1970, and she was at that time an invalid. I told her about this, and I think she had [had] a stroke. They kept her on Valium all the time, so she was already out, and she couldn't enjoy the fact that I had actually gotten some success.

Anyway, so I went to Tyler and I was a painting major. Your choice was you're either a painting major or a sculpture major.

MS. RIEDEL: That was it?

MS. WINOKUR: That was it. In those days, Tyler School of Art was the academy. It was based on the academy. And everything else—ceramics, printmaking, jewelry—were all considered electives. They were things that you would take because you should know how to do them. I think the state required you to know them if you were going to teach, but if you were going to be an artist, you were either going to be a painter or you were going to be a sculptor.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: That was it. So I was a painting major. When I was a sophomore, I got to take ceramics, and Rudy Staffel was the teacher.

MS. RIEDEL: Let's talk about that.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, sure. And so that's when I—because of Rudy, I fell in love with clay. At that point I basically knew that that's what I wanted to do.

MS. RIEDEL: What were his classes like? What was the focus?

MS. WINOKUR: He was a real advocate of John Dewey—learn by doing—so he was the school guru. At the time I was a student, he was probably in his 40s. He was very handsome; he was very quiet. And it turns out he was quiet because—he told me years later—he was really inhibited. [They laugh.]

He would say, "Okay, here's how you throw a pot," and he'd throw. We had these horrible wheels that he had built, these kick wheels that you stood up with your hip against one side, and your left leg is kicking this treadle, and you're throwing. It was really tough.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, that sounds awful.

MS. WINOKUR: It was not good, but—

MS. RIEDEL: If you're kicking with your left leg, that's unusual, too, because I remember kick wheels normally kicking to the right.

MS. WINOKUR: But you're kicking the treadle, not the wheel.

MS. RIEDEL: I see.

MS. WINOKUR: And the treadle made the wheel go.

MS. RIEDEL: I see. Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: They're based on these European kick wheels, I guess, British kick wheels. There were no electric wheels.

MS. RIEDEL: Was it stoneware, porcelain, earthenware?

MS. WINOKUR: It was cone 6—it was a stoneware body, but it was more low-temperature.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. And was he working in porcelain?

MS. WINOKUR: He had started to work in porcelain then and he was doing a lot of experiments at the time.

MS. RIEDEL: Way before the Light Gatherers, though?

MS. WINOKUR: That was the beginning of the Light Gatherers. . . . All the girls were in love with him.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: It's very simple. We were all madly in love with him.

In those days, there was no—this was before plastic; there was no plastic sheeting.

MS. RIEDEL: Wow.

MS. WINOKUR: It was in the 1950s; there was no plastic sheeting. We had this room that was called a "damp box." You would throw something, and then if you didn't want it to dry out right away, you'd put it in the damp box.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. There was no thin plastic to wrap any of it in.

MS. WINOKUR: No, there was nothing.

MS. RIEDEL: That's amazing.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. I don't even think that there was anything like that at the dry cleaners at that time. The '50s were a very frugal time, too.

So we all had this joke—we were going to get Rudy in the damp box and [bug him, et cetera!]. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: It was just this childish behavior. I ended up being Rudy's babysitter, for his daughters Megan and Abby. Megan is a writer now who lives in Alfred [NY] with Graham Marks, who was a wonderful ceramic artist who taught at Cranbrook for a while. They met when he was a student at University of the Arts. I started to babysit for Rudy and Doris when she was, I think, pregnant with Abby. So that was [more than] 50 years ago.

Anyway, my house had very little stimulation in it. There were really very few books. My brother listened to classical music, so that was good. There was relatively no art except the paintings that I made and hung on the walls.

When I went to Rudy's house, there were hundreds of books and all sorts of [artworks]. I loved babysitting for him because I got to look at all [these special things]. I loved the kids, so that was good. I babysat for them the whole time I was in college. They still remember me as their babysitter, or at least Megan does. So it's a special bond there.

MS. RIEDEL: And what books do you remember? Anything in particular, or were you drawn to the art books, or were you drawn to the clay books?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I was drawn to the art books. Also, they were Buddhists, and I was very interested in all of their Buddhist stuff. When we moved back to Philadelphia in the '60s—because Rudy then asked Bob [Robert Winokur] to teach while he was in Rome—we ended up coming back here. Our relationship just continued—and we'll get to that part, I guess, but—

MS. RIEDEL: Right, later, but—

MS. WINOKUR: But anyway, while I was a student, he was extremely important to me. Not only did I work in clay, I brought him my paintings to look at; we talked about the work. I knew that I wanted to do clay and so I made a lot of stuff.

MS. RIEDEL: What sort of work?

MS. WINOKUR: Just functional.

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

MS. WINOKUR: It was all functional because that's what everybody did then.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, exactly. And did you experiment with porcelain at all at the time?

MS. WINOKUR: No.

MS. RIEDEL: It was all stoneware.

MS. WINOKUR: It was all stoneware, but I remember I had painted on pieces, and—

MS. RIEDEL: With glaze?

MS. WINOKUR: With glaze, yes. And something which came back again [in] the '70s when I started doing the face boxes with the lace and everything. But yes, there was no—there was one clay; everybody used the same clay.

MS. RIEDEL: Was Rudy teaching sculpture as well?

MS. WINOKUR: No.

MS. RIEDEL: So it was all functional work.

MS. WINOKUR: It was pretty much—it was functional, and it was pretty much whatever you wanted to do.

MS. RIEDEL: And wheels, slabs, and pinch pots and coiling?

MS. WINOKUR: It was mostly the wheel.

MS. RIEDEL: All wheel.

MS. WINOKUR: I think there was some coiling, but it was mostly the wheel. It was not great teaching, I have to say, as much as I love Rudy, when I look back on it. And that was the way the whole school was. The painting teachers, they set up a model—you walk into the room; there is my first—I remember my first response. I walk into this painting studio and there was a naked woman sitting there. [Laughs]. I was 18, so it was a big deal.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. Right. But he was beginning to experiment on his own work?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, he was experimenting all the time.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, but none of that came into class.

MS. WINOKUR: [He did bring work in from time to time.]

MS. RIEDEL: And was there any conversation about that?

MS. WINOKUR: We asked him, "What are you doing?" I'm trying to do this or that. But he was a very private in a lot of ways.

MS. RIEDEL: And did he expose you in class to what was happening in Alfred, or what was happening on the West Coast? And was there any sense of what was going on?

MS. WINOKUR: Not really. We never saw slides.

MS. RIEDEL: Never saw slides? Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: The only person who showed us slides was the art history professor. His name was Herman [Gundersheimer], and he was a European guy who luckily got out of Berlin before they sent him to a concentration camp. Because he did some kind of finagling with the museums there—I don't really know

exactly what it was—so that he would get off the hook.

He came to Philadelphia and he got hired by Boris Blai, who was the dean at the time, who was an old Russian. They built the school. When I was there, there were 10 men teaching, period.

MS. RIEDEL: Wow.

MS. WINOKUR: Most of them were not really full-time. I think Gundersheimer was pretty much full-time, and there was a painting teacher named Alex Abels, who was full-time. There was a horrible guy teaching jewelry, who taught nothing. His name was Mr. Rodgers. [They laugh.]

There were no female teachers. Little bit later on, the first woman they hired, I think, was Lillian Lent, who was a printmaker.

So it was a very tight. It was this period of time when Abstract Expressionism was really hot, and everybody at the school was saying, "You don't want to go there because the figure—painting realistically, this is where it's at, and that's a fad that's going to go away."

MS. RIEDEL: What magazines were you looking at? *Art in America*?

MS. WINOKUR: We were looking at *Craft Horizons*, which was the only ceramics magazine around.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. So there was no *Ceramics Monthly* yet?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, there may have been *Ceramics Monthly*. The one thing I remember is looking at *Craft Horizons*, saying, "Rudy should be in here."

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: Because we even knew at the time that he was important. He was just beginning to make the Light Gatherers, and he was doing a lot of experimenting, but some of the pieces were still coming out, and they were really beautiful. We thought we were going to write to *Craft Horizons* and say, you should do an article. Well, it turns out that in 1976, Bob and I wrote an article about Rudy. We interviewed him for *Craft Horizons*.

There were also very few books.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. In *Craft Horizons*, was there any sense of what was going on on the West Coast at the time?

MS. WINOKUR: We were beginning to understand what was going on, but not to the point where we had a whole lot to do with it. It certainly didn't inspire us to go out on a limb and make things that were Voulkos-like.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. So it was much more an Alfred aesthetic than—

MS. WINOKUR: Much more. It was an East Coast—

MS. RIEDEL: Bernard Leach and—

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, absolutely.

MS. RIEDEL: —Shoji Hamada? Any influence from the Japanese?

MS. WINOKUR: A little bit, yeah. I would say so. There was all that going on and actually, when you see the slides that I got together for you, most of the work isn't from Tyler; it's from when we lived in Massachusetts. But it's still that I made bowls and bottles and teapots and cups, and that was what was expected.

MS. RIEDEL: And this was cone 6 and—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, it was cone 6. . . . He had a gas kiln. But for example, he was the one who stacked and fired the kiln. We weren't allowed to do that.

When I taught, my students learned how to stack, fire—the whole thing.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: Whole attitude was changed.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, right.

MS. WINOKUR: So I think in a lot of ways, it was bad but it was good.

MS. RIEDEL: How so?

MS. WINOKUR: Because I taught myself everything I needed to know, and as a result, I came up with a lot of interesting things that nobody else was doing—ultimately, not necessarily then. I don't necessarily disagree with the idea that you need to teach yourself, but my argument with it is that I think you get where you're going much faster if somebody is saying these are the tools that you need to have in order to produce the work that's in your head.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: And the other thing about it was that, at the school at the time, ceramics was really not important. It was considered frivolous, that the important thing was that you were going to become either a sculptor or a painter, and you would dabble in ceramics. Bob will tell you this, but when he told Raphael Sabatini, who was the sculpture teacher, that he was going to go to Alfred, he said, "Oh, you're ruining your life, because you're going to go become a potter, not a sculptor."

MS. RIEDEL: A potter, aha.

MS. WINOKUR: So that was the general tenor of the school.

MS. RIEDEL: And originally you were interested in painting, yes?

MS. WINOKUR: I was, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Then you had a shift, until you were able to graduate with a degree in ceramics? Or did you—

MS. WINOKUR: The degree was in fine arts.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: And the interesting thing is when they look [back at] alumni—when we used to look back on the years, all the people that graduated before, I think, Charles Le Clair became dean, which was in 1963 or '[6]4—you graduated with a bachelor of fine arts degree. I also had a bachelor of science in education, because you stay for a fifth year so that you can get a teaching degree.

MS. RIEDEL: I see.

MS. WINOKUR: But—I forgot what I was going to say. What was the last question?

MS. RIEDEL: So you were talking about—

MS. WINOKUR: You forgot, too. Okay, it's not my brain. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: It seems like such a natural, organic progression the way we answered it.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, anyway, I went through Tyler [in] five years, learned a lot; learned a lot about myself.

MS. RIEDEL: Can you say more about that?

MS. WINOKUR: I think I became much more confident in myself, much gutsier.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you feel that you had a natural affinity for clay and the wheel?

MS. WINOKUR: I did. It felt really comfortable for me. I felt really happy being with clay, and I wanted to go to graduate school.

MS. RIEDEL: Were there glaze—just a quick question—were there glaze calculation classes? Were you making your own clay? How did that work?

MS. WINOKUR: Rudy made the clay, or he got the kids together to make the clay. The glaze formulas were there. We made the glazes, but I remember going to him one day and saying, "Teach me about glaze calculation." And so he said, "Well, here's this book, so why don't you read this?" It was this book by [Cullen W. Parmelee. *Ceramic Glazes*, 1949], which is a ceramic engineering book, really tricky to understand.

MS. RIEDEL: So that *Clay and Glazes for the Potter* wasn't out yet?

MS. WINOKUR: It came out in 1956. The Dan Rhodes book. I think ’56 was the first edition.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. That sounds about right.

MS. WINOKUR: Something like that, because we have a first edition.

MS. RIEDEL: Wow.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, in the meantime, Bob and I met at Tyler when we were both students. He went off to Alfred for graduate school, and he writes me these letters telling me what a great place it is, and they have really good wheels there. [They Laugh.] Ted Randall had designed a kick wheel that you could sit it on. You sat in a tractor seat. I have one in the studio.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, I remember those.

MS. WINOKUR: You kick the wheel. This is a great wheel, and there’s so much here, and you’ve got to come. So I went up for the summer. I was overwhelmed. First of all, I found out how much I didn’t know. I came in really cocky. I had gotten a piece in the *Young Americans* show in 1958 and I thought, I’m just such a—

MS. RIEDEL: I’m on my way?

MS. WINOKUR: I would never—this piece would never get into a show now, believe me. It was a head, a planter with a face on it.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, right.

MS. WINOKUR: So I went up to Alfred, and I had just graduated from college in January.

MS. RIEDEL: Of—

MS. WINOKUR: Of ’58 and I got a teaching job the next day—

MS. RIEDEL: Oh my goodness.

MS. WINOKUR: —at Wilson Junior High School in Philadelphia, which, it turns out, was the junior high school that I went to and hated enormously. I remember the art teachers there thinking, these teachers, they don’t know anything. One day I’m going to come back and I’m going to teach art in this school. Boy, you get what you wish for sometimes and then you’re sorry. [They Laugh.] But I taught art in that school from January until June.

MS. RIEDEL: And you were teaching painting and drawing?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, and I had a little clay club. There was absolutely nothing for clay. I mean, my coat closet became a damp box. There was no kiln. It was just, here’s the material, you can play with it.

MS. RIEDEL: No way to fire anything.

MS. WINOKUR: No. The one thing that I really wanted when I got out of school was to go someplace else and have a residency, and there was no such thing. It didn’t make sense.

MS. RIEDEL: You said you both wanted to go to graduate school?

MS. WINOKUR: I wanted to go to graduate school, but I had no money to go to graduate school. My plan was that I would teach for another year and save as much money as I could and then go to graduate school.

Well, I went to Alfred for the summer. Bob and I decided to get married. He got a job in Texas. So what do women do? You go where your husband goes. I was 23 years old and in those days if you were 23, you were already old. Can you believe it?

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.] No.

MS. WINOKUR: You were supposed to get married as soon as you graduated from college. That was the rule. My mother was getting worried. [They laugh.] I remember I called her from Alfred when Bob and I—he said, “I got this job in Texas, you want to go with me?” So that was the proposal. I called my mother and I said, “I’m getting married.” She said, “Congratulations.” [Laughs.] She didn’t say, what are you talking about, I don’t know this person, you come home, we’ll discuss it when you come home. You know, it was none of that. She was relieved.

MS. RIEDEL: And he had a job.

MS. WINOKUR: He had a job.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So we meandered to Texas.

MS. RIEDEL: To Denton, right?

MS. WINOKUR: To Denton, Texas.

MS. RIEDEL: What was the university?

MS. WINOKUR: It was … North Texas State [College]. It had been North Texas State Normal College or normal something like that; teaching school. Isn't it funny they called schools "normal schools" if you—it was about education? It wasn't abnormal – [Inaudible]. [They Laugh.]…

Anyway, we drove to Texas. Am I leaving anything out about college, anything else you want to know about that part of my life?

MS. RIEDEL: Well, maybe just what was the most rewarding aspect of that experience for you? What were the strengths and the weakness of—we talked a little bit about—you thought Rudy was inspiring because of his work and because of his lifestyle, not necessarily so much the teaching. But anything in retrospect that were particular strengths and weaknesses or—

MS. WINOKUR: I think that one of the things that was good about it was I went to a high school that had 4,000 kids in it. At the time I went to Tyler, it was 150 students, and I suddenly became a person. I knew everybody. I had attention. I realized what I was worth, which was really the most important thing I got out of it, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Were there many women at the time?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, there were a lot of women.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. Sort of half and half?

MS. WINOKUR: I think there were more women than men.

MS. RIEDEL: Because being an art teacher was acceptable?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. And a few of the women that were there then I'm still in contact with.

MS. RIEDEL: Any other students that were of note, that were important to you or that have gone on to have careers?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, there was Lowell Nesbitt, who became an important painter in New York, who has since passed away. My friend Myrna Minter still lives in the Village, and she is a really good painter and just has not been able to get a foothold. [She's been in lots of galleries and so forth.]

There have been a lot of good people that went to Tyler over the years. But I'm not sure, at that time, who I can remember who was really that hot except Lowell, who went to New York and starting doing these giant flower things, and made a lot of money, apparently. [Also, Barbara Chase-Ribaud, who currently has an exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (October 2013). Barbara Chase-Ribaud is an excellent artist.]

Maybe Bob will remember who was there. Well, there's a woman in the city, Arlene Love, who is a sculptor who's really good. She's now doing photography. She has worked a lot of places in the city, and she was four years ahead of me. And Helen went to Tyler. Did you [know that]?

MS. RIEDEL: Helen Drutt?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah. But she was also ahead of me.

Oh, and there's another couple other people—Natalie Charkow, who lives in Connecticut now. And Dennis Leon did really well, but he moved to California, and he died, unfortunately, young.

MS. RIEDEL: Was there much back-and-forth among the students? Was there a lot of experimenting among the students? It sounds as if you were experimenting a lot on your own.

MS. WINOKUR: There was not the kind of experimenting that you see today in art schools. In sculpture, people did figurative sculpture. They had a bronze foundry and you could cast bronze. I remember casting a little

figure. I have no idea where it is now, but I did that. Sometimes they would bring an animal in for us to do in sculpture.

But you worked with a figure in sculpture. Even the people that were really good, that's what they did, and painters, same thing. They used to have fresco painting, but then I think by the time I got there, that was over. There was also an influx in the early '50s of returning veterans.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, on the GI Bill.

MS. WINOKUR: On the GI Bill.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, do you remember students like that, and did that change the flavor—

MS. WINOKUR: I do. They were older. They were older guys for the most part.

MS. RIEDEL: Did that change the flavor of the courses in any way?

MS. WINOKUR: I don't think so.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: They were just there. Bob can talk about that, too, because he roomed, I think, with a couple of those guys. But also, I didn't live on the campus.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, right. You lived at home.

MS. WINOKUR: I lived at home, which made me apart from the rest—from what was going on, which was the way it was, that's all.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: I think in some ways it was a good experience, and when I see even the way I taught, I feel cheated. I was a much better teacher than I got from all those guys that were teaching then. They'd walk into the [painting] studio, and they'd walk around, and they'd stand behind you and they'd say, "Oh, put a little of this there," and they'd walk away. There was one guy who was really lecherous and kind of—he'd say, "Ms. Colton, if you came to my studio, I could make you into a great portrait painter." [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah. The dean, Boris Blai—this is a great story—he had a special portrait head class. He was a sculptor. We met in this little round turret room. Tyler, which has now moved down to Temple University, had this beautiful campus in Elkins Park. Old buildings—this old building had these funky little rooms, which ultimately became offices. But when I was there, this was a little studio.

So we were doing a head of the janitor; his name was Charlie. I got there early one day. I guess I was 19 at the time. The dean comes in to start the class and I was the only one there. He comes over and he starts feeling me up! We joke about how he used to walk down the hall with his hands like that. [Laughs.] Today he would go to jail. Some of the behaviors of those guys in those days—they'd all be in jail about the way they treated female students. The other attitude was [to] pat you on the head, "You're just going to go get married and have babies. That's what you're going to do."

So that was the kind of feelings that I had from this. The expectations were not like, get cracking, because it's a career and you'd better get your act together.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: It was, oh, you're going to—just pay the money and you'll be fine.

MS. RIEDEL: Was that behavior somehow just something you had to put up with?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, yeah. What were you going to say? We all laughed about the fact that he was a lecherous fella. We had this class in the fifth year for the education class. He was teaching this education course, which was a total joke. He would talk about how he was so virile that he would—when he had models when he lived in France, that he would get into the bathtub, and then if his model took a bath after him she would become pregnant. [Laughs.] That was his – the favorite story about Boris Blai.

MS. RIEDEL: That seems unbelievable in this day and age now. But then—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, that's—oh, in this day and age it's completely unbelievable. Times really have changed.

MS. RIEDEL: They have changed. Once in a while I'll hear some story like this, but that's pretty extraordinary.

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah. Well, another story about that is when I was teaching initially at Arcadia. I went to the then-chair and I said, "Jack, I'm really working hard to build up this program. Can you get me some more money?" I was part-time at the time. He said, "Well, I really can't. And besides that, you have a husband to support you." So sexist. Just really amazing that—and there was no recourse.

MS. RIEDEL: There was no recourse.

MS. WINOKUR: No, there was no recourse. Because the president at the time was a guy, and he was going to say the same thing.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. It's amazing when you—this was the early '60s, or the '50s?

MS. WINOKUR: No, this was the ['70s]. [I started teaching at Beaver College in 1973.] . . .

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. . . . Things probably started to change come the '60s, yes.

MS. WINOKUR: Come the '60s, things started to change, [but still a lot of chauvinism in the work place].

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: I think that I lived through it all.

MS. RIEDEL: It's really good to just be reminded of how commonplace that experience was not very long ago.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, the experience was that if you were a girl, you were expected to learn all the things that girls did to support men. Your job was to support your husband, not to be partners or to do what's important to you. I have to say I'm very lucky, because Bob always wanted me to do my part as the other potter in the family, even though I've always played the traditional mother-wife role.

But I guess it was bred in me. My mother worked. My mother worked to support the family, but she wasn't given the credit or the status as being the worker.

MS. RIEDEL: So she didn't have the say of somebody who was the breadwinner.

MS. WINOKUR: I don't really know what their conversations were like.

MS. RIEDEL: Or the input, right.

MS. WINOKUR: But I know that she did it because there was no choice.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: This was what she needed to do. . . . We got married in August of 1958, and Bob had gotten a job teaching as a sabbatical replacement in North Texas.

MS. RIEDEL: Who was teaching there at the time?

MS. WINOKUR: Georgia Bell Leach, who I don't think ever really did much. She was on sabbatical. There weren't that many jobs, so he took this job.

MS. RIEDEL: He had a master's from Alfred?

MS. WINOKUR: He got the M.F.A. from Alfred.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, okay. And you had a summer program at Alfred. Who did you study with? Was there anything significant there for you?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, it totally blew my mind. I found out there was Ted Randall; Val Cushing was there. Norm Schulman was actually teaching that summer too.

MS. RIEDEL: And what did you study?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I had a whole course of glaze calculations with Mr. Merritt, who was the glaze calculation guy, who was actually part of the ceramic engineering school. That was amazing. Val taught history of art,

history of ceramics class.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, okay. Fantastic.

MS. WINOKUR: He taught a lot of different things. We did plaster casting and, of course, throwing.
MS. RIEDEL: So this was the summer of ’58?

MS. WINOKUR: Summer of ’58. I mostly found out that, man, there’s a lot to learn and I didn’t really know very much. So we went off to Texas. The studio that Bob went to—well, let me just say this, most of the glaze tests that we did at Alfred were cone 10, but we got down to Texas and everything was low temperature. The kiln wouldn’t go to cone 10.

MS. RIEDEL: Was it gas?

MS. WINOKUR: It was an old muffle kiln, as I recall. I guess it was a gas kiln, but there were these tubes inside—unless I’m confusing it with another kiln. But anyway, I don’t exactly remember.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: But it was an old kiln that wouldn’t get to cone 10. I did a lot of glaze testing at that time to try and find a palette of glazes to use.

MS. RIEDEL: It would get to [cone] 6 or 8, something like that?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, but anyway, he taught there. The first year, he taught ceramics. In the meantime, he was looking for another job, and I typed all these letters to many places. There were no jobs. He got asked to stay on to teach freshman design, or whatever it was called there—"Visual Fundamentals"—and something else. He wasn’t teaching ceramics. So for the next four years—we were there for five years—he taught all these other classes, but not ceramics. She came back and was teaching ceramics.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have access to a studio?

MS. WINOKUR: The first year, we rented an apartment through letters. We wrote back and found this apartment, and we went down and we stayed there. Then we moved out, and I guess we put all our stuff in storage. I can’t even remember anymore. We came back east and got jobs in the summer camp, because the salary was $4,000 a year, something like that.

MS. RIEDEL: Where was the camp?

MS. WINOKUR: One of the camps was in New Milford, Connecticut, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: And they were summer camps for kids?

MS. WINOKUR: Kids camps. We taught arts and crafts.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: So we would do that. I’m trying to remember the sequence of places. The second year we were there, we stayed in this funky little apartment—it was on the second floor. It was like half the price of the first apartment. That winter, we drove up to Alfred and bought our wheel, and dragged it back to Texas. There was this little back room and we made this little tiny studio.

MS. RIEDEL: Up on the second floor?

MS. WINOKUR: On the second floor. How we got that wheel up those steps I can’t remember, because—but we were in our 20s. We were strong.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right. . . . So you would throw the pieces; they’d be green; and then you’d transport them as green in—

MS. WINOKUR: We’d take them to the school and fire them.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, fire them.

MS. WINOKUR: The third year, we got an apartment that was much bigger and had three little rooms in the back that we made into a studio. We stayed there for three years, until we left Texas. So we had this little studio back there and we had a kiln.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, really?

MS. WINOKUR: We had an electric kiln, which we still have. It's out in the studio.
MS. RIEDEL: Wow. 40 years later?

MS. WINOKUR: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] I'll show it to you.

So we made all kinds of stuff while we were in Texas. We got involved with the local Texas designer craftsmen. We showed our work and we sold our work.

MS. RIEDEL: Were there street fairs? How did you sell your work? Was it through the university?

MS. WINOKUR: There were a couple little shops around.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: We would have sales every once in a while and people would come.

MS. RIEDEL: At the studio?

MS. WINOKUR: At the house; it was—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: It's hard to remember now. It's a long time ago.

MS. RIEDEL: So you'd make a lot of functional work, and then would you be able to sell most of it?

MS. WINOKUR: We sold a lot of it. We also started getting sculptural with some of it. I was always collaging things on the clay and stamping [designs].

MS. RIEDEL: Would you make your own stamps, or were these commercial stamps?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, I made stamps out of little plaster tubes and you'd carve into them.

We were looking around at what was going on at that time. We were getting stuff in shows and into—I remember there was the Wichita National. It used to be a big show, and sent to that. I have to say, it wasn't really until we moved to Massachusetts and dedicated ourselves to daily practice that I felt like I was really learning something. That was the dailiness of throwing every single day, where our livelihood depended on it, that—

MS. RIEDEL: And that was in '66–'64?

MS. WINOKUR: No, 1963. Well, no, wait a minute. Nineteen sixty-three, we left Texas and we moved to Peoria —the hellhole of the world. . . .

MS. WINOKUR: Peoria, Illinois.

MS. RIEDEL: Peoria, Illinois.

MS. WINOKUR: Is there a Peoria, New York?

MS. RIEDEL: I thought so, but maybe not.

MS. WINOKUR: So Bob got a job. He was the one that was getting the jobs because I didn't have a master's degree.

MS. RIEDEL: So he got a job in Peoria?

MS. WINOKUR: He got a job at Bradley University. . . . Yeah, we don't even like to talk about it. It was such an awful year.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MS. WINOKUR: But it was, you do what you do to get out of Texas—anything to get out of Texas. So we moved to Peoria for one year, rented a terrible house.

MS. RIEDEL: Was there the opportunity to continue on in Texas, or you just had [enough]?

MS. WINOKUR: We could have stayed there.

MS. RIEDEL: You wanted to get out of there?

MS. WINOKUR: But he wanted to teach ceramics, too, so this was a ceramics job.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: It turned out that the people were crazy. The chairman in the department was really weird. He painted the inside of his house black. That's got to say something for someone's mental situation. His wife said, "Oh, he's such a genius," and I thought, How can you live in a black house?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, I've never seen anything like that.

MS. WINOKUR: I think the ceiling was red.

MS. RIEDEL: I've seen houses that are black on the outside.

MS. WINOKUR: Anyway, so we're in Peoria and we're really unhappy. All this time I was trying to get pregnant, which wasn't happening. So we decided when we left Texas—we had a little bit of money because he took everything out of whatever savings account that the school had for you; we took all that money. When I think about it now, it was like a nickel, but at that time it was worth something. We said, "Why don't we just leave here? If there's no job, let's go make pots for a living," which is what we were trained to do. The whole idea—

MS. RIEDEL: Right, to be production potters.

MS. WINOKUR: —was to be production potters. So while we were in Texas, we met this couple who had a house in Ashfield, Massachusetts. They had a summer house there, and they had left Texas in the meantime and moved to Albany, New York, where he had gotten a job; he was a philosophy teacher. His wife, Mary, was one of these, for lack of a better word, a do-gooder. She volunteered—she was for women's rights; she was for all this stuff. She was an interesting woman, but she was also a little nuts.

But nevertheless, we wrote and said, "Would you be interested in having us use your summer house to turn into a studio?" And they said, "That's not a bad idea. Why don't you come and see it?" So we went over Easter break or some—Christmas break, I guess. We went up and we saw this fabulous old house that had been built in the late 1800s—1850s maybe; the kitchen was added in 1910—on 200 acres of pine and birch. It was really gorgeous and we totally fell in love with it.

MS. RIEDEL: Is this western Massachusetts?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. Ashfield is 17 miles north of Northampton.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: So we moved there with all of our stuff, which at the time wasn't a whole lot, but we still had this kiln that we were dragging around with us.

MS. RIEDEL: And the wheel.

MS. WINOKUR: And the wheel, and clay and whatever else. I guess we rented a U-Haul. I'm sure we did. We drove all the way to Massachusetts, and we renovated the inside of what had been a horse barn.

MS. RIEDEL: So he gave up the job in Peoria—

MS. WINOKUR: Gave up the job.

MS. RIEDEL: —had no other job in mind—

MS. WINOKUR: Had nothing. No, we were going to—

MS. RIEDEL: —and just decided to become production potters?

MS. WINOKUR: —we were going to become production potters.

MS. RIEDEL: That's extremely brave.

MS. WINOKUR: It was, actually. At the time nobody was doing that. And I remember Norm Schulman saying—because he was teaching at RISD at the time—he said, "Oh, you guys are doing what I really want to do," which

he ultimately did. He moved to Penland and just became a potter full-time.

So we renovated the barn. We got there in June, I guess. By the fall we had the barn done. We had insulated it, put wallboard up, did—it was a huge job.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, were you bartering that you would renovate this barn and they would allow you to stay for free, something like that?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, it was free rent, and they paid for a lot of the materials, but it was all of our labor.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Then we had just gotten the wheel set up and I get a phone call—my mother had a stroke. So here I am, torn between being there, because this is our livelihood, and racing to Philadelphia. I was going back and forth. My mother was initially in a coma, and then she survived, which was probably the worst thing in the world. It would have been better for her had she simply gone, because she had eight years of being an invalid, of being unhappy.

MS. RIEDEL: Was your father gone by then?

MS. WINOKUR: My father was still alive. But my father—when we were in Illinois, my father had a bout with prostate cancer. I remember taking a train to come to Philadelphia to be with my mother because my father was going to die, but he didn't. He was still alive when she had her stroke, and then a year later he died.

MS. RIEDEL: And he couldn't—so he was of help to her.

[END SD1 TR1.]

MS. WINOKUR: [In progress.] He was a big help for her until he—cancer just got him and he passed away. It was pretty awful.

MS. RIEDEL: I'm sorry.

MS. WINOKUR: My brother ended up getting stuck with living at home and taking care of them, because he hadn't moved out. That's a whole other story that's not even worth getting into, but nevertheless—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So during this particular time of my life—and I was still not even 30; I was 28, something like that—my parents were falling apart and I was trying to figure my life out.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So it was a struggle.

MS. RIEDEL: Sounds—yeah, it sounds difficult, sounds as if you had to be in multiple places at once, juggling a lot of balls.

MS. WINOKUR: I did, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: But . . . you managed to set up a production pottery?

MS. WINOKUR: We managed to set up a production pottery. It was called the Cape Street Pottery, and we made pots; then we would fill the car up with pots, and drive to Boston and New York and Philadelphia, and go knock on the door and say, "Hi, you want to buy some pots?" [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: You'd go door-to-door selling pots? I've never heard of such a thing.

MS. WINOKUR: Shops. We went to shops, not door-to-door. [They laugh.] We went to craft shops.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: But now you would never do that.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: You would make an appointment.

MS. RIEDEL: So you'd just show up with a carful of pots?

MS. WINOKUR: We'd just show up.

MS. RIEDEL: But they would buy them outright.

MS. WINOKUR: They would buy them outright.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Or they would give us orders, or sometimes they would buy them wholesale. I don't even remember any more. I probably have records of all that.

MS. RIEDEL: Do you remember the shops in particular that you did business with? Anything that was significant? Were there beginning to be lots of little craft shops?

MS. WINOKUR: There were lots of craft shops around at that time where people were selling functional pottery, and you can still find them.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MS. WINOKUR: You can still find the same kind of pots that we made 40 years ago—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: —in those shops.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: We just moved on from there.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: And people have those pots that we made then. Every once in a while they come up on eBay. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: So these were cone 6 electric-fired, cone10 gas-fired? Cone 10?

MS. WINOKUR: We built a kiln.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: We built several kilns, as a matter of fact. The first kiln we built didn't work. We had to tear it down and do it again. There was a lot of growing, a lot of learning. . . . Nobody taught kiln building then.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: [When Bob was at Alfred, they said to him,] "When you get a teaching job, if you need a kiln, you will get so-and-so to come and build a kiln for you," because the teacher was the gentleman. That was Binns and the Harder and the Randall attitude about what it was like to be a professor. Ted Randall came to class in a sport jacket.

It was the gentleman. He was a fabulous thrower. He was a really good potter, Ted Randall. I remember watching him throw one day. He was not dirty when he got done.

MS. RIEDEL: Did he wear a white smock?

MS. WINOKUR: No. I remember watching him throwing, and he got off the wheel and there was like—

MS. RIEDEL: No splatter?

MS. WINOKUR: No nothing, no. He's amazing, just amazing.

MS. RIEDEL: Can't fathom.

MS. WINOKUR: It's just a whole different world now. It amazes me to have lived through all of this.

MS. RIEDEL: So was there someone that would come to Massachusetts to help you build the kiln, or someone built it, or you just—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, we did have a friend up there. His name was Jack [Masson]. He lived in Conway and he had a pottery also. We were building these kilns, and he came and helped out a little bit. But Bob did most of it. He was really the builder.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Sort of trial and error? . . .

MS. WINOKUR: Well, the first thing we did was we got plans from Jim McKinnell. Do you know who he is?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, I do.

MS. WINOKUR: And Jim McKinnell had designed a kiln that had a bisquing chamber and a high-fire chamber in it.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: So we bought the plans from him. He would sell you these plans. Well, we built the damn kiln and it didn't work.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.] Oh, dear. And would he come or—

MS. WINOKUR: No, no, no, no, no.

MS. RIEDEL: So that's it?

MS. WINOKUR: I think Bob called him and talked to him about it, or whatever. But we ended up—we ended up in 1965, I guess it was, maybe '64, I can't remember, maybe '64. There was a meeting in Philadelphia of the design division of the American Ceramic Society. The design division was the beginning of NCECA [National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts].

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MS. WINOKUR: And at that meeting, there was Ted Randall and Val Cushing and the Natzlers [Gertrude Natzler and Otto Natzler] and Heinos—maybe the Natzlers. I know the Hinows were there, maybe not the Natzlers.

MS. RIEDEL: Because they were out in California, right?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: The Heinos were still up in New Hampshire back then, but the Natzlers—

MS. WINOKUR: Maybe there were 50 people in the room, at most. Somebody talked about building a cantenary-arch kiln. So we got the plans for that, and we went back up and we built a cantenary-arch kiln, and that worked beautifully. I remember we did the arch, and there was a loft on top of the barn. Bob went up and [to the left], and he had made a hole where the chimney was going to go through. He stood on the top of the arch and it held him. If that held you, then it was going to work.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.] So that's the way to determine it?

MS. WINOKUR: So that's what— . . . all this stuff they're talking about now is all technical.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: It's how you learn to be a potter—how do you learn to do all this stuff? Well, kids today don't need to worry about that; there's a book.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: There was no kiln book.

MS. RIEDEL: There was nothing.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, Dan Rhodes's book had some kiln-building stuff in it, but not a lot. It had more how to fire a kiln than how to build a kiln.

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

MS. WINOKUR: Although there were some plans. Who did the kiln-building book? Well, it doesn't matter. But there's just so much information now. You want to build a kiln? Go and Google it, and you'll find plans to build a kiln.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. Sure.

MS. WINOKUR: Anything you want to know today is out there in the ether. We had to do it all; we had to figure it all out ourselves, so that is what we did. We ended up being there for two years and the first year, we were there all the year alone. The [first] summer, the people who owned the property were in Europe traveling.

The second summer, they came back and we had a lot of problems. We were living in the house. There was room, but they wanted the house. There was a little cabin, and we ended up moving into this little cabin. Then we had arguments about this, that, and the other thing, so the relationship was—they were happy to have us do this work, but they really—it was their place. And we, because we were living there, felt a sense of ownership, which was completely wrong. It was a tough time for me because of my parent's illnesses and everything so—

MS. RIEDEL: You were completely dependent on this for your livelihood—

MS. WINOKUR: This was our livelihood, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: So we felt, well, maybe we'll find a place. I thought moving to Lenox would have been a good idea, because there was the music festival. My idea was that we would buy a building that had a shop in front. We would live in the back, which was a very viable idea at the time.

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

MS. WINOKUR: I had an uncle, who was a psychiatrist, who was very supportive of me all through my life. He was a little bit nuts, too, but he was very supportive, and he would have lent us the money if we found a place. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: How unfortunate. You'd just sunk all this time into building this one studio—

MS. WINOKUR: Right.

MS. RIEDEL: —and then have to leave—and the kiln.

MS. WINOKUR: Well—

MS. RIEDEL: Were you going to take that with you?

MS. WINOKUR: We did. So then, in the middle of all this, I was coming to Philadelphia periodically to see my parents. Every time I came, I would go and see Rudy and Doris. At one point, he said that Tyler was going to open a school in Rome, and that they wanted him to come and teach there; would Bob like to come and teach at Tyler? And I thought—

MS. RIEDEL: Permanently, or just for filling in?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, initially it was supposed to be temporary. You have to get tenure if you're going to stay someplace.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: It was going to be to replace him. But the program was growing by then, so there was a good chance it would get bigger. I didn't really want to move to Philadelphia again; I'd lived here all my life. I thought, "It's a big country. Why should I come back to Philadelphia?" But, I figured, "Well, I won't tell him about it." I was coming back and forth on the bus, the Greyhound Bus. I thought, "I'd better tell him. He'll be mad if he finds out." [Laughs.] So I told him, and he ended up applying, and he got the job. That's how we came back to Philadelphia. You never get a job like that anymore.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: But it was 45 years ago, so it was a different time.

Anyway, that's how we got back to Philadelphia. But I think the time that we spent in Massachusetts was probably, for me anyway, probably most valuable in learning so many things—learning about really being apart, learning about self-sufficiency. We had a huge vegetable garden that the neighbor's horse would come and plow.

MS. RIEDEL: Seriously?

ROBERT WINOKUR: Seriously. A horse and plow, and bring manure at the same time.

MS. RIEDEL: This was the mid-'60s.

MR. WINOKUR: Yes, and I had a long braid.

MS. RIEDEL: Of course, yeah.

MR. WINOKUR: I canned and preserved whatever was around.

MS. RIEDEL: And you worked in the studio day in and day out.

MR. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: You were making pots.

MS. WINOKUR: I would go in the morning, for example, and I would throw 50 cups, and in the afternoon I would come and put 50 handles on. And every time I threw a cup, I said, "It's a dollar." Every time I put a handle on I'd say, "It's 25 cents," because I guess we sold them for three dollars a cup or something like that. So that was my encouragement, and we used to like looking at the stack of shelves with all the pots as they filled up.

MS. RIEDEL: And did you know anyone else who was doing this at the time? Were the Hinows doing this? Did you know them?

MR. WINOKUR: No, we didn't know them. Yes, there were people in Massachusetts in the hills—like Jack was doing it. There were other people around who were making pots. It was the beginning of—it was the '60s.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. WINOKUR: People were getting out there. Then, at the same time, the craft fairs were starting.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. . . . Because Rhinebeck wasn't until 1971, I don't think. . . .

MS. WINOKUR: Rhinebeck was later; Rhinebeck was a lot later, but I think it was even later than '71. Although it could have been—

MS. RIEDEL: Seventy-one, '74, I thought.

MS. WINOKUR: First there was Mount Stowe [VT].

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —then Mount Snow; then it moved to Bennington, and after Bennington it went to Rhinebeck.

MS. RIEDEL: These were summer fairs?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, this was the summer craft shows.

MS. RIEDEL: So you were selling your work through the summer fairs, through craft shops in the general tri-state area?

MS. WINOKUR: Right. Yes, generally speaking, that's what we were doing. And then, of course, NCECA started. Well, NCECA is 40 years old now. I'm trying to remember if NCECA—well, NCECA may have started right when we moved to Philadelphia, because I remember coming to that first meeting when it was still part of the American Ceramic Society, ACS, and then it broke off—the design division broke off, and Ted Randall started the actual NCECA. He was the first president. . . . [It was Kansas City.] I remember we used to do these potlatches. Everybody would bring a pot and then you would exchange. I got Ken Ferguson's big pitcher.

MS. RIEDEL: Was there a real sense of community?

MS. WINOKUR: There was.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] It sounds like it.

MS. WINOKUR: In the beginning there was. Now, it's just thousands of people; they're mostly students. It's not the same you know, jaded.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. What was it back like then?

MS. WINOKUR: It was very small.

MS. RIEDEL: Was it supportive? Was it competitive? Was it both?

MS. WINOKUR: . . . You get a bunch of artists together, you've got a million egos, but it was also very supportive. The whole idea was to encourage people to develop good programs in their schools.

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

MS. WINOKUR: And there was an exchange of information. How are you teaching this? Where are you getting your materials? In the early '70s, Bob and I were both on the board at various times.

MS. RIEDEL: Of NCECA?

MS. WINOKUR: Of NCECA. He was on the board. I know that there was a meeting in 1975 in Philadelphia, and Bob was the on-site chair of that meeting, so he organized it. It took him two years to organize the whole thing because he did everything alone. Now they've got a program person, and they've got an executive director, and they've got all this stuff that we talked about in the '70s that the organization needed. Now, of course, it's all there.

MS. RIEDEL: That must be gratifying.

MS. WINOKUR: It is. In some ways it is. In other ways you think, This should be—look, I started to do that. They have smaller conferences. Like they had this one in Santa Fe, which I'm kind of sorry I didn't go to. It was . . . [called "Critical Ceramics"].

MS. RIEDEL: So Bob took the job at Tyler.

MS. WINOKUR: Anyway, we came to Philadelphia, and we decided that we would find a property and build a studio, and if the job didn't work out, we could still be potters.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Which is why we bought this place.

MS. RIEDEL: Forty-six years ago you were saying, right?

MS. WINOKUR: . . . [Forty-six, yes!] The house, the garage, and three and a half acres. We built the studio in 1967 in the beginning, because it took awhile to get the plans, the whole thing done.

And, oh, interesting about that: the summer of '66, before we moved down here, we taught at Haystack. One of the young men at the time in the class was Mark Tribe, who is an architect. He's at Berkeley, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: He designed our studio for us. [It's the only building he designed that got built!]

MS. RIEDEL: One quick question before we completely leave Massachusetts. Were you able to support yourselves as production potters?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, we were. In fact, when we left, we had enough money—we had, I think, more saved than when we started. So we had come out with—I don't even remember how much. . . . [It] was a reasonable amount of money. So we were able to do that.

MS. RIEDEL: What was the atmosphere like at the time? It seems as if there was an authentic interest in ceramics. People were really excited about functional clay.

MS. WINOKUR: They were interested in the hand. In the '60s people were really interested in making things with their hands. The whole hippie movement was like that. People were tie-dyeing; people were selling all this—and when we went to the craft shows, you could either buy a table for X number of dollars, or you could tailgate. So a lot of people came with their trucks, and they opened up the back of their truck, and they put the stuff out. Well, you would never do that now.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. And was there bartering as well, bartering back and forth between the craftspeople?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. It was a much [freer atmosphere]. I don't know what's going on now with the 20-somethings and what they're going through, except that I feel like right now, when you get out of college, you have a website, you have a calling card, you have a gallery or not, but you have a career path going. We didn't

have career paths.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: You're going to be a potter, so what does that mean? You're out there making stuff and you're having a good time, but you don't think of it as a career path. It's not high-tech; it was low-tech.

MS. RIEDEL: It was a lifestyle choice?

MS. WINOKUR: It was a lifestyle choice. Yes, absolutely.

But I have to say that while we were there, we missed academe. We missed the interaction with other professionals. We missed having [lecturers] come to the school. Because even in Texas—they had a big music school in North Texas, and there were always amazing concerts. I remember sitting in the front row one night with Isaac Stern playing, which was amazing.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: So we really wanted to have that. In fact, when we came here, I was hoping we could live on campus. But there was, of course, no faculty housing. Everybody lives all over the place, and I kind of wanted to be in a college town. But Philadelphia's been good to us; I can't complain.

MS. RIEDEL: So when did you begin teaching in Arcadia? Did it happen fairly quickly after you got here? Did you have the time then [inaudible]?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, first of all, I had two kids in the meantime.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. They were born when you arrived here?

MS. WINOKUR: [Stephan] was born in '67; Michael was born in '71.

MS. RIEDEL: And you came here in '66.

MS. WINOKUR: Sixty-six, yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. So your life changed in a lot of ways.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, my life changed radically.

At some point Jack Davis, who was the chair of the art department at what was then Beaver College, had been the assistant dean at Tyler.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: So I knew him. And one day he called up and asked a lot of questions about building a ceramics program. I said, "Gee, Jack. I wouldn't mind teaching that." And he said, "Well, I've already hired somebody." But a year later the guy who he had hired, who was one of Bob's very first graduate students, got a job teaching at Montgomery County Community College full-time. The job at Beaver was part-time, so I ended up getting that job. And when I got there, there was—

MS. RIEDEL: What year was that?

MS. WINOKUR: Nineteen seventy-three, fall of '73.

There was very little there. There was one electric kiln or two electric kilns, I can't remember now, and a bunch of wheels, and one small room. No, two rooms. There was a room for the kilns and glazing, a studio room, and an empty hallway. Upstairs there was a Montessori nursery school.

MS. RIEDEL: Upstairs?

MS. WINOKUR: In the building, yes, at the time. I started teaching and I had five or six students the first semester. Then the following year I got two classes, and it built, and finally they got rid of Montessori school and they started developing programs. It took me awhile, but I finally built up a program.

MS. RIEDEL: And you were teaching wheel work and functional ware?

MS. WINOKUR: I was teaching everything.

MS. RIEDEL: And by that you mean—

MS. WINOKUR: I taught hand-building.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I taught raku.

MS. RIEDEL: And where did you learn raku? Or did—you picked it up when you were in Massachusetts.

MS. WINOKUR: Massachusetts.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. When did the transition from stoneware to porcelain happen, and how did that come about?

MS. WINOKUR: Nineteen seventy.

MS. RIEDEL: Right—so a little earlier. You were already in Philadelphia?

MS. WINOKUR: We were in Philadelphia. Bob went to a NCECA conference. We used to take turns initially, when the kids were little, going to conferences. He went to NCECA, and he came back and he said Ken Ferguson and Warren MacKenzie had discovered Grolleg porcelain, and they made up this formula, and we should try it.

So we both started to do it, to work in porcelain, and Bob didn't—it didn't work for him, but I kept with it. In the meantime, he went to salt glazing and I went to porcelain. We felt that that was really healthy that we were both doing two completely different things.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, and so while Bob was teaching at Tyler and you had two small children, did you have a studio and you were able to work at all?

MS. WINOKUR: [Yes, I worked in our studio.]

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, you did. So you continued on with functional work and began to experiment with porcelain in '70?

MS. WINOKUR: Initially, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And what was the allure of porcelain? What about it was interesting to you?

MS. WINOKUR: It just felt right to me.

MS. RIEDEL: To throw it?

MS. WINOKUR: To throw it, to handle it. I ultimately developed my own formula by altering that initial formula, which was very simple. It was Grolleg, feldspar, quartz, and a little bentonite. It was a really simple formula. And I added grog.

MS. RIEDEL: Grog to porcelain?

MS. WINOKUR: Grog—200 mesh—[molachite] grog, which is essentially porcelain ground up.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: But for hand-building and for the size of the stuff I do, it gives it body.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MS. WINOKUR: But it's not as translucent as other porcelain bodies can be.

MS. RIEDEL: You wouldn't throw with grog porcelain?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: You did? Interesting. Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: It's not heavy grog. You—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: —don't even know it's there. You really would hardly know that it's there, but it is. So that's

when I started to work with porcelain, 1970.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you drawn to its consistency, to its thinness, to what it could do with glaze, all of the above?

MS. WINOKUR: All those things plus the fact that you can draw on it with a pencil, with a ceramic pencil.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: I like the fact that everything you did showed. All your marks would show.

MS. RIEDEL: It didn't feel shocking to make that shift because you [inaudible].

MS. WINOKUR: Well, it was a gradual shift because—and you'll see it in a couple of these slides—initially, I basically made the same forms I was making in stoneware in porcelain, and I was glazing with colored glazes. I didn't give up glaze till probably the '80s sometime. So it's all been an evolution. I'm not shocking at all[!]

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: I wish I was more shocking.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, it makes sense when I look at the work, too. There's that sense of geology in those slow shifts. So, it makes sense.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, but if I look at this whole body of work over all these years, it's all been a very slow, gradual movement from one thing to another.

I feel like I've always been interested in the landscape. But a lot of the stuff I was looking at initially were, like, the Maine rocks or Southwestern rocks, and it's not until really 2000-something that I got super-interested in realizing, "Dummy, porcelain and ice, it's a perfect match. Where have you been all this time?"

But when I started to do a lot of the landscape [works], the idea of using the porcelain to describe something that was maybe brown was that it became surrealistic, in the sense that it's very easy to make a brown landscape out of brown clay. That's very literal. But if you do it in white clay, and then you suggest by drawing or using sulfates on it with pale colors; the suggestion, I think, is—to me, anyway—it's more imaginative.

MS. RIEDEL: Before we get to the landscape-inspired work, I want to talk about the boxes—

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, [okay].

MS. RIEDEL: —because those were some of the very first porcelain pieces. [Inaudible] and had you done boxes in stoneware, or did the porcelain somehow work as a catalyst for that new form?

MS. WINOKUR: I did a lot of slab-building with stoneware—

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —made a lot of planters. At one point we [got] a commission to do a bunch of planters for some place in Chicago. I don't remember. They needed to be big so they could put a flowerpot inside of them. Actually I've got a slide of one of those. When we go to the studio, we'll see it.

MS. RIEDEL: Were there many commissions in your experience at that point in your career?

MS. WINOKUR: No.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: That was one of the early ones.

Anyway, the boxes—oh, I know how that started.

MS. RIEDEL: You do?

MS. WINOKUR: I had been making—the first boxes I made when my father died. My father died a horrible death. He died of cancer at a time when they didn't give you a lot of drugs. I saw him the night before he died, and it was just really a nightmare. I had dreams about my father afterwards. I remember one dream where I was being chased by a ghost, and I woke up in a cold sweat. It really scared me. So I went to the studio and I built a box and I put the ghost in the box. I did a series of these. I called them Ghost Boxes;they were just very simple, flat-sided things.

Then from there, I was looking around for texture to put into the clay, and I discovered lace. It was [during] the women's movement, and so I started pressing lace into the clay and making all these little boxes that were very precious that you could put things in. We were friends at the time with [Olaf Koogfors], who passed away, as you probably know, at a young age, and Stanley Lechtzin, who was one of Bob's colleagues. But nevertheless, we were friends with them. And I decided that I would make these porcelain boxes for their really expensive jewelry to go in—

MS. RIEDEL: Ah, of course.

MS. WINOKUR: —which never happened, but it was a catalyst.

MS. RIEDEL: And these boxes were—

MS. WINOKUR: So that's—

MS. RIEDEL: —the size of the one we're looking at? So they're 12 inches square, something like that, eight inches?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, some were. I made a lot of really little ones.

MS. RIEDEL: Really small ones? Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I made them all sizes. That's a good example of one with the lace, and I kept that one because I liked it.

The face. Then the faces came from—I'm not even sure where, but one day [I] got this idea that I would make faces and put them on the boxes. That's where they came from. Those were bigger. Those were probably like —about that size [10 by 14 inches].

MS. RIEDEL: You mentioned the Ghost Boxes coming from a dream, and I know you've mentioned—I think you've mentioned—the unconscious as a source of inspiration—

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: —and influence. Was that one of your first senses of taking something from a dream, or from an unconscious image, and putting it into your work?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, it's interesting. At the time, I was reading Jung, and I was reading a lot of Buddhist [literature], and I was really into a lot of spiritual meanderings. I think that it was all very internal, and I think that at that time of my life, when I think back on it now, that's where a lot of that stuff came from, were these internal musings and dreams. I was dreaming a lot so—and now I would say that a lot of the stuff I'm doing is so external. I'm so conscious of the melting ice and so conscious of what we're doing to the earth that it's not internal at all. It's much more of an awareness and an intellectual response than in those days.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: I guess that the whole idea of allowing myself to be feminine was another thing that came into it. Because when we were making pots for a living, this was maleness: how big can you throw; how tall can you do it; how much clay can you lift; how strong are you? It had nothing to do with being a woman, not that women haven't always been hard workers, because they have been, but I think it's really hard when you— this is interesting, making me think back about the way I may have felt 40 years ago.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: It's like I was a different person, I guess.

MS. RIEDEL: I'm sure.

MS. WINOKUR: I think wherever you are, at what point in your life, affects the thing that you do. I do remember, when I had the kids, that at that point is when I gave up making functional stuff as a total output, because I decided if I had X number of hours to be in the studio, I was going to do what I wanted to do, for me, and not worry about anything else.

MS. RIEDEL: That's interesting. Did you have the job at Beaver by then, as well?

MS. WINOKUR: No.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. But you had limited time in the studio and [inaudible].

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I had two little kids.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: I would have a lady who used to live across the street [who passed away of course] take [Stephan] when he was little for a couple of hours a couple of times of week so I could work in the studio, before I had Michael. She was a nice lady but she said to him one time, "I don't know why your mother had you if she just wants to go work."

MS. RIEDEL: She said that to your son?

MS. WINOKUR: She said that to my kid.

MS. RIEDEL: And he was old enough to remember and repeat it to you?

MS. WINOKUR: Probably, yeah. He did. He told me that a long time ago now, but, yes. So that was the attitude about women. If you were at home, even if you had a studio, that was a hobby. It really wasn't real work. That's something very hard for people to understand.

MS. RIEDEL: But you felt compelled. You clearly felt driven.

MS. WINOKUR: I felt driven, yes, absolutely driven. Also, I needed to make some money, and we were selling things at the time. It was before Helen's Gallery. Helen's Gallery opened in '73.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

So then you had decided that you weren't going to make functional work because you had limited time in the studio. Did you feel that it was important that you be able to sell whatever you were going to make, these boxes?

MS. WINOKUR: I guess I wanted to. I figured I would be able to sell them but . . . I guess I was cocky enough to think that anything I make, people would want. [They Laugh.]

MS. RIEDEL: Was it fairly true? Did you sell the boxes?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I sold a lot of those little boxes. Every once in a while, somebody says, "Oh, by the way, I bought a box of yours 20 years ago." That's really strange. A couple of them have been on eBay.

MS. RIEDEL: So were these porcelain with lace and celadon?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. Some of them had luster on them—

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —bright gold. I don't know if I have any. I might have one or two still around.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you aware of Beatrice Wood at the time?

MS. WINOKUR: No, I had no idea. I didn't know [her]. Natzler was there, but I didn't know much about Beatrice Wood. There wasn't a lot of information out there.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. It's hard to imagine that today.

MS. WINOKUR: Today we are so glutted, it's shocking, but there was not a lot**.** Dan Rhodes's book came out, and then who was next? Who wrote the next book? [Glenn] Nelson wrote a book about ceramics. We slowly started to get stuff, and then, of course, [Rose] started writing about what was going on on the West Coast—

MS. RIEDEL: Rose Slivka.

MS. WINOKUR: Rose Slivka. Then suddenly awareness is coming into what's really going on out there. But when you think about what's out there now, it's just amazing to me. I've got stuff in, like, 10 books, if not more.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. So what was *Craft Horizons* like then? Rose Slivka was the editor, and what was your thinking about it? Was that something you looked forward to reading [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, we were always excited for it to come. And of course, the response to Voulkos's work

initially was, “Oh, my God. Look what he’s doing. That’s so awful.”

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: But after a while, you begin to understand that it’s not awful. It’s really important work. But initially, as an East Coast, Alfred-driven potter, it was shocking work.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: I looked at other [things] when I got interested in the boxes; I started looking at Art Nouveau.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I have a lot of books about Art Nouveau that I collected and looked at and used a lot of that information. And that whole beautiful flowing line I got interested in because porcelain lent itself to that.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: That was in the ‘70s. That was really important, the whole Art Nouveau movement, to me. I should—if you want to talk about the evolution of the work, I should probably go through some of the slide things, because it’s easier to almost talk about some of that showing you pictures.

MS. RIEDEL: Shall we go take a look at that now and then come back?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, we can look at that, and then on the computer. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: We have 20 minutes on this disc. So do you want to take a break and go look at the slides and we can come back? Or shall we talk about a couple of other things?

MS. WINOKUR: It’s up to you. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: Well, let’s just maybe talk about inspiration and how your sources of inspiration have changed from the early.

So we were just mentioning geology and the Arctic and becoming much more externally focused recently. Back then, you mentioned Art Nouveau, and you talked about dreams. Were there any other profound sources of inspiration or places where the ideas were coming from?

MS. WINOKUR: Initially, like I said, the whole box thing started with my interest in decoration and in Art Nouveau and in that magical realm. One of the slides that I have in my slide lecture is a painting, one of the romantic paintings of Ophelia floating down the river. I always forget the painter’s name, which is ridiculous.

MS. RIEDEL: We can add it.

MS. WINOKUR: I’ll think about it. [John Everett Millais.] So that particular image became this etherealness of women. There were all these female faces that I did that had to do with this dreaming. They’re all called *Dream Boxes*, as a matter of fact.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I think I started to make those in ’73. Paul Smith had a big show in New York in ’74 called *Baroque*. It was *Baroque ’74,* and I had [the] Ophelia box that I made in that show.

MS. RIEDEL: The American Craft Museum.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, and you remember the original—did you see it, the one that was next to the MoMA, the little museum?

MS. RIEDEL: I don’t think so.

MS. WINOKUR: You’re too young.

MS. RIEDEL: Maybe a little bit, yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: It wasn’t across the street. It was the Modern—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: It was right next to the Modern. It was a townhouse. Well, that's where that show was.

MS. RIEDEL: I think there's a Folk Art—Folk Art Museum is what I'm familiar with.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, the Folk Art Museum is further down the street. But anyway, he had this show there. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: The *Dream Box.*

MS. WINOKUR: The *Dream Box* [*Ophelia*], and I was trying to find it for some reason a couple of years ago. I wrote to Paul and I said, "Do you remember who bought it?" He said he thought it was somebody on staff, but he couldn't remember, blah, blah, blah. And then I get a little email from somebody, I think a year ago, saying that she had it. Of course, now I forgot where the hell I put the email. It's gone. I can't remember again who it is, but somebody has that piece, which is nice to know that it's still [owned].

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MS. WINOKUR: That was my favorite one of the whole [group], but they all kind of came out of that. It was this face floating on lace. And then when you lifted the box up, there was a drawing inside of some kind.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah! Landscape? Figurative?

MS. WINOKUR: Some kind of—

MS. RIEDEL: Abstract?

MS. WINOKUR: —figure drawing, I guess.

But I guess the shift came in 1982, I think. I was asked to do a workshop in Portland, Oregon, and I flew over the Rocky Mountains. I literally had this epiphany of looking down on the earth and seeing the Rocky Mountains from above.

MS. RIEDEL: Now, clearly you'd flown before, but not over the Rockies? Is that it?

MS. WINOKUR: Right.

I took photographs [of the mountains]. I was enchanted by aerial photography, and there was this shift.

Well, here's the other thing that happened that was interesting. I was asked to do a lot of workshops in the '70s, and since I was only teaching one class a semester, I could go away. I don't know how many workshops I did all over the country, mostly for ladies' groups who had asked me, "How do you manage to juggle being a mother and having a career?" It was a really interesting thing.

MS. RIEDEL: Were these sort of like women's encounter groups, something like that?

MS. WINOKUR: No, they were craft groups.

MS. RIEDEL: Women's crafts groups?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, there were men, too, but mostly they were women.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: That's one of the questions I always got asked: "How do you manage to juggle being a mother and having a career?"

MS. RIEDEL: And what did you say?

MS. WINOKUR: It wasn't easy, but you compartmentalized your life. This is the studio time, and this is the kids' time. When they came home from school at 3:00, I closed the studio door and I was here for them. But anyway, so basically it was an epiphany that I could—

MS. RIEDEL: Would you describe it?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, but wait a second.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: What I was going to say about the women's groups is that I would show—I was running around

the country showing everybody how you press lace into clay and how you can use the texture and then pooling the glazes and all this other kind of stuff. I finally felt like I'd given it away. When you start to see clones of yourself popping up all over, it was, like, why was I doing this? I was showing everybody how to do what I did, and so it wasn't mine anymore.

I knew I had to move on; that it was time for me to give that up and move on to the next thing. And so the next thing, instead of being internal, it was external, and the external was the actual landscape. Even though the boxes have the undulations of the land, I had to give up all that decorative stuff to be able to concentrate on the form and the drawing that I see. Boy, when you're flying, if you look out the window, you see such fabulous drawings.

And I started photographing those. I'd get on an airplane at times—the airplanes were half-empty then. I jumped from one side of the plane to the other. People thought I was nuts, but I was taking pictures, some of which didn't come out very well. But enough did so that I had information. Then I started collecting books about aerial photography, so—

MS. RIEDEL: I want to talk about that first experience seeing those Rockies. You describe it as an epiphany. What in particular about it?

MS. WINOKUR: First of all, they were white—[laughs]—and they're just so fantastic. You know what I mean? I was just so amazed.

MS. RIEDEL: At the scale?

MS. WINOKUR: At the scale, and then the plane was basically close to them because they're high.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: The plane's at 30,000 feet. I don't know how many feet up the Rockies come, but there was enough where I could really see—get a good image of what I was looking at. So that was very exciting to me.

MS. RIEDEL: And the texture, as well, perhaps? The light?

MS. WINOKUR: The whole thing. It was just the phenomenon of the earth.

MS. RIEDEL: Also I'm just thinking about having grown up on the East Coast. Had you not seen mountains that large before?

MS. WINOKUR: No, I had never seen the Rocky Mountains before.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, so there was no sense of what that scale of mountain—

MS. WINOKUR: No, I had no idea.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: It was—

MS. RIEDEL: The Catskills and the Poconos, but no Rockies.

MS. WINOKUR: But I had never seen them from above.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I don't even know where I had flown actually, whether—I must have flown before Portland. But it was just—to me, it was, like, this big deal to see this amazing planet—

MS. RIEDEL: So it changed your point of view.

MS. WINOKUR: —and to also see circular irrigation—I had no idea even what it was.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: Aliens had made circles on the ground.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So also I think that I tend to have this a little bit naïvete still. I can get kicks out of very little.

This morning I went out to cut some zinnias, and there was this gorgeous Monarch butterfly sitting on one of them. It just blew me away. My relationship to the planet is really very strong.

MS. RIEDEL: Was nature important to you as a child?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, yeah, I looked for fairies under the grass. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: I didn't have it then, because I grew up in a row house. I guess we went to the seashore. We went to Atlantic City [NJ] in the summertime for a week. It was a big, big thing, but I'd never really been anywhere as a kid. We didn't travel anywhere.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: There wasn't any money.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: I think '82 was the big shift for me from the whole internal musings to getting outside of myself. And then, of course, I started looking at more literature that had to do with aerial photography and reading different kinds of books, but I still—a lot of the spiritual stuff I still keep with me.

It's funny. I went through a really strong period of reading a lot of things that had to do with the spirit, the kind of imaginary world that I think a lot of writers make up to maybe give them a sense of where they fit in the world. Because we're each this little individual package of cells that walk around on this planet, and we're really very isolated in a lot of ways. What we all try to do is to connect with one another. In the final analysis, it's almost impossible because you don't really know what's in somebody else's head. At any given moment, it's —

MS. RIEDEL: And did that somehow also connect with nature, that sense of spirit, or is it separate?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, yes, of course.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. So were there books in particular that were especially [inaudible]?

MS. WINOKUR: I could go looking through my bookshelf and say, "This one was important. That was important." But off the top of my head, the one that really was interesting was Bachelard's—

MS. RIEDEL: Yes. *Poetics of Space*?

MS. WINOKUR: —*Poetics of Space*. I go back and forth to that book. One of my friends gave that to me.

MS. RIEDEL: That makes sense.

MS. WINOKUR: The boxes, after the lace boxes and after the very initial landscape box, I started doing these things which had interior spaces in them, which you couldn't see. In other words, it was a sculptural form with a little [shape that can be removed]. And inside there was something else, like a little room. Then there was [another small opening], usually a triangle, that you would go through into the interior space. They were kind of magical.

I had a show at a college in Pittsburgh. [Jerry Caplan got me that show; he's since passed away.] At the opening, I remember the president was a woman president who came with her little girl. I had taken the little lids off of [several of the boxes], and the little girl said, "Well, what's in there?"

And I said, "Well, you have to use your imagination; you decide what's in there."

She said, "No, but I want you to tell me."

And I thought, Poor kid, you know? I think I must have told her again that she had to make up whatever she wanted that could be living in there, but—so that's a kind of—

MS. RIEDEL: Nobody had told her about the fairies under the grass.

MS. WINOKUR: They did not.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: Right. Another part of that spiritual thing was to make these special boxes with secret compartments.

The interesting thing is that, now that I've given up all that work and gone on to these big statements, there's a lot of people making [things] that fall into that realm now. But I don't think I could go back to it. I think you do something and you go past that in your life, and you have to move on to the next—whatever that next thing may be.

So anyway, I could look and find some of the books later on.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, . . . that's one of the reasons we're doing this over two days—

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: —is we can pick it up again—that particular part of the conversation up again.

[END SD1 TR2.]

MS. RIEDEL: This is Mija Riedel with Paula Winokur at the artist's home and studio in [Horsham,] Pennsylvania, on July 21, 2011, for the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art. This is card number two.

So we just had a tour through the studio and saw some of the earlier work and slides of some of the very early work, some of the lace pieces that were actually a combination of hand-built forms and thrown forms.

Maybe just a quick question before we come back to the earth pieces, or the land-inspired pieces, that we were starting to talk about—you hadn't seen anyone do that sort of combination of hand-built work with patterns, and then those thrown spouts? This is something that you were figuring out as you went?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. And I think, for the most part, most of the stuff that I've gotten ideas about, I've ended up figuring out for myself. I've always found that, to me, is almost as interesting as making the work.

Because I've always [thought] about art-making as problem-solving—and there, again, I think if somebody showed me how to do it, then I would have had to figure out how I could make it my own. But since nobody showed me how to do it, I was able to do it and discover how to make it. And that was as important as making it. Now, I may have seen similar things. I don't really remember anymore.

But I know that, for the most part—well, for example, I saw early on, when I started to think about working in porcelain, going through museums—and this is where the slides would help, too. If you remember, there's a picture of a celadon bowl, Korean celadon bowl, with carving in it. Well, I didn't know how they did those. I found out later on that they were made on a mold, and the mold was carved.

It was that kind of thing. But I didn't know how it was made, and I wanted to get texture inside of the bowl, so I figured out that if I—and I also found out that you couldn't throw on the wheel and then put the lace on the wet clay, because it would make a mess. So the lace had to go on the clay when it was the right consistency, which was not wet. It had to be plastic, but not wet.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So if you roll out a slab, you can then roll this texture into the clay. And then what I did was I put the lace on the clay, rolled it out, and then cut a circle and put it on the wheel, and then put a coil around it and through the rim.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah, interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: I figured that out myself. Of course, years later, I discovered that—or some time later—I discovered that I could have made a plaster mold and put the plate on top of it, and it would have had the texture in it. That's the way that the Chinese and the Japanese did it [mostly the Chinese did it] with those beautiful celadon bowls. I've got one over there, as a matter of fact.

But I almost think not knowing [things] forces you to go figure [it] out, and you end up with a better product. . . .

So the same thing happened with making all these bottles with the texture. I found out that I couldn't throw something and then wrap the thing around it and expect that texture to stay there. I would have to roll it out on this perfectly appropriate moisture of clay, and then wrap it up and throw it.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have much back-and-forth or brainstorming with other artists at the time? It sounds as if you were working a lot of things out by experimenting alone in the studio.

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah. I've pretty much been alone. Very rarely have I worked with anybody else. I can't really think of many times—doing workshops. Sometimes, doing a workshop and teaching something, somebody will come up and say, "Well, have you tried it this way?" And I think, "Oh, why didn't I think of that?" I don't know. I think maybe I missed out not having someone, because Bob and I hardly ever talk to each other about what we're doing.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, not very much.

MS. RIEDEL: Has that been true from the start?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, in the beginning, we were both making functional stuff, and in fact, we were just signing "Winokur" on it, without who was who, but—

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: —then we did discuss what we were doing, because it was a question of selling it. But once we both started going in our own directions, there's very little critique because usually, if we critique each other, we get mad at each other.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: So the best thing to do is to just keep quiet. Well, he has this habit. If I'm showing somebody something, like having a party in the studio or whatever, and I'll be showing, and he'll say, "And have you thought about trying it this way?"

Why didn't you tell me that when there was nobody around? Why do you have to say it in front of other people? Then I will sometimes walk through, and I'll say, "I can't help but noticing that if you changed that and did that, it would be much better." So we've learned to keep our mouths shut.

MS. RIEDEL: So it's not necessarily helpful, that, particularly—

MS. WINOKUR: It's not helpful, usually.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: It's much better if we just separate—

MS. RIEDEL: And figure out through experimentation?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting, interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: And like the cups I made—they're all hand-built. They're not thrown.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: So I've figured out how to do that.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, and to then assemble them, you're right, you can see a bit of a seam. But it's something that —

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, there is a seam, but the handles are traditionally pulled handles because they feel good, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, a pulled handle really has a feel unlike anything else.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. I think some things are appropriate for what they are. I think that's important. If you're making something for somebody to use, it needs to be a comfortable fit. I have a lot of these cups that are very clever, but you could hardly drink out of them. It's interesting that potters have used—and I use the term "potters" all the time, but really, it's artists—have used a form as a vehicle for self-expression. It could be anything, and the way you interpret it makes it unique.

MS. RIEDEL: Do you make a distinction between potters and artists? Are some potters artists and others are not? Are some artists potters? Have you thought about that much, one way or the other?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, then when I did think about it, I know that there are some potters that make stuff which is very ordinary and nice. Sometimes very well crafted, but I think it leaves something to be desired. And then there are people who are potters who make things which are extraordinary. It's just like anything else. Some people are better at it than others.

MS. RIEDEL: Do you think of yourself as an artist now?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you think yourself as an artist when you were making functional pots?

MS. WINOKUR: I guess not. I guess I thought of myself as a potter. I often refer to myself as a potter, but I really think that I'm an artist.

It's interesting. When I was a student, the attitude was, you're a student; you're not an artist. Someday you may become an artist, but not yet. Today everybody's an artist. Kids in kindergarten are artists. So it's semantics. What does this word mean anymore? I don't think it has the cachet that it used to have.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: That, I think, bothers me a little bit. Maybe that's being snobby, but nevertheless, I've always felt that it was a term that you earned. Today it's—I just saw an article in the paper the other day, Teenage Art Show, where there's these little kids that make art, and their parents grab the paintings away when they think they're done, and they charge lots of money for them. I don't think it's conscious. But on the other hand, whatever floats your boat.

MS. RIEDEL: Is that something, as a teacher, you tried to address specifically?

MS. RIEDEL: How would you put it?

MS. WINOKUR: I think in being able to say [to] women: a) women can do this. You don't have to be a powerful man who can lift, who can throw 50 pounds of clay at once on the wheel. You can do other things. Of course, women today are certainly doing that. The field, I think, has probably gotten more women working in it now than men; it didn't used to be that way. The interesting thing is that during the '30s—'20s and '30s—when you think about the women then, Rookwood Pottery was run by women. Everything kind of shifted around after the war.

. . . Women during the Second World War took on a lot of male jobs. And then when the war was over, they wanted to get the women out of those jobs, so the men could have the jobs. Now, if women would just stay home and be mothers, there would be all these jobs available for men. [Laughter.]

MS. RIEDEL: Probably not likely to happen.

MS. WINOKUR: I doubt it.

MS. RIEDEL: We have a little time left on this disc. Shall we talk about the trips to Alaska and Iceland, and finish up the travel idea?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, right. So let's see, we went to Alaska.

MS. RIEDEL: When was that?

MS. WINOKUR: I think it was in 1994.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, early, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: We flew to Anchorage, rented a car and drove all over and went hiking and all that. Then we went to Seward and took a day-trip boat out to see the glaciers. At that time, I wasn't really that interested. Alaska was just—we wanted to go to Alaska. So we went out on this boat with like a hundred people on it.

And interestingly enough, we met a colleague of mine. We were sitting together at graduation. What are you going to do this summer? I don't know. What are you—we're going to Alaska. Oh, we're going to Alaska, so shall we meet?

So we met these friends in Seward and we went on this boat trip together. We get to the glacier and it was a June day. It was freezing cold out on the water. We had every piece of clothing we could think of on us, and we get to the glacier, and it calved right in front of us. It was really extraordinary. The whole front fell off. Now,

this was before any discussion of global warming. I had no photographs of that. Bob took some photographs of it. But I wasn't—it was interesting to me, but I didn't relate it to what I was doing in clay at the time.

MS. RIEDEL: And it didn't have the epiphany quality that Mesa Verde did.

MS. WINOKUR: No. Not at that time.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay, right.

MS. WINOKUR: So that was an interesting trip. Then, the interesting thing is I really can't remember exactly when it suddenly occurred to me that glaciers were so important. The first piece that I did had more to do with my responding to the environment in terms of climate change, and—

MS. RIEDEL: What was that first piece?

MS. WINOKUR: That's—this piece was this one.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, *Global Warnings* [2003]?

MS. WINOKUR: *Global Warnings*.

MS. RIEDEL: That was from what year?

MS. WINOKUR: This has text written on it. Does it have the date? Of course not.

MS. RIEDEL: It was around the time of the *Segments Erattacus*—1999?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, I think it—no, no, this was probably around 2002 or '03. Actually, I think it was 2003.

MS. RIEDEL: Around the time of the *Wasp Ledges?* The repetitious ones.

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, I think so. I did this piece and—

MS. RIEDEL: Is this the first real environmental statement you feel in your work?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, it is. Then I did the *Ice Cores* [2006]. And with the *Ice Cores*, I started looking at—well, I think actually I have to give credit to *National Geographic*, which we get every month. I have this stuff out and these piles of stuff in the studio of—there are discussions about climate change and global warming. I started getting really focused on that. And with that piece, it was actually making specific statements. Each one of them is like a little globe, and it has messages on it about what we're doing—I don't think you can read it on there—messages about what we're doing to the environment.

[END SD3 TR2.]

MS. WINOKUR: [In progress.] —and what we should be doing. Not all of them have texts, but a lot of them do. That piece has been shown a number of times. [It is traveling now.]

MS. RIEDEL: They're all mounted on the wall. Are they meant to be—in this installation they're set in a corner of a wall.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. I like to put them in corners so that you can read it by—it's confined like that. They have been shown flat, but I like it much better in the corner. It's been any number of places.

MS. RIEDEL: Are you specific? Because it's very much of a gridlike piece, are you very specific about it being five [feet] tall and—

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: —however many, 10, 11 long?

MS. WINOKUR: [It is five high and 11 wide; total, 55 globes.]

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. And it's always meant to be horizontal, not vertical?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, at the Arcadia show it was hung vertically. I didn't really like the way it was hung, but it looked good in terms of designing the whole space. And you couldn't read it because it was up a little bit too high.

MS. RIEDEL: But that's interesting that you're comfortable with it being installed a variety of ways. Or do you have a preferred—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I'd prefer it in a corner.

MS. RIEDEL: At eye height roughly?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, at eye height.

I remember it being in Finland, in Helsinki, at the museum there, and watching at the opening, because I didn't know very many people, so I could just kind of stand there and watch. People were really reading it, which I felt good about. Now it's become an old message, but initially I thought it was good.

So then I started looking at the melting ice. That's really what triggered the desire to do the other things.

Then in 2006, we went to Iceland. I then really had an opportunity to see what was going on and to walk next to the glaciers. We went to this just incredible [place, very] different than Alaska.

The Alaska glaciers were actually coming into the ocean, and you had to go on a boat to look at them. Here we drove to—the sea was over there and you could hardly see it. We went to this area that was [on the glacier]. I was standing right next to it. It's like, there's the glacier and there I am.

There were all these fissures. And because of the volcanic action in Iceland, there's also a lot of black volcanic dust. So they're very black and white. That's something that I'm still trying to figure out how I can do successfully, because when you mix the two, when you layer the clays together, if you're not careful, it gets really smudgy.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So I have to figure that out, which I will do eventually.

Then we also went to this other area which was called Jökulsárlón, which is a lake bed, or a lagoon actually—a lagoon at the edge of a glacier. There all the icebergs are coming down from the glacier and forming and changing constantly. That was really fascinating.

MS. RIEDEL: To see that geologic—

MS. WINOKUR: Right.

MS. RIEDEL: —action in action.

MS. WINOKUR: If you would go back another day, it would be different. We went very early. We went, actually, Easter weekend. If we would have gone in May, you can go out in a little Kodiak boat and go in and out of these icebergs. I wouldn't mind going back to Iceland. Now I would really love to go to Antarctica, but it's a really expensive trip.

MS. RIEDEL: It is.

MS. WINOKUR: I can't get anybody to go with me. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Why are you drawn there? What would you like to see?

MS. WINOKUR: I would like to have a confrontation with the icebergs.

MS. RIEDEL: A confrontation with the icebergs.

MS. WINOKUR: Or maybe "confrontation" is the wrong word. I would like to be able to physically see them. I see photographs, and they're enormous, but the photographs are little.

MS. RIEDEL: What about the ice in Antarctica draws you rather than returning to another part of Alaska or Iceland?

MS. WINOKUR: There's not as many glaciers in Alaska, although I'm willing to go to Alaska. Bob might go to Alaska with me. There are some little boat trips, four days or five days, where they go in and out of the islands. I don't want to go on a big cruise ship. The whole idea of that just really turns me off, although that would be the easiest and cheapest way to go to see them, because I could do the inside passage that way. But I don't know how close you get. I have this yen to go, and it needs to be sooner rather than later. [Went to Greenland in 2013.]

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: This piece, actually, is kind of based loosely on—

MS. RIEDEL: What's that piece?

MS. WINOKUR: This is called *Glacier's Edge* [2010], and it's taken from photographs of Patagonia's ice field; the glacier was called Perito Moreno. That's also another very long, complicated trip. You have to go to Argentina and then get on a boat.

Interestingly enough, I got an email at some point, I think a year ago, from somebody doing her master's degree. She wanted to have my thoughts about all this iceberg stuff. She was going to Antarctica.

MS. RIEDEL: . . . I remember a few artists going on an expedition specifically to get the state of what was happening there, maybe a year or two ago.

MS. WINOKUR: Really? I missed that. I wish I had known about it.

MS. RIEDEL: I'll ask the woman I know who went to see if we can get some more information about that. I'm just thinking about scale and glaciers.

Hearing your desire to really experience them firsthand more than you have is just making me think again about the significance of scale in your work. Do you feel that the scale you're currently working in is satisfactory to you in terms of what you want to realize with the glaciers?

MS. WINOKUR: It has to be, because beyond that is almost getting to the point where I can't handle it anymore; it's heavy work.

MS. RIEDEL: It is heavy work.

MS. WINOKUR: These are all three feet high, and the other thing is that my kiln shelves—if you span two kiln shelves, I've got three feet.

MS. RIEDEL: Got you.

MS. WINOKUR: Those are parameters that I have to work with.

MS. RIEDEL: How tall was *Glacial Runoff* [2009]? That's 96 inches high.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, it's eight feet high.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: So each one of those sections is about this big. It's a shame that's not a good photograph. It was a really hard piece to photograph.

MS. RIEDEL: I would imagine that that has some of the immensity and scale that you would want to have in those pieces.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. Oh, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And that's, what, 70 different elements?

MS. WINOKUR: I think 72, actually.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. And each one's roughly, what, a foot tall?

MS. WINOKUR: About. I think they're maybe 10 inches-something.

MS. RIEDEL: So there is the real sense of being able to confront that or experience it or stand in front of it with a scale that's larger than human.

MS. WINOKUR: I discovered, working in parts, you can get something big—you just have to make enough parts.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: I can do that. But for now, I think, if I can get the sense of monumentality in a small piece, I can do that too. . . . My idea for making these pieces is to bring into the gallery, or the interior space, my response

to something which is out there that's enormous, that you can't experience, really. But if I bring it in and remind you of it, that's what my intention is.

MS. RIEDEL: It makes me think of that quote that you read this morning from *Poetics of Space* about immensity. Wasn't there something that you read about that?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. That one is—

MS. RIEDEL: You want to read that now?

MS. WINOKUR: "In analyzing images of immensity, we should realize within ourselves the pure being of pure imagination. It then becomes clear that works of art are the by-products of this existentialism of the imagining being. In this direction of daydreams of immensity, the real product is consciousness of enlargement. We feel that we have been promoted to the dignity of the admiring being. Immensity is within ourselves. It is one of the dynamic characteristics of quiet daydreaming."

MS. RIEDEL: "The dynamic characteristics of quiet daydreaming."

MS. WINOKUR: Isn't that nice?

MS. RIEDEL: It is nice. It sounds like it could be a title for one of your shows.

MS. WINOKUR: [Laughs.] Great idea.

Now, this is something that might be interesting, too, from Milosz [in Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*]: "'As I stood in contemplation of the garden of the wonders of space,' Milosz writes, 'I had the feeling that I was looking into the ultimate depths, the most secret regions of my own being; and I smiled because it had never occurred to me that I could be so pure, so great, so fair! My heart burst into singing with the song of grace of the universe. All these constellations are yours, they exist in you; outside your love they have no reality! How terrible the world seems to those who do not know themselves! When you felt so alone and abandoned in the presence of the sea, imagine what solitude the waters must have felt in the night, or the night's own solitude in a universe without end!' And the poet continues his love duet between dreamer and world, making man and the world into two wedded creatures that are paradoxically united in the dialogue of their solitude."

I guess I hadn't thought about all this stuff for a while. But I appreciate your reminding me of it, because I think in lots of ways that's pretty much what my intention is. My internal self has a relationship with the external world. I like to reimagine into these pieces that I'm making, so that somebody else can get perhaps, I hope, an idea of what's going on in my mind through the work.

MS. RIEDEL: Your sense of the world, your—

MS. WINOKUR: They see my sense of the world and my sense of—I think all art-making has to do with wanting to bare your soul through your work to the audience, to the outside world. And when somebody really gets it, if they look at a piece of mine and they really understand what I'm up to, that just makes me feel really good. That's probably the bottom line for most of my work.

MS. RIEDEL: That it might strike a similar chord in someone else.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Has that been true, do you think, from the early pieces starting after Mesa Verde? I don't know that I would say that about the early lace—well, maybe the very first lace boxes had the beginnings of that.

MS. WINOKUR: I think they did. I think that that—but not certainly—let's face it, I've gotten more mature in my work as time has gone by.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MS. WINOKUR: One would hope that that would happen. I think that it has. And that makes me feel good, like there's more meaning in the work that I've done since then. I think some of the boxes with the little partial lids with interior spaces—I think those were probably the first pieces in which I really visually discuss what was going on internally.

[END SD3 TR3.]

MS. REIDEL: This is Mija Riedel with Paula Winokur at the artist's home and studio and Horsham, Pennsylvania, on July 21—

MS. WINOKUR: Twenty-second.

MS. RIEDEL: —22, thanks, 2011, for the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art. This is card number four.

So we've talked a bit about the workshops Penland and Haystack, and we've mentioned Beaver, but let's talk about teaching in particular. Beaver—was it Beaver College?

MS. WINOKUR: Was Beaver College when I started working there. I started teaching in 1973; when I began, I taught one class.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. Was it a clay class?

MS. WINOKUR: There was very little there. We had two rooms. One room was the throwing room for wheels, and the other room is the glaze room. There was a hallway that was empty at the time, and on the second floor there was a Montessori nursery school.

MS. RIEDEL: All right, you mentioned that.

MS. WINOKUR: I mentioned that.

Anyway, initially they started the program of metals and jewelry and ceramics—and there was actually weaving, too, to begin with, to satisfy the state's requirements for an education degree in art.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: So, very few students at the time. . . .

MS. RIEDEL: Where is it located?

MS. WINOKUR: It's located in Glenside, Pennsylvania.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: But it actually started in Beaver, Pennsylvania, which is where it got its name. It's not exactly the name that most people associate with it, but that's where the name came from.

When I started to teach there, it was probably 125 years old, and it [began as] a girls' school. In 1970 or '71, it became co-ed. So when I was teaching there—I started in '73—there were maybe one or two guys on campus. And that slowly has built up. Now it's probably 50-50.

MS. RIEDEL: When did the name shift to "Arcadia"?

MS. WINOKUR: The name change really had a lot to do with the computer, because if you tied to Google "Beaver College," it came up a pornographic site.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: That prompted them to change the name, and they had all these focus group meetings, and the older alumni women said, "Why? I don't understand what's wrong with the name. What's wrong with 'Beaver'?"

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: So clearly boys didn't want to go to "Beaver College."

MS. RIEDEL: Got you.

MS. WINOKUR: So they did this whole focus group thing and they came up with "Arcadia." And that was—

MS. RIEDEL: And it became Arcadia College or—

MS. WINOKUR: University—

MS. RIEDEL: Arcadia University.

MS. WINOKUR: —and they changed it to "University." They could do that because prior to that they had already started a whole series of master's programs. They now have a physician's assistant program; they also have a doctorate in physical therapy. I think you can get a master's in business administration. The school's changed

quite a lot.

I've been retired for eight years, so I think the name change was like 15 years ago already.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay. So halfway through your—

MS. WINOKUR: It's been about—no, no, no, I retired eight years ago, after 30 years, so it was the last few years that I was there with the name change.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: Would you describe how you developed the department and how it changed from when you arrived to when you left?

MS. WINOKUR: Right, well, when I first came, I had one class. The second year, I had a class in the fall and the spring. I started pushing for more space, more everything, and kilns. There were only electric kilns, and I wanted a gas kiln. First thing I did was, I built a sawdust kiln and put it outside, and the next thing—

MS. RIEDEL: Did you actually build it?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, it was nothing to build a sawdust kiln. You put a bunch of bricks around and put the pots in. You throw the sawdust in and you put a lid over it, and you—

MS. RIEDEL: So like a pit fire basically? Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —use smoke and pit fire. So that was the first thing I did, which I got reamed out for because everybody driving past on [Route] 309—at that time you could actually see the building from 309. Now there's trees and everything. You can't really see the back of that building. They called the fire department—"School's on fire."

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: So I got taken down by the chair: "You can't do that."

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MS. WINOKUR: I said, "Well, look, I'm trying to build a program here; you can't only fire an electric [kiln], you have to have choices." [Inaudible.] "All right, move it into the courtyard." I moved it into the courtyard—the alumni people complained. So eventually I had a deal. I said, "I will call the fire marshal every time I'm going to fire, make any smoke, and tell him that I'm doing this." So after a couple of phone calls, he said, "You don't have to bother me anymore; it's [okay!]"

Then I built a raku kiln, thinking that that would be a good way to introduce another firing technique, and for years I taught freshman raku firing initially, so that they could see the whole process of glaze melting and the whole business very quickly. It was really very successful, and interestingly enough, my successor doesn't like raku and he never does it.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. Where did you learn to raku?

MS. WINOKUR: I don't really know.

MS. RIEDEL: Just picked it up?

MS. WINOKUR: I just kind of picked it up. We never did it when I was a student.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: And they didn't do it at Alfred either.

MS. RIEDEL: I would think not.

MS. WINOKUR: I must have picked it up doing a workshop, going someplace where they were doing it. I can't remember actually.

MS. RIEDEL: I always associate that so much with Paul Soldner.

MS. WINOKUR: Right. Well, I've watched [him.] Paul was here; he did workshops. Bob taught raku at Tyler. [I know; I watched him there.]

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I think I probably learned how to build the kiln from what they had at Tyler.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: . . . I always brought my students to Tyler. There was a lot of back and forth because it was so close.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: Beaver/Arcadia is close to the old Tyler campus.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: At some point I had a friend who had a stoneware gas kiln, and she decided that she wanted to get rid of it. She wasn't going to be doing that anymore, and they ultimately moved to San Francisco. So she basically gave me her kiln, her slab roller, and a wheel, as a donation.

MS. RIEDEL: How wonderful!

MS. WINOKUR: We wrote her a big tax letter. I went with the then-maintenance crew, which were guys that the school had hired. The school was much smaller then. We went and we took this kiln down, and we put it into the trucks, and we took it back to the campus, and we put it up outside—no roof, no nothing—and fired the hell out of that kiln, year after year.

MS. RIEDEL: No roof? So it sat outside in the winter?

MS. WINOKUR: Sat outside. I would cover it with whatever. I think we tried to put a tin thing over it at one point, which blew off. It was very windy on that hillside. Then I started to ask for a roof because I had a raku kiln out there also, and I said, "Oh, come on. Give me a roof." All this I'm doing—I'm part-time. I'm making hardly any money, believe me. But I really was passionate about doing it right. If I was going to teach, it was going to be professional. It was not going to be summer camp ceramics.

So it took me 10 years to get a roof over that kiln, which finally I got. Then, ultimately, I got $25,000 from—the state gave the school this educational money once a year, and they could use it however they felt appropriate. So the dean gave it to me to build a big car kiln.

MS. RIEDEL: How fantastic.

MS. WINOKUR: So I built this 50-cubic-foot car kiln. I hired a former student of Bob's, and then one of my students helped him, and they built this kiln over the summer. I had finally gotten a professional kiln. That was after we had the roof over the kiln.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you full-time now?

MS. WINOKUR: I got to be full-time in '92. It took me 17 years to become full-time. I was teaching ceramics, and I guess I started teaching 3-D; 3-D was one semester, in the spring semester. So basically, there were only five classes. You had to have six classes to be full-time, and I couldn't get another ceramics class [there weren't enough students], so I ended up teaching a figure modeling class, and that gave me my load. And they finally—after struggling, they made me full-time. I was full time for the—I guess, what, 12 or 13 years, when I retired.

The interesting thing about my teaching tenure is, I do not have a master's degree. You would never get a job teaching in a university today without a master's degree. I never had tenure, but I got to be full professor, which was really rare. I also got a sabbatical, which was also—after all those years, I got a sabbatical. But anyway, it's a checkered past in terms of teaching.

But anyway, I love teaching. I really love the students and I think I made some good headway with them. They loved the class, they tell me. I still have some that keep in contact with me. So I think I did a pretty good job. I taught everything; I had no tech. I ran the studio completely by myself.

MS. RIEDEL: So you loaded and fired and—

MS. WINOKUR: I made the students do it all. I taught them how to do it. I think that even though it was very

hard—and it was hard to get them motivated a lot of times—they learned. Somebody had to clean the kiln shelves. Somebody had to take care of stacking.

Somebody had to be there at night to watch the kiln. And we had these kids; a lot of them lived on campus. So I would say, "You're going to be there tonight. You got to get up at 12:00 and go check the kiln." And I think that, even though it would have been a whole lot easier to have somebody there firing the kilns, these kids that I had learned how to do all that.

MS. RIEDEL: Absolutely.

MS. WINOKUR: All the kids that were ceramics majors, of which I had—every year, I had a few—they were the ones that were responsible. Otherwise, their work wasn't going to get fired. But it was a very hard job, because ultimately, if somebody didn't show up, I had to do it.

I had to organize it all the time, so—well, like, we would order clay, a readymade clay body. When the truck came with the clay, I had those kids line up and bring the boxes of clay in. "You're going to use it; you're going to have to carry it."

And I think that doesn't happen. I know that my successor, who I dearly love, has a tech. Somebody fires the kilns, and the tech is the person who recycles the clay. The kids had to learn how to recycle clay, too, which they hated, but they had to do it. There was all this technical stuff I taught them, plus how to throw, how to hand-build.

MS. RIEDEL: That was part of your general ceramics course? You didn't have a separate technical class for glazing or for firing?

MS. WINOKUR: No, one class.

MS. RIEDEL: All in a single class.

MS. WINOKUR: Everything was in one class.

MS. RIEDEL: And did you—

MS. WINOKUR: I had a beginning class and then I had an advanced class, and the advanced class included everybody taking Ceramics 2, 3, 4, and Thesis. Sometimes that was not a lot of students, and sometimes it was a whole lot of students. So that was tricky, trying to do all that together.

MS. RIEDEL: Was there a degree offered in art with a focus in ceramics?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: B.F.A. with a focus in ceramics.

MS. RIEDEL: And was that true from the time you arrived?

MS. WINOKUR: I can't remember; probably not. I think it's maybe just a B.F.A., initially. . . . I can't remember exactly when that shifted, but I'm sure that it changed. I had a few initially. I remember one or two people that did do their thesis in ceramics.

MS. RIEDEL: And anybody who's gone on to continue to practice, that you're aware of?

MS. WINOKUR: There's a few, but nobody has done anything world-shaking. There was one student of mine who left, and when she just—this is fairly recent—the last group of kids I had were all really good, and one of them who was doing really well went off to San Antonio, had a baby, and she's not doing clay right now.

But this one girl who went to UMass Dartmouth did really fabulous work. She moved to Kentucky with her boyfriend, who she met [at UMass], who's a woodworker, and they just bought a house; she's getting going. And she's working at J.Crew, which is a shame. But I think she will eventually get stuff. I think she will be involved at some point. [Some of my students are teaching art in secondary schools, and they all use clay in some classes.]

You like to see your students graduate and become involved immediately, but some people don't. Some people have this hiatus while their lives get organized, and then they pick it up later on.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

What do you see as the place for universities in the future of American craft, and American ceramics in particular? Do you think there's an important role for universities in the future of ceramics? Or do you think all that can be learned elsewhere?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I think it's hard to say. But I would say that I think it's really important to have a whole education. There's a lot of schools where it works very well. I think it really depends on the attitude of the teacher. But I think that if you separated it out altogether, I think we would lose a lot. I think then it could become the DIY kind of a thing. I think that being involved with the university gives you a certain amount of credibility, plus the fact that—I think the advantage of education in a university setting is that you get a lot more information a lot quicker than if you have to go and sort it out for yourself and take a class here and a class there and then put it all together.

Not that there's not a role for the Penlands, but I think it would be a shame to see it shifted to—I know Bob doesn't agree with me about this, but the art school experience that I had going to Tyler was very different than what's available now in most colleges.

MS. RIEDEL: How so?

MS. WINOKUR: It was the academy. Your day started at 9:00 in the morning with a sculpture class or a painting class all morning at least three days a week. And the afternoon, you had sculpture three days a week. Tuesday and Thursday you might have electives morning and afternoon. Then, at 4:00 the academic teachers came in, so we had English and history and psychology and sociology. That was probably it. There was no math. Science was "Science of Painting"—

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: —which was a big joke.

But somewhere between that attitude and what a university can give you—I think it's a shame it's so expensive now, because I think four years isn't enough.

MS. RIEDEL: If I'm understanding you correctly, you're saying that you think that a basic liberal arts content is an important part of an artist's education.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. Absolutely. I believe that. Lots of art history. But I think English is really important. Science is important. It's all important.

I guess the only thing I would give up is courses like calculus and trigonometry, which are probably beyond most artists' brains, but—our students, we encourage them to take geology. They had to take a science course, so we said, "Well, take a geology course. That's going to give you a whole neat understanding of something." I'm sorry I didn't take it.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes!

MS. WINOKUR: I kept thinking, "I'm going to go back and take it," but of course, I haven't done that—or sit in.

MS. RIEDEL: When you look back on all your years teaching and as a student, is the—and also at Penland and traveling—does anything stand out as the most rewarding educational experience that you've had? Whether it—studying with Staffel or working on your own just having to figure it out.

MS. WINOKUR: I actually think my summer at Alfred taught me—in terms of what I learned in a quick amount of time—that summer at Alfred was really the most important, because I learned so much. I also learned what I didn't know, which is a really important lesson to learn. I walked in there and I was cocky. I had a piece in a show. What did I know? And then to find out that, "Your throwing is really bad. You're throwing too thick." Of course, now, nobody would care. I was carving and throwing these things and carving into them and having a good time, and, "They're too heavy." "I'm not going to fire this; it's too heavy."

MS. RIEDEL: Would they not fire the work?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, sometimes. Norm Schulman was in charge of the firing. He sent them back to me saying, "Make them thinner."

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.] Wow.

MS. WINOKUR: There were rules, by George.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.] Has technology had an effect on your work? We've talked aerial photography. We've

talked about the computer and images.

MS. WINOKUR: For the computer, it's so great to be able to go through sites and find pictures of icebergs. That's fun. And, of course, the whole changing away from slides to digital images I think is an improvement. On the other hand, we have a closet full of slides, and who knows what we're going to do with those.

But from that point of view, I think it's been kind of interesting and helpful, probably. But I haven't taken advantage of all the new technology that some artists are using to do mold work and whatever other kinds of clever things they're doing. I'm going to find out, because I know Greg's gotten all these machines over there. So I'll go over and see what's up.

But I'm not sure how much better that will make your work. It might make it different, and it could give you a different avenue, and some people will probably do amazing things with all that stuff, but you have to have the right ideas, not just the gadgets.

MS. RIEDEL: That leads nicely, I think, into working process. Let's talk about your working process and how it has evolved over time. We don't need to go back to the production pottery, but—[inaudible]—sculptural, but—

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, it's a little slab-constructed work. I learned how to make those boxes and I never really gave it up. Everything is based on that kind of hollow construction. The difference now is that—well, one of the things was that I eventually developed a clay body that was appropriate for working larger. The original pieces were made from, like I said, the original [Grolleg] body, which was very tight and more translucent.

For a long time I made the clay here. We have a big dough mixer in the shed outside. I was getting one of my students to come and help me, and we were making up 800 pounds at a time.

And then I went to Penland one summer to do a summer session, and—it must be at least 10 years ago, if not longer—and they said, "We will make your clay for you." They had Standard Supply in Pittsburgh make my clay body and ship it to Penland, and it was fine.

And I thought, "Why am I knocking myself out? For the additional few pennies a pound, I can get somebody to make it for me and have it." So that's what I started doing. They would make a ton at a time for me. So that was a big help because I got out of making it.

I recycle a lot.

MS. RIEDEL: I bet.

MS. WINOKUR: The interesting thing about the recycling is, the clay that I get in these 50-pound boxes is so beautifully pugged, and you roll out a slab and it's perfect. But I can't get the kind of texture that I want out of that slab. It's too good. So I recycle all the scrap, and I wedge it up really wet, and it's got air bubbles in it. That's why I can get this great texture, because the clay is actually bad.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: But it doesn't explode or anything [in the] kiln.

MS. WINOKUR: No. No, it's just—

MS. RIEDEL: But it's just really rough.

MS. WINOKUR: I can manipulate it so then I can get the texture that I'm after, because sometimes I will roll really wet clay out on the table—I have this table that's kind of porous—

MS. RIEDEL: Plaster sort of thing?

MS. WINOKUR: It's—no, it's black. It's kind of a resin, I think, but it looks like slate.

I roll out slab on that and it sort of sticks. As I pull it up, I'm getting a little sticky stuff, and that's how I get some of the texture. Or, if I don't want that, I will roll it out, and then I'll kind of pick it up and manipulate it, and then throw it so it stretches. So a lot of little tricks, but it's because I'm using this recycled clay that works.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: I've got my pile of recycled clay, and then I've got my other clay. I will roll out slabs and use

those for the construction part, and then use this other stuff for the textured areas.

MS. RIEDEL: So that's interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: So that's how I do it.

Now, the ripped edges, which was the first thing I started to do, that had to do with rolling out the clay and then bending it and bending it back, and either tearing or whatever I was doing. All that stuff started with ripping the edges, and then I kind of moved into making a whole surface texture.

Everything is made in parts so that I can fire it easily. But the fireplaces, that became a whole other situation where I would go to someone's house, measure the space, come home, and make templates. There was a lot of preparation work involved in those. In anything which is commissioned, it has to fit in a particular space. You have to account for shrinkage; this clay shrinks 14 percent.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, that's quite a bit.

MS. WINOKUR: It's the really translucent porcelain [that] will shrink up to 20 percent. So 14 percent is actually pretty good. Stoneware shrinks 10 percent. Low-fire clay shrinks a whole lot less. I sometimes wonder, why am I not using low-fire?

MS. RIEDEL: White low-fire.

MS. WINOKUR: The color is not quite as nice. At least I haven't really explored it, which is probably stupid. I should probably start exploring low-fire clay and see what I get from it; might be a lot easier. I'm not sure if it's strong, though.

MS. RIEDEL: I would think not.

MS. WINOKUR: Porcelain is really strong.

MS. RIEDEL: [Inaudible.] [How about commissions?]

MS. WINOKUR: For the fireplace commissions, I would go to somebody's house, see the space, make drawings, make models, say, "Which one? You want this one; you want that one? What do you want it to look like?" And they would pick one. I would then come home and make a big paper drawing on the wall and make it 14 percent bigger. Then, in some cases, I would actually [make] three-dimensional cardboard shapes of the piece. I have a whole bunch of slides of this stuff that maybe I should send them off one of these days.

MS. RIEDEL: It would be great to have for the Archives so people can see how that actually evolved.

MS. WINOKUR: . . . Anyway, so then I would make all this stuff and let them all dry together and fire it.

And then the smart thing to do, which I learned after a few trials and errors, is that I glue them up in parts so that I would—say, if we took this one, I would make the four pieces on the side, put that on one piece of board, and three pieces in the middle, and another piece of board, and so forth, and then hang them with brackets that I fabricate—

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, I see.

MS. WINOKUR: —on the back—on the wall so that they could then be lifted up and taken off if necessary.

MS. RIEDEL: Perfect. So that's how they were installed.

MS. WINOKUR: That's how they were installed. Not all of them. Like I said, the first few were [not] done like that.

MS. RIEDEL: The cement, right?

MS. WINOKUR: Right. It's after I got smart enough that—like, I have this one friend that I made one for that's really nice; I really like that. It's a smaller fireplace. She's trying to sell her house. And so the question is, if the person who buys the house wants it or they don't, then we can take it off.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you have to be at all aware of the uneven temperature coming out of the fireplace affecting [inaudible]?

MS. WINOKUR: Actually, I've never had anybody complain about that, because it's on the outside. The inside, the firebox, is what gets hot. The worst thing to have to do is clean off the soot from the ashes that come out.

But if you have a glass door like that, you'll hardly get any soot anyway.

MS. RIEDEL: So you had no problems with cracking or discoloration, anything like that?

MS. WINOKUR: No. No. Actually that's not true. One of them did crack, but I think it was because of what it was hung on. . . . I repaired that one too, but anyway, that was a long time ago.

MS. RIEDEL: Are there specific qualities that you look for in a working environment? Do you like to work to music? Do you like to work to silence? Do you need a lot of natural light? Is there anything in particular?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I need light and I like to work to music. I like classical music. Sometimes I listen to talk [shows], like NPR. I'm an NPR addict. Bob and I will sometimes have one radio [on]—we each have a radio. Sometimes he'll have it on too loud and I'll complain, so he'll turn it off. The deal is if we're bothering each other, we have to turn off whatever because [we are respectful of each other's working habits].

Initially we both worked in his studio. I've only had my studio for 25 years now, I think. Initially I didn't have that. I worked in there. When we started out, we were both throwing, so we each had our little corner. And then when I started to do the fireplaces, I remember literally standing there one day with this slab in my hand thinking, Where am I going to put this?

And then I got a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts—it was probably '86, something like that—for $5,000, which paid for the cement floor. Then Bob basically built the studio. We hired a few people. We hired somebody to do the wallboard, because we have had that experience, putting that stuff up. It's really hard. And I guess somebody did the roof. But he had a graduate student at the time who helped with the cement. And that's how I got it. So it's a nice studio.

MS. RIEDEL: Spacious.

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: Lots of natural light.

MS. WINOKUR: I mean, you can always have more space.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: I think people that end up in these big factory lofts have the best studio spaces because they have lots and lots of space for stuff. Considering the fact that this is here, I don't have to travel for it. I don't have to pay rent for it. We each have about 800 square feet, which is pretty good.

MS. RIEDEL: Is there anything in particular that you do to finish the porcelain surfaces that are not highly textured and aren't glazed? I'm thinking of the piece that you have outside in the gallery right here, the small gallery. Is there any sort of terra sigillata that you put on the top of it, any kind of burnishing?

MS. WINOKUR: I sand them.

MS. RIEDEL: You sand them.

MS. WINOKUR: I sand them. I bisque-fire, which you think, Well, why are you bothering to bisque-fire? You're not going to put any glaze on it. But I like to bisque-fire them because sometimes I put color on it. Also, after it's bisqued, I can clean off any edges, sort of sand it down. Then I fire it high, to cone 10, and I sand it again when it comes out of the kiln because there's always little bits of grit. So I can sand it down so when you feel it, it's really smooth—

MS. RIEDEL: Right, yes.

MS. WINOKUR: —with just regular sandpaper.

MS. RIEDEL: The contrast then between that smooth, sanded surface—it's so satiny—with that very highly textural edges. This is really strong.

MS. WINOKUR: I wonder if there's a white terra sigillata. I never thought about that. Probably is, but there's no point.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, sure.

MS. WINOKUR: There's no point in doing it.

So that's pretty much the practice. And the other thing, I guess—I don't know if I said it before, but for the color, I use: a) I use a ceramic pencil, usually black, which, as you know, fires into the clay. And I sometimes use the metallic sulfates. My favorite, I guess, is the green, which is chromium—mostly chromium nitrate.

MS. RIEDEL: And is that put on in a wash, then? In a slip?

MS. WINOKUR: They're soluble in water, so it's basically like painting with watercolors. The only crazy thing about them is you put them on and they disappear.

MS. RIEDEL: Really?

MS. WINOKUR: It's like disappearing ink, and when you fire it, it comes back.

MS. RIEDEL: How quickly does it disappear?

MS. WINOKUR: Pretty quickly.

MS. RIEDEL: So you can't paint half of it today—

MS. WINOKUR: Sometimes if you're not sure where you've put it—a lot of people who use them put vegetable dye in them—

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —so they can see where they put it.

MS. RIEDEL: Painted—mm-hmm, mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] So then do you have no idea how saturated the color is?

MS. WINOKUR: I don't. And sometimes that can be a big mistake. I used to be much more careful. I would put—like I knew that . . . one teaspoon, say, of chromium nitrate to a baby food jar of water was the right amount of solution. Lately I have gotten very careless about that stuff, which is not good. You have to measure.

MS. RIEDEL: You've had a very, very long relationship with Helen Drutt. Are there other galleries that you've exhibited with, or has it been primarily Helen?

MS. WINOKUR: It's been pretty much her. Occasionally, when we started out, we showed in lots of little craft shops all over the place. Then when Helen opened her gallery, we made the commitment to be with her exclusively.

MS. RIEDEL: I see.

MS. WINOKUR: So we were.

MS. RIEDEL: From early '70s to—

MS. WINOKUR: Nineteen seventy-three until she closed. I'm trying to remember when she closed. It's been awhile.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah, it seems it's been about 10 years, hasn't it? Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: I think it's almost 10 years now.

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] I think so, too. Would you have regular solo shows? Were you part of an annual group show? How did that work?

MS. WINOKUR: We had a lot of solo shows with her. And there was always a few—

MS. RIEDEL: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Every couple of years, something like that?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, every few years. Then there were group shows all the time. She always had something going on. She also showed work other places, which was—the reason why Helen is so important as a gallery person is that she didn't just sell your work; she went all over the world talking about the work, showing slides so that people knew about you from all over the place. And I think—

MS. RIEDEL: Which is how—please, go ahead.

MS. WINOKUR: I think that's one of the reasons why she was so important. She didn't just have a shop.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. And you were saying, I think, all around the gallery, that that's how your exhibition in Helsinki came about.

MS. WINOKUR: What happened was the woman who ran the gallery at Arcadia initially, whose name is Paula Marincola—we were good friends at the time when she was there, and she was always having these major artists' shows. She got the gallery up—way up here. She brought in these very well-known New York artists. She was always having major exhibitions. And I said, "So when I retire, will you give me a show?" And she said, "Yes, absolutely," because she liked my work and she thought that that would be good.

So then she left, and I'm going to be retiring. I'd retired in 2003, so Dick Torchia, who is the gallery director now, said he would give me a show. But he kept having these other things that were taking precedent; like for example, he had a show of Olafur Eliasson. That's where I met him. He was 35 years old at the time and just a charming young guy.

Anyway, so I'm making all this work. I made *White Butte* because Dick came to the studio, wanted to look at work, and I had this small piece, which was *White Butte*. He said, "I really like that piece, but why don't you make it big?" And I thought, well, what do you mean by big? He said, "Well, you know, make it big." So I, as an idiot, I did. I made it eight feet by 10 feet. I had this piece made, which took me months, then he kept having these other things that were coming in that were taking precedent.

In the meantime, Helen had organized for me to have a show in Honolulu, at the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, with Jay Jensen.

MS. RIEDEL: Fantastic.

MS. WINOKUR: Do you know him?

MS. RIEDEL: No.

MS. WINOKUR: A really nice guy. Anyway, so it ended up that I had this show in 2005 in Honolulu—the end of 2004, the beginning of 2005. And then the show went to Helsinki. Then it ended up back in—finally at Arcadia in 2006, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Where was the show in Helsinki?

MS. WINOKUR: At the Design Museum.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: That show was called *Three Voices–Three Women.* Do you have that catalogue?

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: Because I—otherwise, I have it in the other room. So that's going to say the year too. Where is that?

MS. RIEDEL: Ah, *Three Plus Three Equals One: Three Voices, Three Continents, One World*.

MS. WINOKUR: *One World*, right. Wasn't it 2006?

MS. RIEDEL: Let's see.

MS. WINOKUR: Two thousand five.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: So this was in the winter. Actually, it wasn't. It was in the spring. The weather was pretty decent. And then, at the end of 2005, the work came back and I had this show at Arcadia, 2005-2006, December to January.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: But it was all basically the same work. So instead of starting at Arcadia and then going to Helsinki and to Honolulu, we did it backwards. I'd already been retired for a couple years. But it was fantastic, I have to say. We decided that Helen would interview me. Because Dick always had some kind of an opening event with the exhibitions—so Helen was going to interview me.

And it was really nice because the place was packed. She started trying to interview me, but I'm such a

blabbermouth—it wasn't hard; I just kept talking. We showed some slides, and it was really very, very nice. A lot of people came from the city. I also got a great write-up in the newspaper with that, which will go to the archives—Ed Sozanski, who is the art critic for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

MS. RIEDEL: And this is, to date, the largest exhibition you've had—the Helsinki, Honolulu, Arcadia—

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, it is. It's the largest solo exhibition.

MS. RIEDEL: Did this have a title? Was it the *Global Observations* exhibition—or, no, that came after.

MS. WINOKUR: Then what was it called?

MS. RIEDEL: Well, this is *Three Plus Three Equals One*—

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, but the show at Arcadia had a name too. You've got that brochure right there.

MS. RIEDEL: *Geological Sites*?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: That was it.

MS. RIEDEL: So, same basic work, but with a few different titles.

MS. WINOKUR: Right. And some things were not in all the shows. There was some variation within the shows. Like, for example, in Honolulu I had all nine of those *Segments*—

MS. RIEDEL: Of the *Segments Erraticus*?

MS. WINOKUR: —*Erraticus* in a row. I only had five at Arcadia. It looked better.

MS. RIEDEL: To have five?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah. I did have the prints in all three shows, though.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah, let's talk about the prints.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. So how they started was very interesting. Haystack has these faculty retreats periodically.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: Bob had been to one, and when he was there he did some monoprints. He had gotten ahold of this gelatin stuff that they use. Fran Merritt, who had been the original director of Haystack, developed this crazy technique for using this Jell-O to make monoprints with. Usually, what you would do is you have the plate and you put down paper and then you pull it up, and you do it, and you ink it and so forth and so on.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: So Bob went up [to Haystack] and he had a little bit of this stuff. He made a bunch of prints. Then the following year it was my turn to go—it was two years later. I think it's every two years. He said, "Well, while you're there will you get more of this gelatin stuff?" And I said, "Okay." So while I got the gelatin stuff—and it was really cold to work in a lot of the studios in October—I thought I may as well try it. So I started fooling around with it up there, and that's how I started doing these prints. I didn't know how to use it, so I figured out this crazy way to do it with the clay in a kind of backwards way.

MS. RIEDEL: So what did you do with—

MS. WINOKUR: Most people say, "What do you do? Put ink on the clay, and then you put paper on the clay?" Well, if you've got a lot of texture, the paper is not going to lay flat on this texture. So using the gelatin and inking the gelatin and then flipping the gelatin over onto the textured clay, the gelatin, which is flexible, kind of will get into the nooks and crannies. You rub it, and what actually happens is that the clay takes ink off of the gelatin. So when you take the gelatin off, you're printing what's left of the ink.

MS. RIEDEL: I see.

MS. WINOKUR: You put the paper on top of the gelatin. I'd just rub my hand over it and pull it off, and there's a

print.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. And you made how many prints like that?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, I don't know.

MS. RIEDEL: A dozen?

MS. WINOKUR: More than that. I've framed—about a dozen I think. But I have a drawer full of some that are good; some are not so good. There's a lot of loss because a lot of them don't come out very well.

MS. RIEDEL: This was the single time that you worked in this particular—

MS. WINOKUR: No, when I came back home, I brought the gelatin with me, and I started doing it on a fairly regular basis until I got enough prints that I really liked to use. I did it for a while.

MS. RIEDEL: They're all black and white?

MS. WINOKUR: They're all black and white. I tried using color, wasn't happy with it. I just felt that the black and white has much more integrity.

MS. RIEDEL: They're very abstract, but also very landscape referenced.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes! Exactly. I know I should do more with it. I have to figure that out. I want to do them bigger. It's harder to manipulate the gelatin when you put it down on something. You're thinking, Well, you could make it rigid. But if you make it rigid, then you're not going to be able to rub it into surfaces the way you would want to. I guess everything doesn't have to be big.

MS. RIEDEL: Right. [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: I could also make lots of little ones and put them together, I guess.

MS. RIEDEL: When did you start working in this, and are you working in it still?

MS. WINOKUR: I'm still fiddling around with it. But it was around 2004, '05, something like that.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: That's already six, seven years ago. So time flies really fast.

MS. RIEDEL: Have you found you've been able to get a lot more done since you retired? Or have you found other things to do with your time?

MS. WINOKUR: No, I can do whatever I want. It's really kind of interesting. And yet, I think I don't quite have the energy I had years ago, which is very annoying. I'll work for a couple of hours and I get really tired. That's the only thing that's really bothering me about getting old, is that the energy—I do yoga and that helps. But I need to do more exercise, I think, to get my energy level up again.

I find actually that if I have a show to work for, I'm more productive than if I don't have a show to work for. That's the only thing that's kind of holding me back right now. I wish that I had something major coming up.

MS. RIEDEL: But since Helen is retired, there's no gallery that's taken her place.

MS. WINOKUR: There's no gallery. We did have a show at Rosenfeld Gallery. But he's mostly a painting gallery. He doesn't have any real connection to the clay world or to the craft world. I think it may have been a one-shot deal. We'll see what happens if we have this open house here.

MS. RIEDEL: We talked in passing yesterday, I think, about Rose Slivka in *Craft Horizons*. Are there any writers or craft, clay-specific periodicals that have been important to you? Do you feel a good [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: I think that *Ceramics Art and Perception* has been doing a pretty good job of writing about clay. I came across—on the Internet—the other day a blog that comes out of England. It comes out of Wales, actually, and, of course, now I can't even remember the name of it, but there were interesting articles on it. And that's just in the blogosphere. So I think there may be more stuff like that happening that I'm not even really aware of. The other magazine that's pretty good is *New Ceramics*, which is from Germany. Do you know that one?

MS. RIEDEL: I do.

MS. WINOKUR: He does a pretty good job of handling things. I think *American Craft* has really gone down the tubes. I find it—and this is on the record—I find it really disappointing that a magazine that was started by someone—or it was continued by someone like Rose—well, Rose, I guess, did start *Craft Horizons*, didn't she?

MS. RIEDEL: I don't remember if she actually started it.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, she was the important editor in any case.

MS. RIEDEL: She was certainly—yes, for a long time.

MS. WINOKUR: And Lois Moran did a pretty good job for a while too. But the new people there, they are just wrecking it. It's all about advertising. It's all geared towards the collector. The articles are, for the most part, shallow. And the new head of the ACC is a fundraiser. He came here and did "listening sessions," he called it.

MS. RIEDEL: Those convenings?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. We went to one that they had at Tyler. Bob said something about, "Well, when Rose Slivka was editor," and he said, "Who's she?" And I thought, Oh, you didn't do your homework. Not to know who your predecessors were in a position like that—anyway, I think it's lost a lot. It needs to stay where it is. It's geared itself totally to the craft fairs.

We tried to say to him that "your audience is not only the craft fair people." We're fellows in the ACC, which is a nice honor, but it's pretty meaningless. They don't do anything for the fellows. There's a lot of fellows—there's a big list of them. There's no writing about them; there's no saying, "Why don't we do an exhibition for them," or anything like that. There's just—every year they give out a couple more citations or whatever, and that's the end of it. There's no follow-through.

MS. RIEDEL: . . . Short of Rose Slivka, is there anybody else who you really feel has done the field a good service?

MS. WINOKUR: I think Glenn Adamson writes pretty well.

MS. RIEDEL: Sure.

MS. WINOKUR: And Glenn Brown is doing some good articles. There's a few people out there who I think are paying attention. I also find it very interesting that somebody like Roberta Smith, who is a hotshot—

MS. RIEDEL: —*New York Times*—

MS. WINOKUR: —*New York Times* writer, writes about ceramics. She wrote about the show that they had at the ICA [Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia], which I thought was a really bad show, and praises it from here to—because it's got all of this weird stuff in it that's badly made, from my point of view. Remember, this is my opinion. And why doesn't she, if she wants to write about it, why doesn't she study what the field is really about? That kind of stuff bothers me.

MS. RIEDEL: So the history of the field, where it came from, and—

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. And I would love to see more really good critical writing.

MS. RIEDEL: So more scholarship.

MS. WINOKUR: I think Jana Koplos is also drawn to do that. I think her book is very good.

MS. RIEDEL: *Makers*? [Janet Koplos and Bruce Metcalf. *Makers: A History of American Studio Craft*, 2010.]

MS. WINOKUR: *Makers*, yes. And of course, she wrote a very nice article about us for our show, so—[laughs]—and she's teaching critical writing at University of the Arts. We actually had lunch with her a couple weeks ago. She's teaching a seminar there. That means that there is a need—there's no question about the fact that there really is a need.

It's unfortunate that there's not more presence in the university system where you could actually train people to become good writers, curators, critics. But she's teaching a class in critical writing, so that could be anything. . . . She's teaching kids across the board. It's not just craftspeople. She's teaching painters, sculptors, whatever.

I'm sure there's other—

MS. RIEDEL: Have you read Arthur Danto or [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: Right. I'm just not good with remembering names off the top of my head.

MS. RIEDEL: Everybody does seem to remember Rose Slivka's very well informed—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, she was a groundbreaker too. She wasn't afraid to write what she felt, instead of trying to placate people. I know Voulkos wasn't even popular when she started writing about him.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: And other people, too, that—

MS. RIEDEL: What sort of changes have you seen in craft, in clay in particular, in your lifetime, and the market for clay that we haven't already touched on?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I think it's gone the gamut. It started with functional pottery, and it's slowly just allowed for just about anything to be made out of clay, which I think is pretty wonderful.

Then there was this whole rise of the collector. There's this large group of people who purchase clay objects and build great collections. And now they're all dying. These collections are very often going to museums, which is great if they'll take them. But there's no new group of collectors, necessarily, coming up that we're, certainly, aware of, because the young people are going to "design within reach."

I'm sure that's not true across the board, but generally speaking, that's what I hear from friends. Like Ruth Snyderman has a gallery in Philadelphia. She said that's where she knows people are going for a lot of functional stuff. But there's also a crossover now that there are a lot of people who would have bought paintings [who] are buying craft objects because they see them as art objects, not as craft objects. And I think that's especially true when it comes to a lot of the figurative ceramics that's out there.

MS. RIEDEL: So, again, Manuel Neri, Stephen De Staebler, Beverly Mayeri—

MS. WINOKUR: Right. But there's thousands of young people that are making some incredible [work—some of it's really incredible; some of it's really awful]—but they're making a lot of figurative stuff. I think that's what people are buying. They're certainly not buying subtle art. So that's a big shift. But the big problem for a lot of people is the fact that there are not enough collectors.

The galleries are also closing. Nothing has replaced Helen's gallery. I can't think of a gallery anywhere—I thought Nancy Margolis in New York was going to do that. But she's showing everything. There's just no other —that thing is done. What Helen did, what Ruth—

MS. RIEDEL: Franklin Parrasch in New York?

MS. WINOKUR: I guess he's still showing stuff. I haven't been to his gallery for a while. And Garth [Clark], of course, has now moved to Santa Fe, where he's now running auctions and [and has started an online service called C-File].

MS. RIEDEL: Question about community. We've talked about how you worked a lot by yourself in the studio, but you have been involved with NCECA, with the American Craft Council, with a number of different craft groups. And we should talk about them, because you felt they've been significant in ways that I'm not completely clear on. So maybe you can talk about that.

MS. WINOKUR: All right. My first involvement was with PCPC, the Philadelphia Council of Professional Craftsmen, which Helen and Stanley Lechtzin and Olaf Skoogfors organized. There was a bunch of other businessmen, whose names I forget, that were involved in that. The idea was that the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen—which is still here; it still exists. But it kind of—anybody could join. And it was [in some cases] a lower level of artistic merit.

MS. RIEDEL: Like local artists—not even regional, but just general local artisans.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. So anyway, they wanted to have an organization that reflected the high quality of work that was being made. And it was mostly people who were teaching in the universities. So when we moved here in '66, we got involved in that. And Helen became the executive director. There was not a big group, maybe 25 people, but people like Lizbeth Stewart were in it; Bill Daley was in it; Yvonne Bobrowicz was in it. Roland Jahn was a glassblower. Yvonne was fiber.

It was all materials. Stanley and Olaf were metals. I can't remember . . . a big group. So we got involved with that, and I ultimately became the treasurer. We had no money, so I'm not sure what I was the treasurer of, but I was in charge of the books. We had exhibitions all over, in funny places. We even had an exhibition at the

Franklin Institute. It was called *Making It,* and we all helped to put this all together.

That's how we started. There were a lot of these exhibitions, one after the other, in various venues. Helen finally said, "Why am I doing this for for nothing? I should have a gallery." Her gallery actually grew out of that experience of organizing all these exhibitions.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting.

MS. WINOKUR: So then she opened the gallery. After a while PCPC just kind of folded. She took a lot of people into the gallery, but then some people she didn't take in. So that became a kind of sore spot. I think Ken Vavrek was—I'm not sure if he was here at that time. Ken Vavrek taught at Moore. And he's represented by Rosenfeld Gallery. He's pretty much the only clay person that they—

[END SD4 TR1.]

MS. WINOKUR: [In progress]—handle on a regular basis. At the time of PCPC, there was a big exhibition sponsored by Johnson Wax that was at the Civic Center Museum, which doesn't exist anymore, in Philadelphia. I was not in that show. But there was a concurrent show that we [all the PCPC people] were in that was also held there, at the Civic Center.

We had these big exhibitions periodically, and then, like I said, when Helen opened the gallery, the PCPC thing kind of disappeared. After that, at some point in the '70s, the mid-'70s—

MS. RIEDEL: That Johnson Wax show, just to clarify, that was that huge, national traveling show put together by Lee Nordness, yes?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And I'm just forgetting the name of the exhibition title right now, but that was so pivotal.

MS. WINOKUR: Was it *Craft USA* or something like that?

MS. RIEDEL: I think so. My brain is just slightly—

MS. WINOKUR: There were a lot of shows like that at that time. I was in some of them, but I wasn't in that one. Then I got asked to be the representative to the American Craft Council, the Northeast Regional Assembly.

MS. RIEDEL: Ah. Now, was this the thing put together by Aileen Webb?

MS. WINOKUR: Aileen.

MS. RIEDEL: And it was pronounced *A*ileen, not *I*lene?

MS. WINOKUR: *A*ileen, yes. I was involved in that, and for quite a long time, I guess. I'm not sure how long anymore. But we met at least once a year, and then I met with people in Philadelphia to see what they wanted. I got groups of people together.

MS. RIEDEL: So this was the grouping where Ken Shores was a representative from the Pacific—

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: And Trude Guermonprez would be from the Southern California area?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, but we never saw them, because they—

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, you didn't get together?

MS. WINOKUR: No, because we didn't get together as a whole group. We got together in our region.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, I see.

MS. WINOKUR: I don't remember ever having one big national—unless there was a big national meeting and I just didn't get to go to it. I don't remember.

MS. RIEDEL: I thought Ken Shores talked about everyone gathering in New York at Mrs. Webb's place and—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, that's very possible. Let me just see here when that was, what years that was.

MS. RIEDEL: And this was when the WCC [World Crafts Council] had meetings all over the world.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: They were in Mexico and Peru and Turkey.

MS. WINOKUR: That's right. But I couldn't go to those, because I had little kids and I really didn't have—all right, from 1968-73, I was the Philadelphia Council of Professional Craftsmen, and '72-76, Pennsylvania representative to the Northeast Regional Assembly. In '79-82, I was on the NCECA board of directors. In 1989, I was on the Clay Studio advisory board. And '92, I was the chair of the lecture committee of the Clay Studio.

I was president of the Tyler Alumni Association from '96 to, like, 2001. And currently I'm on the board of Watershed Center for Ceramic Arts. Being on the ACC thing put me on the board at the time that the craft fair, the Northeast Regional Craft Fair, which the region sponsored, was doing really well.

MS. RIEDEL: This was pre-Rhinebeck, or this is Rhinebeck?

MS. WINOKUR: I was there before Rhinebeck, but while Rhinebeck was going on, it was doing really well. We were making enough money so that we were giving out little fellowships. We gave a fellowship to Gerry Williams, who was starting *Studio Potter*—

MS. RIEDEL: *Studio Potter*.

MS. WINOKUR: And it wasn't a lot of money. Maybe it was $300, but $300 in '78 was a reasonable about of money, I guess, for him to get this magazine off the—

MS. RIEDEL: That was a good investment.

MS. WINOKUR: We also gave money to Paulus Berensohn to investigate back problems in potters.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: I remember those two. Anyway, we were doing so well and making all this money that the ACC decided that we could not run that fair anymore. It was never clear as to what the deal was, and they kept saying that it was accounting problems, but they just wanted to make the money themselves.

MS. RIEDEL: Do you want to take a little break?

MS. WINOKUR: I'm sorry. Maybe I should.

[Audio break.]

MS. RIEDEL: All right, we're back. And you were talking about—

MS. WINOKUR: I was talking about the night that the people came from ACC, from the New York office, and they said to the—

MS. RIEDEL: Who were the people? Do you remember who this was?

MS. WINOKUR: You know, I don't remember who it was. I just remember that one of the people there was Ray Perotti. Ray Perotti was, I believe, art director, the regional director. But I can't remember. Oh, one of the people who was involved with it was Carol Sedestrom. And Carol Sedestrom ended up running the craft fair. She ran the Northeast Regional Craft Fair, initially.

So they came from the main office and they said, "You guys have done such a wonderful job. You've done such a great job, such a good job, that you now can't own this anymore. You have to turn it over to us. We're taking it over, and it's going to become the ACC craft fair."

MS. RIEDEL: What was their—

MS. WINOKUR: And we were so mad. We were really mad. We felt like, here we'd knocked ourselves out, because everybody worked hard to do this thing, and—

MS. RIEDEL: And what ramifications did that have? What did that mean, to be taken away by ACC?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, it went national. It just changed the tenor of the thing. But I guess, ultimately, it's what has to happen. Change is the one thing that we can always count on.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: It changed from a small craft fair into a huge craft fair. And from just being in the Northeast, it then went on to become—there was the Southeast Craft Fair—they're all over the country now.

MS. RIEDEL: So there was Baltimore; there was Rhinebeck. I'm trying to think of— . . . there was San Francisco.

MS. WINOKUR: There's one in San Francisco. I think there's one in the South somewhere. I think there was a Southwest one. Whether it still is there or not, I don't know.

The Philadelphia Craft Fair has nothing to do with ACC. Philadelphia Craft Fair is sponsored by the women's committee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. That's their big fundraiser. And here's an interesting thing. When I was involved with ACC, we decided that it would be really great if we could have an exhibition in a major museum—that it would really bring the whole quality of crafts up, or show the best crafts to the public. So I took it on myself to approach the museum.

MS. RIEDEL: Here in Philadelphia?

MS. WINOKUR: Here in Philadelphia. The director at the time was Evan Turner, and one of the people that I went to see was Bea Garvan, and Kathy Heisinger. There may have been somebody else who I'm forgetting. Anyway, I called them up and I said I wanted to make this presentation about our having this craft show—I'm sorry, craft exhibition—at the museum.

I went to New York and I sat with Lois Moran, and I pulled slides and we made up a whole presentation. And I went to the museum and made—this was a lot of time spent—and I made this whole presentation. When I got done, they said, "That's really wonderful, but we have to tell you that we're starting this craft show, and that since we're doing the craft show, we're not going to do anything in the museum." The craft show was going to be at Memorial Hall, which is this really beautiful building that's not too far from the museum. "And we'd like you to be one of our jurors." So I juried the very first craft show.

MS. RIEDEL: And what year was that, roughly?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, let's see. They celebrated their 30 years, so it's at least 30 years ago. I juried it three or four times.

MS. RIEDEL: And what changes did you see in that time of jurying that? Were there specific trends? What did you see?

MS. WINOKUR: The first time we did it, it had a component of invited people. They had a fashion show. It was much more intimate. As time went on, it got much more commercial. It's what's going to sell—how can we make money for the museum?

It also turned out that I would sit on a panel with four other people, and we would pick certain things and kick a lot of stuff out. But there was this big "maybe" pile. At the end, you go see the show, and, Where did all this stuff come from? I didn't vote for that. I didn't vote for that. Why is all this stuff here?

I remember, at the time, Darrel Sewell, who was the crafts—theoretically, he was the Eakins Fellow, but he was also involved with the so-called crafts part of the museum—I remember marching up to him one night and saying, "Darrel, I just came from the craft show. Where did all that crap come from?" And he said, "Don't say a word. That show brings in a lot of money for the museum." And this is being recorded, folks, for posterity.

It really made me mad. And I think that we've now seen—certainly it started then, probably, to see how important money became in terms of the movement. It's not the quality of the work; it's, Can you sell it? And if you can sell something which isn't, maybe, as good as or as inventive as that thing, but you can sell this other one which is much more appealing to the collectors or to the buyers, then we're going to take that one and sell that. I find that really disturbing.

MS. RIEDEL: And is that something that you've seen develop over the years?

MS. WINOKUR: Oh, yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: I mean, did it rise and ebb?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I think a lot of the work that's being done now is not sellable. It's bizarre, a lot of it. It's certainly inventive; I would say that. In judging a lot on what the Clay Studio sells [because they've become the marketer in the city], the quality of a lot of the functional work is very high. I would say that. And I think that the presentation is good.

I think that that's a good example. But I also see that the whole marketplace has become the important aspect of what's going on. As galleries close, as there's less opportunities to really show your work, the common denominator is, Can you sell it, and where can you sell it? And you can sell it on the Internet, too. That's a whole other aspect of the world right now.

I know people that make really good work that sell a lot of stuff on Etsy. And they sell not their best work, but they sell, like, their second line on Etsy. I haven't even tried that. I wonder if I could sell anything on that.

MS. RIEDEL: Functional work may do very well on that. Who knows? People do sell a lot.

MS. WINOKUR: I haven't even figured out how to go about doing that—[laughs]—but. the Internet is becoming the marketplace. I would say that's the big shift that I see. And I think that's going to continue and get even stronger. Watershed had an auction on the Internet, and it did fairly well—nothing super-expensive. I sold a piece, probably one of the more expensive pieces, but even that was less than $1,000.

MS. RIEDEL: That's interesting, though, that that auction was online.

MS. WINOKUR: And I think a lot of people are doing online auctions. There's some websites that are totally online. There's no gallery. It's just an online gallery.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, right.

MS. WINOKUR: I don't see how you can buy something without touching it. That's the thing that surprises me. But people do. So anyway, that's my ACC story.

And then, after the ACC, I got elected to the NCECA board, and I was on the NCECA board from, what did I say, '72? No, '79 to '82. And when I was on the NCECA board, I became the liaison [that was my title]— and it was my job to organize the commercial exhibition.

Have you ever been to an NCECA conference?

MS. RIEDEL: Yes.

MS. WINOKUR: They have this big room, and they've got all these manufacturers selling all their stuff. In those days, there weren't quite so many people. But I organized all that, got to know all the suppliers, which was fun. And that made a reasonable amount of money for the organization—to have all those people come and sell their stuff. In those days, what we would do was, at the end of the conference, to get people to come to the business meeting, we had a raffle.

The manufacturers would donate various things to the raffle. I got to be the raffler, the person who raffled things off. It was really a lot of fun, and I really enjoyed that aspect because I'm a real ham, I guess. But then, ultimately, after a few years of doing that, it turned out that it wasn't legal for us to be raffling things off and we had to stop doing it. We raffled off wheels, kilns[, all sorts of supplies]. They didn't want to take them back. They didn't want to have to ship the stuff home.

MS. RIEDEL: Why was it not legal to raffle them off?

MS. WINOKUR: There was something about having a conference and then doing this thing where goods were being exchanged—that was not legal. I have no idea why, but all I know is that we were told that we had to stop.

MS. RIEDEL: And NCECA is nonprofit?

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

MS. RIEDEL: That's interesting. I never heard of such a thing.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, anyway, it was. It had to stop, so—

MS. RIEDEL: Were any of these different groups from these communities in any way influential to your career or to your work?

MS. WINOKUR: In a kind of oblique way. They made connections. It was about networking, which is about joining groups to your network. So I got to meet a lot of people that I wouldn't ordinarily meet. Being on the board of NCECA, there was a lot of perks to that.

MS. RIEDEL: Like what?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, everybody knew who you were. And so there were exhibition opportunities that came up that probably wouldn't have come up had I not been involved, I think. I got to go other places, because the board met in different places. The board always met where there was going to be a conference, and you would have to go there. So I was on it for three years, and Bob was on it for longer, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Right.

MS. WINOKUR: He was on it for—well, he was on it in '75, when we had the meeting here, and then in '92 he was also on it, for a few years each time.

MS. RIEDEL: And do you think NCECA has been helpful to the field?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, I do, absolutely. Initially, I think it was mostly for educators, and then when it opened itself up to the students, the students, I think, got a tremendous amount out of it. They got to see all kinds of [work] in one spot that they wouldn't see ordinarily. I think it's been an amazing organization that has grown so much. But it certainly does exemplify what's going on in the field.

The field has exploded. Who would have thought? When we had our little potlatches all those years ago, it was a completely different time. And you know what? There are more people in the world now. Fifty years is a lot of generations of people. And then the old people, including me, are not dying so fast.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: We're hanging in there. I expect to live to be at least 92 because—I didn't tell you this—one of my real role models was Imogen Cunningham.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, okay.

MS. WINOKUR: I have to tell you this story. I met Imogen Cunningham. When we lived in Texas, her son Pad, one of the twins, was a ceramic engineer and he worked for the Denton Brick Company. When we got to Denton, we went looking around for clay. We went to the brick company to see what we could get and we met Pad, and we became friends. He gave us all kinds of tips and he gave us stuff to try and all that.

One night he said, "Do you want to come and meet my mother?" So I had no idea who his mother was. He was [Padraic] Pad Partridge; anyway, so his mother, Cunningham was her name. His father was Roi Partridge. There was a twin brother [Rondal].

So we went to Fort Worth, where they lived, and met his mother. There was this lady, who was, at the time, in her 70s, walking around in a denim skirt and sneakers, which just knocked me out, because all the women I knew who were that age wore silk-print dresses, and they were all dumpy-looking. We had the most wonderful evening. I was playing the recorder at the time, so I'm sitting there playing my recorder, and she photographed us.

MS. RIEDEL: Do you have copies of that? Oh, how wonderful.

MS. WINOKUR: And that's one of her photographs.

MS. RIEDEL: That's gorgeous.

MS. WINOKUR: So a couple of weeks later, we get this package in the mail from Imogen, with the three of us together [in one of her photos, *Ruth's Rear*, and on the back it's signed with her name and address in San Francisco, and eight-inch-by-10-inch photographs that she had taken of me and Bob and Pad].

One of our friends told us that it's all worth a lot of money, but anyway—so after years of not thinking very much about that, somebody finally said, "You have to get that archivally framed." So I did.

MS. RIEDEL: Yeah.

MS. WINOKUR: But anyway I was totally in love with her. She was a great role model, because I didn't have very many women role models at the time. And she said that she had gotten asked to go to Washington to work for *Fortune* magazine. Her husband, Roi, who taught at Mills College, said, "If you go, don't come back." And so she said, "Goodbye."

She went off to have her career. And she may have gone back. That's what she said then.

MS. RIEDEL: What an amazing woman for you to meet so early on in your career.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. I was, 24, 25, something like that, and all I knew were my aunts, who were hard workers but certainly not an artistic woman who had—she was gutsy; she was smart; she was a fabulous photographer. It was a very important little episode in my life, I think.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, I think so, too. I'm really glad you remembered that.

MS. WINOKUR: Not many other women that I could think of that were as important to me as she was.

MS. RIEDEL: Did you keep up any kind of relationship with her?

MS. WINOKUR: No.

MS. RIEDEL: There was one meeting and that was it.

MS. WINOKUR: Actually, I wrote her and thanked for all the stuff, but that was the one meeting.

We kept in touch with Pad. After we left Texas, we still kept in touch with him and we exchanged Christmas cards for years. One year, we sent a card and we never heard back. And finally one night we get a phone call and it was his daughter, who by this time was grown up, and she was a veterinarian. She did horse massage. And she told us that he had died and that he and his wife Marjorie had both passed away.

And I wondered, "Why haven't we heard?"

You think of people that just are gone. It's interesting with Facebook because one of my friends—actually, the woman who photographed the page next to that, which is one of these little diary pages that she was photographing—Judy Taylor, she died and—early 50s, when her heart gave out.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh, dear.

MS. WINOKUR: She was still on Facebook, and it's so weird to keep getting—like, every time you get a little message, "Why don't you 'friend' Judy Taylor?" or something. And I'm thinking, How do you get somebody off of Facebook if they're dead? It's dreadful.

MS. RIEDEL: That's awful.

MS. WINOKUR: I think her sister finally may have done something about it, but anyway, so that's my story.

MS. RIEDEL: About Imogen.

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

MS. RIEDEL: Well, I have just a few final summary questions and—

MS. WINOKUR: Okay.

MS. RIEDEL: —we can address those now.

How have your sources of inspiration changed over time? Is there anything other than what we've discussed already that stands out?

MS. WINOKUR: No, I think we've pretty much covered it all. The various stages of my work reflect, I think, the inspirations that—

MS. RIEDEL: [Inaudible.]

MS. WINOKUR: —caused it. I would like to say one other thing about inspiration, though, which I guess I didn't say. When Rudy was my teacher—and I know I said he wasn't that great a teacher technically, but he gave me something that very few people can give you. He gave me a real sense of myself, and he made me feel like I could do anything I wanted to do. That was really important at that time of my life, when I was a really young person.

MS. RIEDEL: I would think so.

MS. WINOKUR: That was the thing about that school, where you felt like you were a real—you were a person, not just a number.

MS. RIEDEL: Right, because all of a sudden it was a smaller—

MS. WINOKUR: It was a smaller environment and you were taken seriously, or he took me seriously, I think. And he said, "You can do whatever you want to do."

Then at some point I remember having an exhibition at Helen's, and he came over to me and he said, "I'm really proud of you," which was really special. He said he couldn't do what I did, which is really interesting.

Another interesting little bit is that Enrique, who I met in Hungary, Enrique Mestre—

MS. RIEDEL: The Spanish artist, yes.

MS. WINOKUR: —the Spanish guy, he said something to me when we were talking about each other's work. He said, "I had a student who came and said, 'Professor, I can't make that.'"

He said, "You're not supposed to make it." He said, "I have to make my work and you have to make your work."

That's an important thing to remember when you think about who's making what, that—and I would say this to students, too: "You have what's in you to make whatever it is that you need to make." I think we make work to live.

MS. RIEDEL: How so?

MS. WINOKUR: Because I think if I didn't have this thing to do with my hands, I would go crazy.

When I was in college, I had to work in the summer to make money, and I had a summer job one year where I went to work in a factory as a secretary. I must have a certain amount of dyslexia because I was a lousy typist and I made a lot of mistakes. I finally got fired from that job, but I hated it so much. It was so boring that people were not smart.

I remember I was reading, I think, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoyevsky, going back and forth on the subway. One day the boss sees this book and he says, "You're not—." I took the job thinking it was going to be a full-time job. That was what I told him then. I didn't say I was going back at the end of the summer. And he said, "You lied to me. You're a college student," blah, blah, blah.

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: But anyway, it was just that—I remember that that experience [proved to me that] I didn't want to live like that, that living that kind of a life would [have] killed me. So I think people who are artists do what they do because they're driven to do it.

MS. RIEDEL: Yes, I've heard that many times in different ways, but I think that—I've heard that before.

MS. WINOKUR: When I'm not in the studio, I usually get cranky if I'm missing working.

MS. RIEDEL: Has that been true from the beginning?

MS. WINOKUR: I think pretty much.

MS. RIEDEL: Something you just needed to do?

MS. WINOKUR: In a way, I had a problem: I had kids. Because I was always feeling like, Here I am playing with these little boys and I should really be in the studio working, and then would feel guilty about being in the studio working, thinking that they're with a babysitter. They're doing what they're doing, and I should really be taking care of them. I think it's a dilemma that women have, anyway. But as an artist, you feel this push-pull kind of a thing.

I wonder if it's different for men. I wonder if they just feel like this is their job; this is what they need to do.

MS. RIEDEL: No, I haven't had many male artists say they felt like they needed to spend more time with their kids.

MS. WINOKUR: [Inaudible.]

MS. RIEDEL: I haven't had that experience. I've heard that from women who work in multiple fields, but I haven't heard that from men.

MS. WINOKUR: I think—

MS. RIEDEL: It doesn't mean they don't necessarily think it, but I've certainly never heard anybody say it.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, anyway, it's too late now to say what we should have done. Shoulda, woulda, couldas are a lot of things.

MS. RIEDEL: What do you see as the importance of ceramics as a means of expression? What are its strengths and its weaknesses? And what does it do better than anything else? What is the essence of it that appeals to you and has held your interest all this time?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, first of all, I think that it's very therapeutic. I think clay is—and I'm not talking about myself necessarily—but I think there's so many people attracted to it because it feels good. It's primal. It takes you back to making mud pies, which I loved doing as a child. And I think that primal instinct is stronger than a lot of people want to admit. But basically making things with your hands, I think, is a really important thing that human beings need to do. Even if it's a question of gardening, whatever you do with your hands is important. If you can do something creative with it, that makes it even more special.

So ceramics itself, I think the material is magical in that sense. That you take this lump of nothing and you can make something out of it is quite extraordinary. And the fact that it goes through the fire and is transformed makes it even more extraordinary, so that there is a magical quality to it from the beginning to the end product. That's the way it is to me, I think. It has that sense of the touch: that you push your thumbprint in it and it stays is important. So it's a lot of different levels.

I hope that it continues to be something that people want to work with, because there's certainly plenty of it in the earth. On the other hand, maybe we're using it up and making ugly things. Who knows? I'm not sure about that, but it seems to be going through some kind of a transformation right now in terms of the art world, where a lot of graduate programs are pushing students into becoming sculptors who might use clay, not people who are committed to using clay. And so that's why you're seeing a lot of work that's very mixed-media.

There's one piece in a show at the Clay Studio that is 95 percent wood and whatever else, and this little tiny piece of clay. They didn't even need the little piece of clay. The little piece of clay could have been made out of wood, too. But the person is probably in a ceramics program, so he's got to use at least some clay. I think my attitude is, if your work looks better in another material, make it in that material. Don't say, "Well, I have to put some clay in it." So if you want to use clay, use it because it's important that the thing be made out of clay.

MS. RIEDEL: I would think that you would be interested in a program, though, that would offer mixed-media as a way to access, for example, more extremes in scale that you might be interested in exploring yourself.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, absolutely. If I felt like the thing I had to make had to be made out of steel, I would make it out of steel. And that's fine. I guess I have conflicts about it, too, and I can see the value of a three-dimensional course, which allows you to move from one thing to another. But what I am concerned about is that I have a feeling that a lot of—and this is just talking about academic university departments—that clay may be phased out. Glass could be phased out.

Those things need lots of fuel and they're expensive to run, whereas if you have a class in which you say, "Go out and find a bunch of sticks and whatever else you can find and make a sculpture"—which could be quite interesting, too. Where the classes are taught from a conceptual base rather than a material base, there is a value in that on the one hand. But I think maybe there also needs to be—I think clay needs to be respected and kept as a viable area to work in. I don't know.

MS. RIEDEL: Well, it has such a long history.

MS. WINOKUR: It has a long history, and I think the history really does encompass vessel and object.

MS. RIEDEL: And it's evolved as technology has evolved, to be sure.

MS. WINOKUR: Right.

MS. RIEDEL: When we think about Jerry Rothman's evolution with clay, its ability to be—practically zero shrinkage and then also to have that incredible tensile strength—

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah.

MS. RIEDEL: . . . It's amazing what can be done with it.

MS. WINOKUR: Right.

MS. RIEDEL: That's just one example. There are so many technical innovations that have happened with it.

MS. WINOKUR: Well, it's an amazing material, absolutely. So I would hate to see it disbanded, I think, in favor of

being current.

MS. RIEDEL: What does it do better than any other material, do you think?

MS. WINOKUR: Very often you can't get the colors with paint that you get with glaze. That's one thing, I think, is true—not always.

MS. RIEDEL: You think you can get unusual colors through glazing. Is that what you're saying?

MS. WINOKUR: Yeah, you can—

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: —that you can't get with paint. There's a depth to glaze. There's the crystallization that occurs very often in glaze that you can't get with paint. So it does that well.

You can make it into any shape you want easily. All the major bronze sculptures you think of were made of clay and then cast in bronze. And sculptors think of clay as the intermediate material. They don't think of it as the finished material.

So I don't know. I just know that I have run my life the way I have using this crazy stuff and enjoying it, and I would hate to see it disappear. But on the other hand, maybe they'll figure out something better to use—possible.

MS. RIEDEL: How has your work been received over time?

MS. WINOKUR: By who?

MS. RIEDEL: Well, by, I guess, a general audience. As your work has evolved over time, how has the reception been?

MS. WINOKUR: I think different people have liked different aspects of it. Somebody would say, "Oh, I liked it when you did those face boxes," or "I liked it when you did this or that other thing." But I have gotten a generally good reception for a lot of the work at various times. I wouldn't say sales are that great. I once had somebody tell me something really interesting. He said, "Your work is the kind of work that other artists really like."

MS. RIEDEL: That is an interesting [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: Isn't that interesting? Meaning, "I like your work but I can't sell it"? I have sold a lot of work, but—

MS. RIEDEL: Right. That's actually—that's quite a compliment.

MS. WINOKUR: You think that's a compliment? I thought it was an interesting comment. This was a long time—I think we were in the Whitney with a bunch of people walking around—the Whitney or the Modern, one of the—I think it was the Whitney. And this person [I can't even remember who it was] who made that comment, which has stuck with me.

MS. RIEDEL: That's like saying "a painter's painter."

MS. WINOKUR: And what does that mean? Does that mean that other people don't get it, or it's—I just found it kind of an interesting comment.

MS. RIEDEL: Were you going to say a potter's—

MS. WINOKUR: [Inaudible.]

MS. RIEDEL: —other artists—other artists.

MS. WINOKUR: I wasn't making pots by that time, when this person said that.

MS. RIEDEL: I'm sure not. It sounds to me like there's a level of nuance that people who are more familiar with the arts might respond to, whereas others might not.

MS. WINOKUR: I think the subtlety of these pieces that you see in there is something that's hard for everyday people to take, because they want to see something with a picture on it.

MS. RIEDEL: And because it's quiet and it takes time to reveal itself, and you have to bring yourself to it and spend some time with it.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. Then you always wonder what your friends really think, because of course, your friends are going to like what you do because they're your friends. So that's not a good judge, either.

MS. RIEDEL: No, definitely not.

One final question: How or where do you see yourself and your work fitting into contemporary art?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, that's a really good question, because I am not really sure. On the one hand, I think that it does. On the other hand, when I look at some of the things that are going on now, I think it doesn't at all. I think it's in a different time spot. And I see a lot of figurative work being done. That seems to be a hot subject right now.

MS. RIEDEL: Where do you see it fitting in, or how do you see it fitting in? Is there a particular tradition you think it [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: I feel like I stay inside the landscape tradition.

MS. RIEDEL: Minimalism at all?

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, definitely Minimalism. And one of the artists I think I could say my work kind of lines up with is Wayne Higby.

MS. RIEDEL: Interesting. You're right. I hadn't thought of that necessarily, but that makes sense.

MS. WINOKUR: A similar sensibility. I'm trying to think of who else I could say would be in the same kind of category, but I think of myself as someone—

MS. RIEDEL: Well, you mentioned De Staebler.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes. He might object to that. [Laughs.]

MS. RIEDEL: Well, I'm asking you.

MS. WINOKUR: I could say, in some respects, with him. I also feel in a lot of ways it's just unique work. I don't mean that to sound pompous or anything, but I do feel like nobody's doing what I'm doing. That's the way it is and I think that it's the strength of what I'm doing. At the same time, it's a shortcoming to say that I'm not part of a certain movement.

So if you're doing figurative work, and there's 25 other people doing it, even though your stuff might be different than everybody else's, you're still, art historically, you're there. My work is not—somebody once said to me, "Your work is hard to pigeonhole," from an art historical point of view. Do I need to worry about that?

MS. RIEDEL: [Laughs.]

MS. WINOKUR: I don't think so. But my work is contemporary because it's done today. Anything that's done now is contemporary, right?

MS. RIEDEL: Well, especially the more global [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: Well, I meant literally—

MS. RIEDEL: Right, of course.

MS. WINOKUR: —if you do it today, it's contemporary. But no, I think that all the pieces that have to do with climate change are definitely contemporary. That's my general interest, which will continue, I think, for the next couple of years, anyway.

MS. RIEDEL: That's been your focus really for 10 or 15 years now, hasn't it?

MS. WINOKUR: Well, since, like, 2003, so it's '11 now? Eight? Seven, eight years? Something like that.

MS. RIEDEL: Were the *Segments Erraticus*—were those related to global warming [inaudible]—

MS. WINOKUR: No.

MS. RIEDEL: Okay.

MS. WINOKUR: No, those had to do with geodes.

MS. RIEDEL: Oh.

MS. WINOKUR: So those were from the rock series.

MS. RIEDEL: I see.

MS. WINOKUR: My attitude about those was, if you took a giant rock and you sliced it in half, what would you find? That's what those are about.

MS. RIEDEL: So we've talked about Minimalism. And then just talking about rocks, it seems like there is throughout your work also an interest in nature and the environment, man and nature, geologic forces.

MS. WINOKUR: Yes, my work has been about nature since the first landscape box I did, which was in the mid-'80s, so it's a long time. And sometimes I wish that I could do something else, but I can't. The only thing that I do do from time to time is to make pots—like, dishes. If I need something, I go to the studio and make it. [Laughs.] And I like making cups because I think that when someone drinks out of a cup that I made, they're remembering me. A lot of potters, especially, I'm sure, have the same attitude about making a cup for someone to drink out of—that [there is a connection between maker and user, even a spiritual one].

What I do for fun is I make pots, mostly cups and plates.

MS. RIEDEL: It's interesting. The cups are slabs now, right? And nothing is thrown anymore.

MS. WINOKUR: They are slabbed a little. I haven't thrown for a long time, actually. And even if I make a bowl, I usually do a press mold in a bowl. I have the old Randall wheel. Bob has an electric one. So the Randall wheel is cranky. It's not that easy to throw on anymore, but doing slabs gets the job done.

So what else?

MS. RIEDEL: That's it. Any final thoughts or—

MS. WINOKUR: No, I just hope that someday somebody listens to this and hears what I have to say when I'm long gone. That would be nice. It's nice to know that that's an option. Thank you for all your good questions.

MS. RIEDEL: Thank you very much for your time and for your being so generous with your thoughts.

[END SD4 TR2.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

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