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Oral history interview with Stanley Lechtzin, 2005 April 20

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Stanley Lechtzin on April 20, 2005. The interview took place near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was conducted by Helen Drutt English and Cindy Strauss 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.

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

Interview

HELEN DRUTT ENGLISH: This is Helen Williams Drutt English and I'm interviewing Stanley Lechtzin in his home in a suburb outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the 20 of April, 2005. And I am here with Cindy Strauss, curator of contemporary decorative arts and design at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and this is a joint interview for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. And this is disc number one, tape number one.

Stanley, when and where were you born?

STANLEY LECHTZIN: I was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1936.

MS. ENGLISH: And the specific date, please?

MR. LECHTZIN: June 9 of '36.

MS. ENGLISH: And what were the names of your parents?

MR. LECHTZIN: My mother was Sylvia Fishman and my father, Jacob Lechtzin.

MS. ENGLISH: Did you have any siblings?

MR. LECHTZIN: My brother, Edward, who is four years my junior.

MS. ENGLISH: Four years junior. And would you like to describe the nature of your childhood and your family background?

MR. LECHTZIN: I was born into an observant Jewish family. The grandparents lived in the — not the apartment, but it was a two-family house and they lived upstairs and my mother, father, brother and I live downstairs. My father was trained as a pharmacist and I grew up in a drug store.

MS. ENGLISH: Were your grandparents your paternal grandparents or your maternal grandparents?

MR. LECHTZIN: My paternal grandparents. Maternal grandparents lived in Cleveland where my grandfather ran a kosher butcher shop.

MS. ENGLISH: Do you think growing up in a drug store surrounded by a pharmaceutical environment had any influence on your future?

MR. LECHTZIN: It demystified the sciences in many ways and made them appear to be more attractive, I guess, than for many of my friends. I early took an interest in the practical applications of the sciences, but growing up in Detroit at that time it was impossible to not become very much involved in the automobile industry and the ongoing love affair that all teenage boys have with automobiles, so mechanics were an integral part of my growing up as well.

MS. ENGLISH: Were you observant?

MR. LECHTZIN: I was pressured to be observant, which I guess forced me in the opposite direction. Things haven't changed all that much. I think all youngsters tend to want at least to go contrary to their parents' desires but if you wish me to expand upon that aspect of my early life I'll be happy to do so.

MS. ENGLISH: Please do so.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay. The introduction to religion at that time, I think, in virtually all religions was not all that

sound educationally. I was prepared for my Bar Mitzvah by having the material literally beaten into me with a wooden ruler on the palms of my hands very much like the stories I hear of the education of Catholics at the hands of nuns at that time. That, I think, was guaranteed to cause discomfort and lack of interest. As I matured, however, that lack of interest gave way to a more intellectualized approach to religion and while I valued the knowledge gained at that time and the interest it instilled in my exploration of religion, it also led to a total disregard for belief in the myths of religion.

MS. ENGLISH: And yet in your own work and in your own commissions, you've had an amazing commitment to the Judaic tradition.

MR. LECHTZIN: It is an academic interest.

MS. ENGLISH: Would you like to discuss the early part of your secular education?

MR. LECHTZIN: The most important aspect of it, other than the very typical grade school, junior high school, et cetera, which left little impression on me other than the fact that for some reason in the junior high environment I turned out to be the popular man on campus and was elected to virtually every student post which I expect provided a degree of security and a desire for leadership. But in Detroit at that time, I think still there is technical high school — Cass Technical High School, which was very near to my father's drug store and was in essence a magnet school.

Rather than going to the local high school, I chose to enroll at Cass Tech which was in all probability the best thing I could have done for my future life. It provided an education that I at this point would assess as superior to anything that happens in the first two years of college when it comes to the sciences and math and the mechanical trades. They were all there. I was able to learn drafting, chemistry, foundry, machine tool practices, physics, the whole gamut of technology and science. This was the best preparation I could have had for what I decided to do in the future.

I never at that point had any knowledge of art, nor did I consider myself an artist, nor did I even think that I would go on to college. My heart was set on becoming a tool and die maker for Ford Motor Company which at that time was not allowing Jews into the union, so that was the end of that dream.

I decided at that point that I did not want to spend anymore time at the drug store. At that point I had been working for either my father or his associates around the city and I had had my fill with working behind a soda fountain, so I asked one of my friends whose family was in the jewelry business to see if they could find a job for me in that field. I found a small jewelry repair shop near the high school — near Cass Tech and worked there for two years.

I graduated, worked for the Detroit Public Lighting Commission as a draftsman working with some half dozen 40-plus year-old engineers and after a few months of that I realized that was not a profession that I wanted to pursue. I then went on to work as a cartographer for U.S. Lake Survey which at that time was doing mapping of Eastern Europe. I didn't see much of the Great Lakes, so it was pretty clear to me who I was working for.

After a stint at Lake Survey, I looked around and found from a number of sources that there was this genius who had just come to Wayne State University teaching jewelry, Philip Fike. And while I didn't have much interest in a college education, I truly wanted to get near this man and so I made application to Wayne State and, lo and behold, I was allowed to enter even considering the fact that my 12th grade grade-point average wasn't much to be proud of.

In any event, from there on it's not really history but once I got near Philip, I realized I had to have a college education. I went on to Cranbrook where I had the pleasure and the mentoring of Richard Thomas, and here I am.

MS. ENGLISH: What would be —

MR. LECHTZIN: By the way, along — during the college years I had little expectation that I would be a college professor. I expect that I would leave Cranbrook and go into business with that boyhood friend of mine who got me my first jewelry job. But I came out of Cranbrook at a very good time for higher education in the States. Sputnik had just ascended and money was being thrown at universities and colleges around the country. All were expanding and the arts got a good deal of the spin-off from that. There was plenty of money and I was amazed to find that I was offered — I interviewed I think for six positions at the college level and I was offered the job at three of them, so I decided I'll put in a few years of college teaching and 43 years later I'm still at my first teaching job.

CINDY STRAUSS: If I —

MS. ENGLISH: Sorry.

MS. STRAUSS: All right.

MS. ENGLISH: Your interest in skill, in technique seems to be a pervasive part of your personality. Did you also avail yourself of the cultural institutions in Detroit? The museums such as the Detroit Institute of Art and other institutions that offered —

MR. LECHTZIN: I —

MS. ENGLISH: — an aesthetic, you know —

MR. LECHTZIN: Upon entering Wayne — it's not Wayne State, it was just Wayne. What was it at that time? Well, never mind. When I entered Wayne State and began taking courses in the art department, I realized immediately that I had to find out something about what this world was about. And Wayne is located in the cultural center of the city of Detroit or at that time it was the cultural center. The university, what is now called that Center for Creative Studies, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and a number of other cultural organizations were all within walking distance of one another.

And so I would regularly visit the museum and — oh, and the main library was there. I discovered in that library, an extensive collection of the publication *Gold + Silber, Uhren + Schmuck*, German jewelry trade publication. They had bound volumes of it going back to the — just after the Second World War and this acquainted me with what was happening in Europe at that time, which led to other things, which I'm sure we're get into further on in this interview.

The interest at about the junior year in going to Cranbrook was engendered by the fact that at that time the Detroit Art Institute held an annual — held two annual exhibitions: one for the fine artists of Michigan and the other for the crafts in Michigan. At the — in my junior year, I began entering the Michigan Artist and it was called the Michigan Artists Craftsman Exhibition, I entered for the first time in my junior year, received second or third prize. First prize at that time went to Earl Krentzin who had recently returned from teaching, I believe, at University of Wisconsin. I may be mixing up dates, but it was about that time that Krentzin had graduated from Cranbrook and had gone on to teach for a year or two at Wisconsin. He typically would take first prize, second prize typically would go to a graduate student at Cranbrook, and Lechtzin always came in third. [They laugh.] Well, that was impetus enough for me to decide to go on to Cranbrook after working with Philip for an additional year and a half.

I continued to enter that exhibition. I continued to visit the museum. One of these exhibitions that I still remember was a show of Etruscan work. It was an extremely large and beautifully installed exhibition of Etruscan gold work and that set the stage for my thesis work at Cranbrook.

In any event, a simple answer to that question is: "Yes, I've visited museums." [They laugh.]

MR. ENGLISH: Cindy, you had a question?

MS. STRAUSS: Before we leave your early education and your first jobs, I wanted to just follow-up with the question about the brief period that you spent working in the jewelry repair shop with your first exposure to jewelry. Did you find even in the repair work that you were doing that it sparked your — what kind of interest did it spark in you and did you find that you had a facility for it?

MR. LECHTZIN: It allowed me to engage in the mechanical and technical activities that I enjoyed very much or at least I did at that time in that way. It also taught me a great deal about the use people made of body adornment. Some of my earliest work was engagement rings and wedding bands, the designs of which derived in large measure from what I determined was wrong with what was being produced commercially. The jewelry repair shop by its very nature received objects that needed attention. I determined early on what the attention was that they needed. Do you want me to go into those details?

MS. STRAUSS: Not necessarily, but I would be curious if you see a difference in evaluating the difference between being a university-trained metalsmith or a metalsmith that's been trained in a studio outside of the academic world.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, I had the benefit of both.

MS. STRAUSS: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: And I am fortunate, I believe, to have had the trade experience, the commercial experience prior to entering a college art program and I've seen that in a few of my students over the years. Those who have had some experience working in a jewelry store doing sales and/or bench work approach their art in a manner that

is more focused. They — as I discovered, there were reasons to change what was being presented to the public. Many of — few of the students who come to me with that experience also have those attitudes. They're in college studying art because while they wished to continue to be jewelers, they are totally dissatisfied with what they experienced out in the commercial venue.

You asked something else and I think I've lost track of that. Oh, I also was fortunate in my place of birth. I at that time would not have had the financial ability to go to college had it not been in the same city and I was able to live at home. Further good fortune was Philip Fike, who was an exemplary role model and extremely strong, innovative, insightful artist and he tolerated this guy that came his way with all these ideas about jewelry that had very little to do with what was going on in Fike's studio. And that toleration was truly what allowed me to understand, develop, and appreciate what it was that he offered, but he did so in a very gentle fashion so I was able to make that transition at my own pace rather than as a pace governed by the academic calendar.

MS. ENGLISH: Could you speak a bit more about Phil Fike because my memory is — of his involvement with the fibula, his absolute passion about collecting cutters, you know, choppers, and also chopping utensils.

MR. LECHTZIN: I've not seen any of those.

MS. ENGLISH: He had an amazing collection.

MR. LECHTZIN: The jew's harp is the thing that I associate him with collecting.

MS. ENGLISH: And also — and also choppers.

MR. LECHTZIN: but I've never seen any of his choppers, and he wasn't collecting them when I was near him but he was collecting and playing the jew's harp along with his guitar. Classical guitar was a very important instrument in his life. Excellent singing voice; just a beautiful human being.

MS. ENGLISH: Very robust personality like the Lion in the *Wizard of Oz*. [They laugh.] If I remembered correctly.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes. Yes. If you knew him at that time in his life — just a very, very special person. I was fortunate in my exposure at the undergraduate and graduate level to some — to two unique human beings. In speaking of Philip's involvement professionally, the philosophy that he instilled that derived from his analysis of the fibula and how it functioned as body adornment has been central in my approach to body adornment.

While I don't think anybody would mistake our work for one another — the work we do for one another, the underlining philosophies were meshed — totally meshed. I — up through my last meeting with Philip, there was this complete understanding of one another professionally and acceptance of one another professionally and I believe admiration for one another professionally.

MS. ENGLISH: Did the same relationship exist with Richard Thomas?

MR. LECHTZIN: It was a different relationship. Richard was far more the academician and I experienced an understanding and an appreciation and a love for teaching in a manner that Richard communicated by example, and that has been with me for my entire professional life.

MS. ENGLISH: At what point did you move away from the traditional techniques of metal smithing toward the exploration of electroforming? And if I remember correctly there was a paper that was delivered some time during the '60s. Could you explore that with us?

MR. LECHTZIN: I got a — I received — let me see, when was this?

MS. ENGLISH: I think it was —

MR. LECHTZIN: It was in '63. I received a call from Paul Smith who was then direct — or head curator of the Museum of Contemporary Crafts as it was called. He had just completed the selection for the Young American show. I was once a Young American. He phoned me to tell me that he had selected my piece for an award. I don't remember what award that was, but he wanted me to know that while it's exciting visually, it's much too heavy to wear. The piece is hanging in our bathroom — yeah.

[They laugh.]

MS. ENGLISH: Yes —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: "Much too heavy to wear, Lechtzin. You've got to do something about it." That set me to thinking

and I then heard or was invited by Aileen Webb, whose name we all recognize and who was just forming the World Congress of Craftsman. The invitation was to form and direct a panel — the metals panel — that would present its predictions of the future to the First World Congress of Craftsman which was to be held at Columbia University in 1964. I believe it was June of '64.

She indicated that there would be a budget and that I would be asked to invite anyone that I wished to participate with me in this panel presentation — whatever it was that I thought would be important to present to the world of craft. This was motivation enough to begin to move beyond the traditional realm and I had been toying with the electrochemical processes. I recognized that they would enable me to produce thin, lightweight metal objects as an answer to Paul's criticism.

So using the World Craft Congress monies, I set about in January of '64 to hold a workshop at Tyler. The studio was cleared of students because it was between semesters. It was during the Christmas vacation period which we now call the winter break, and I invited — let's see if I can remember — the list of characters I know you'll recognize immediately — Olaf Skoogfors who I had met almost immediately upon arriving in Philadelphia. I've been aware of his work, his activities. I thought it fortunate to be coming to a city and embarking on a teaching career at about the same time that Olaf was doing the same thing. He's just recently returned to Philadelphia from School for American Craftsman in Rochester. He was offered a position at the Philadelphia College —

MS. ENGLISH: College — right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — of Art —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — which is now the —

MS. ENGLISH: University.

MR. LECHTZIN: — University of the Arts. Thank you.

MS. STRAUSS: I need to put in a tape. Excuse me.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay. You want to stop there for a moment?

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay. I'll just —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: I don't want to mess with this.

MS. ENGLISH: So we're at side two on the tape for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

MR. LECHTZIN: So in any event, we were both were setting off to start our teaching careers and we found one another to be extremely compatible. Again, things sometimes work out just perfectly in one's life and that was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. In any event, I invited Olaf, Earl Krentzin from back in Detroit, Philip Fike who I have now mentioned reverentially a few times. Who else was there?

MS. ENGLISH: Ron Pearson.

MR. LECHTZIN: Ronald Pearson. Thank you. And, let's see, Joe Trippetti, who was recommended by Aileen Webb. Yes, Joe Trippetti was an enamellist, but more importantly he was president or director of the New Hampshire Guild — yes, it was New Hampshire? Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: Yes.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. New Hampshire Guild of Craftsman.

MS. ENGLISH: New Hampshire Guild of Craftsman.

MR. LECHTZIN: And so we got together for a week-long workshop at Tyler. I had set up a very, very modest, quite rudimentary electroforming installation and we all set about using that technology as best we could. We brought that to the conference in the summer in June of '64 and that established my "expertise," and I use that in quotes at that point. I was just really beginning to explore the technology, but that established that as a meaningful and important technology for me which I then continued to explore.

When I got back to Tyler, I was able to expand upon it with some university grants. I went on to take a course in

electrochemistry at the Temple University Technical Institute. At that time Philadelphia was a major electro — had a major electroplating industry and Temple was offering courses to electroplaters. I sat in on that and that rounded out my technical knowledge. And in '65, I was asked to plan facilities for Tyler's new buildings in which I was able to incorporate an extensive electroforming laboratory and that activity continued well in through the '70s when something very important entered our world. Now I'll leave you hanging. [They laugh.]

MS. ENGLISH: What entered our world at that time?

MR. LECHTZIN: The move from the mainframe computer to the personal computer, for want of a better term, and I acquired my first one in '78 and that was the beginning of a love affair that continues to this day.

MS. ENGLISH: Before we go to the computer — [they laugh] — I would like to go back a few years and I would like you to discuss —

MR. LECHTZIN: Coffee, please.

MS. ENGLISH: Oh. [They laugh.]

MS. ENGLISH: I would like you to discuss the formation of the Society of North American Goldsmiths which is also known as SNAG, right?

MR. LECHTZIN: SNAG.

MS. ENGLISH: And in particular if you could discuss that first meeting, you know, the first regional meeting among the regional directors, but then the first meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: And the first exhibition of what was known as Goldsmith '70.

MR. LECHTZIN: I'm pleased that you recollect all that because that is a little dim in my mind. It all tends to flow together. A lot of things were happening then simultaneously. And how did that get started?

MS. ENGLISH: There was a small group that met first.

MR. LECHTZIN: That's — yeah. Yes. Yes, but I'm trying to remember and I really can't remember how we decided to do that. I don't know who wrote to whom or who called who, but once again it's pretty much the same cast of characters. The — I know at that point — yes, yes now it's coming back. At that point, the Minneapolis Museum of Art —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — was organizing annual exhibitions of craft —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — and I was asked to jury in '70 as was Jack Prip and Phil Morton.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes. Phil Morton was involved at that — oh, sure now it's coming back. Phil Morton was involved at that point and he, I think, was the impetus. Yes, he must have been. He must have been the impetus.

MS. ENGLISH: For SNAG, right?

MR. LECHTZIN: He had been traveling around the country meeting with individuals — individual jewelers that he had some interest in and was carrying stories between us. He involved us in his book and at the — and it took advantage of the fact that a number of us were now going to be in Minneapolis to suggest that we get together and so a number of individuals were invited, I think, by Phil Morton. And —

MS. ENGLISH: What year was that?

MR. LECHTZIN: — that was our first meeting and that must have been '69 or early '70. And who was there? I know I'm going to leave people out and I really — it troubles me that if this becomes a transcript on the web that people will be left out, so I hope that we will be able to go back —

MS. ENGLISH: Yes.

MR. LECHTZIN: — research that and make sure that —

MS. ENGLISH: Yes.

MR. LECHTZIN: — all the culprits are duly listed.

MS. ENGLISH: You will get a transcript —

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: — and you can edit it —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: — and add to it.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well —

MS. STRAUSS: I have the list of original participants.

MS. ENGLISH: At the original meeting?

MS. STRAUSS: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: Before —

MS. STRAUSS: Because all of that — those original letters were in — [unintelligible] —

MS. ENGLISH: Okay.

MR. LECHTZIN: Great.

MS. STRAUSS: — that's in the Archives of American Art.

MR. LECHTZIN: Great.

MS. STRAUSS: So I made copies —

MR. LECHTZIN: Great.

MS. STRAUSS: — of them all.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay. And I remember who was at the first meeting.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, you weren't there. [They laugh.]

MS. ENGLISH: I was the only — I was the only —

MS. STRAUSS: I have the correspondence from the planning meetings.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. STRAUSS: The ones that took place —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay.

MS. STRAUSS: — every couple of months —

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. STRAUSS: — around the country.

MR. LECHTZIN: Great. Great. Why don't you —

MS. ENGLISH: Right. And I was — and I was —

MR. LECHTZIN: — feed that into the transcript —

MS. STRAUSS: Yes.

MR. LECHTZIN: — rather than my —

MS. STRAUSS: Right. Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — trying to recollect it at this point.

MS. ENGLISH: And I was the only lay person at the first meeting. I was the only non-goldsmith other that Harry Bober, who was the guest speaker —

MR. LECHTZIN: Oh, at the first official —

MS. ENGLISH: — at the first official —

MS. STRAUSS: — meeting. Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes

MS. ENGLISH: — and Alma Eikerman and —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: — Arlene Fisch were like, "What are you doing here?"

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes.

MS. STRAUSS: I have the list from —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes.

MS. STRAUSS: — and the copies of letters —

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MS. STRAUSS: — from Philip Morton to Olaf —

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: And I —

MS. STRAUSS: — about the — before the first meeting.

MR. LECHTZIN: Right.

MS. ENGLISH: And I remember Harry Bober's speech on the Sutton Hoo treasure and how he apologized to the congregation for bringing information that was not his original research —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: — but somebody else's research.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Do you remember that?

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes. Now it all comes back.

MS. ENGLISH: And do you remember how he looked at us —

MR. LECHTZIN: At the formative —

MS. ENGLISH: — and said, "We would — [they laugh].

MR. LECHTZIN: — well, I was looking at different things at that time.

But in any event the — and there was a series of perhaps four, maybe five, maybe even six preliminary get-togethers but the first one was in Minneapolis. And we were beginning to throw around names and it was all-male group and so Philip Fike typically had something to say about it. And I don't know if we ought to pass this on for posterity but SNAG started out to be SNATCH. [They laugh.]

MS. ENGLISH: Oh, why? [They laugh.] Well, you know — and but you know what Harry Bober said? Harry Bober said that SNAG spelled backwards was GANS and "gans" in German was goose and as far as he was concerned they were the geese that laid the golden egg. [They laugh.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, that's — that was very kind. In any event, it —

MS. ENGLISH: The goose that laid the gold, right?

MR. LECHTZIN: So that's pretty much how it all got started. And to the best of my recollection we were all at that point college teachers and felt a need to communicate in a way that is no longer felt obviously. Communication now is overwhelming. At that time it was non-existent.

MS. ENGLISH: Right, but the impact of that was amazing when you think of all those people who had never known each other before, with their major students all coming together for two or three days at a time. It was an extraordinary moment in history.

MR. LECHTZIN: Mm-hmm. And out of that came the election of Phil Morton as the first SNAG president and I don't know if we have to go on beyond that. I think at this point everybody knows how it has developed and how large it is.

MS. STRAUSS: But can you tell us a little bit about that first exhibition.

MR. LECHTZIN: That was a —

MS. STRAUSS: As opposed to the conference; the actual exhibition.

MR. LECHTZIN: That was a fascinating time. Oh, the third member on our jury — Lechtzin, Prip and Schmidt — Christian Schmidt. Okay?

MS. STRAUSS: Mm-hmm.

MR. LECHTZIN: A somewhat more traditionally-oriented individual than either Jack or I, and he was disturbed by the selections we were making. He didn't voice his concerns, but he went home after the first — because he was from the Minneapolis St. Paul area. He went back to his studio after the first go-around and created an object which he titled "Metal of Honor" and he snuck it onto the table the following day. It was produced by his nom de plume, Abraham Izzechitz [ph] and he commented on our direction in that manner. It was, from his perspective, something that was just thrown together without little regard for craftsmanship or art. And I don't know if that received much currency publicly, but it was a turning point in Schmidt's life and I don't want to go into any personal details other than to say he died soon after. But I would assume from his reaction that there must have been other similar reactions around the country.

MS. STRAUSS: So it was clear — in the Goldsmith '70 exhibition it was sort of a — would you refer the exhibition as a breaking point between the old and the new direction in a more public sense?

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, the interesting thing is if you look at Schmidt's body of work and what we were looking at and what ultimately was shown that year, there isn't that radical a departure. The work was, to my eye today, very conservative. So I found it hard at that time to understand what it was that he found so objectionable and why he was so dismayed by what it was we were about to display. It wasn't very radical at all.

MS. ENGLISH: No. I think he really did miss the point because the great thing about Goldsmith '70 was that for the first time the nation saw an exhibition of work of major metalsmiths and their major students and the grand diversity of style that existed within our nation. I mean, it was an extraordinary exhibition.

MR. LECHTZIN: I —

MS. ENGLISH: It was the first time we saw —

MR. LECHTZIN: — can't recall it in detail.

MS. ENGLISH: I remember we — I had never seen a Mawdsley before and I never even knew who Alma Eikerman was and her commitment to holloware and her commitment to geometric aesthetic precision. I mean, it was an opening up of information —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: — and that was a great moment.

MR. LECHTZIN: As you say that, I can understand why it is that I don't see it in the same way because all of that was pretty much known to me.

MS. ENGLISH: But that's great.

MR. LECHTZIN: I came to the jurying table hoping for surprises, and there were very few, and therefore I walked away from the experience not thinking too much of it, really. It was pleasant, I enjoyed the company, I enjoyed an interaction with my two fellow jurors. The meetings were far more exciting. The peripheral activities were far more exciting.

MS. ENGLISH: But you were a professor and you were teaching —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: — and I was a layperson.

MR. LECHTZIN: And —

MS. ENGLISH: And you had information through the academic community that lay —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. That's why we —

MS. ENGLISH: See it in a —

MR. LECHTZIN: — perceived it in a different light.

MS. ENGLISH: Right. In different ways. Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. STRAUSS: Did that exhibition travel or was it just in Minneapolis?

MR. LECHTZIN: [Laughs.] I don't know.

MS. ENGLISH: I just don't remember. I have the catalogue.

MR. LECHTZIN: It probably didn't travel.

MS. ENGLISH: Travel.

MR. LECHTZIN: I don't think it traveled.

MS. ENGLISH: But we traveled as a result of it. [They laugh.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, that was — I don't know that it was a result of that, but anyway —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — go on with the questions.

MS. ENGLISH: Right, so we should — well, but, you know, if we're talking about major exhibitions, there were two other exhibitions that you were involved in that I would like you to address because they also involve your travels. And one would be the exhibition of American jewelers in Japan in the late '60s, and the other exhibition would be in 1971, Gold and Silver — you know, *Schmuck + Gerät* that took place in Nuremberg. And you and Olaf were the —

MR. LECHTZIN: The second didn't exist, but I'll —

MS. ENGLISH: It did exist, you and Olaf are the only two in the catalog.

MR. LECHTZIN: I'll straighten that one out in a minute.

MS. ENGLISH: Yes.

MR. LECHTZIN: Sorry. [They laugh.] But we'll get that one right for history.

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: The first one is a story that I enjoy telling.

MS. ENGLISH: Very good. [They laugh.]

MR. LECHTZIN: In '72 or thereabouts —

MS. ENGLISH: '72?

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, because we went — we traveled to Japan in '73. Danielle [ph] check the poster upstairs.

MS. ENGLISH: No, no.

MR. LECHTZIN: Check —

MS. ENGLISH: Japan was — I thought Japan was —

MS. STRAUSS: Japan was —

MS. ENGLISH: — in the late '60s?

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: No.

MS. ENGLISH: Yes.

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: Yes. It was in the late —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Check the poster.

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: It was before the goldsmith, it was before the —

MS. STRAUSS: Seventy or '71.

MS. ENGLISH: It was before the goldsmith.

MR. LECHTZIN: Check the catalog. [They laugh.]

MS. STRAUSS: I want to say — I'm going to vote '70.

MS. ENGLISH: Look — wait, well —

MR. LECHTZIN: Well —

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: — '71 *Gold und Silber, Schmuck und Gerät.* That I know was 1971 because I have the catalog.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay. Then you'd have knowledge — you have knowledge that I don't have.

MS. ENGLISH: And you inscribed it to me.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay, then you have knowledge that I don't have.

MS. ENGLISH: And — and —

MR. LECHTZIN: That completely escapes my memory.

MS. ENGLISH: Right, and —

MR. LECHTZIN: But let's go back to Japan, whatever the date was —

MS. ENGLISH: With Miye Matsukata and Olaf.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, whatever the date was.

MS. ENGLISH: Miye Matsukata, Olaf, and you.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes. And me. Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MS. STRAUSS: It's not up there. It's in Japanese characters.

MS. ENGLISH: All right.

Mr. LECHTZIN: Oh, it's all in Japanese?

MS. ENGLISH: Can I have my — it's in my book that you have.

MR. LECHTZIN: In the catalog.

MS. STRAUSS: [Off mike.]

MR. LECHTZIN: In any event, Miye Matsukata was the sister —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: — of the then — who was married to then ambassador to — U.S. ambassador to Japan —

MS. ENGLISH: Ed —

MR. LECHTZIN: — Edward —

MS. ENGLISH: Reischauer.

MR. LECHTZIN: Reischauer.

MS. ENGLISH: She was the sister-in-law.

MR. LECHTZIN: Sister-in-law?

MS. ENGLISH: Law.

MS. STRAUSS: Nineteen sixty-eight.

MR. LECHTZIN: Wow.

MS. ENGLISH: See?

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay, okay, okay. [They laugh.] It was 1968.

MS. ENGLISH: Sorry.

MR. LECHTZIN: I thought it was in the '70s.

MS. ENGLISH: Sorry. [They laugh.]

MR. LECHTZIN: In any event, Miye Matsukata through that relationship with Reischauer —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — and Japan was asked, invited, encouraged — I don't know, maybe she suggested it, but in any event, there was to be — oh, I know how it happened. At that time the embassy —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — was — and I'm putting this together after the fact because I never really got all the details, but apparently, the Mikimoto Pearl Company contacted the embassy — the U.S. embassy and was asked and asked to have an exhibition of U.S. — outstanding U.S. American jewelry in Tokyo to benefit the jewelry designers in Japan, which were just embarking on a program of development for the Western markets.

There is no indigenous tradition for jewelry in Japan. It only began to develop after the Second World War. And I won't go into who Mikimoto Pearl is, but in any event, Miye then through her relationship was asked to do this exhibition and she determined that she was not likely to be able to do the entire thing herself and truly she wasn't an American, and if this was to be American jewelry designers, et cetera, she needed to find an American. So she invited Olaf Skoogfors, who was born in Sweden, and was raised up until high school in Sweden, educated there, et cetera. And the two of them realized that, well, Matsukata and Skoogfors don't sound very American, so they had to find another American and they found Lechtzin, another typical Anglo-Saxon, WASPy American — [they laugh] — to join them.

The three of us then comprised the American exhibition in Tokyo, Japan. It was cosponsored by the Yomiuri Shimbun which was the English language newspaper and the Odakyu Department Store that gave us an entire floor and dozens and dozens of workers to prepare the exhibition, and Mikimoto Pearl who underwrote many of the costs.

We were brought to Japan with our work in steamer trunks, whisked through customs, treated to chauffeured limos around the country, all expenses paid with, believe it or not, spending money left on our nightstand at the New Otani Hotel. And it was as — all — as the three of us remarked repeatedly, there's never going to be another experience like this in our entire lives. We're being treated as rock stars. It doesn't happen at all to most people. We are very fortunate it happened to us at that point.

It was well received. A beautiful catalog was produced. It — we were interviewed by newspapers. There was — there were thousands — literally thousands of people going through the exhibition every day. And we were then — along with touring and visiting various cultural areas in Japan, we were obliged to meet one day with the 15 jewelry designers — 15, maybe 20 jewelry designers at Mikimoto Pearl's. We all sat around a conference table and the president of Mikimoto was properly situated at the head of the table. We — the three of us sitting at the foot of the table, surrounded by these designers, who each were required to present one object for our examination and comment. We looked at one another and quickly determined that this was serious and managed somehow through our inability to speak Japanese to deactivate the situation. I don't think anybody lost their job because of anything we had to say, and we walked out of that conference, each being presented with a giant freshwater pearl, which at that time was extremely valuable. It was truly an extraordinary experience.

MS. ENGLISH: Would you —

MR. LECHTZIN: What else is there to say?

MS. ENGLISH: [Laughs.] Not much. —

MR. LECHTZIN: The — but we each had a vast amount of floor space. I think I must have had, oh, 30-some display cases, and each of us had a similar amount. And interestingly we arrived, I believe, two evenings before the opening, so all the stuff had to be unpacked. The display or the gallery area was empty when we arrived. This crew of people just were scurrying around madly and by opening day it was all in place and just looked beautiful.

MS. ENGLISH: During the same period of time, didn't you and Olaf and Judy and Edith go to Europe together?

MR. LECHTZIN: That was '65.

MS. ENGLISH: So that was earlier —

MR. LECHTZIN: That was before.

MS. ENGLISH: — three years earlier.

MR. LECHTZIN: That was —

MS. ENGLISH: Would you like to describe that journey? Because I think it was one of the most important journeys of American metalsmiths at —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Yes. Once again, timing is everything, and as I remarked to my students to a point where they are more than tired of hearing it, everything is connected to everything else. My hours as a student poring over *Gold + Silber, Uhren + Schmuck* in the Philadelphia Public Library prepared me for the trip ten years later to Northern Europe.

Olaf had spent two years in the army in Germany, so he knew Germany rather well. But at that point, he was just out of high — no, I guess just out of — he must have just been out of high school because he wasn't really very involved in the craft scene when he was over there. He wasn't paying much attention to craft at that point. And — but he knew the area well. And in '65 we decided to take our summers — or that summer and visit the schools and goldsmiths that would turn out to be a very important activity for our field generally and communications between countries, surprisingly. This was 20 years after the cessation of hostilities and Europe had pretty much completely rebuilt and the crafts were thriving. There were many schools teaching craft. And I had been very interested in what I saw in "Gold and Silber," and Olaf at that point had developed that interest, so we essentially just arrived in England and started placing phone calls.

It was apparent that the Europeans we contacted had no contact at all with what was happening in the States. We were the first that I can determine in the goldsmithing world, or the academic goldsmithing world, to attempt to make contact and people were surprised, fascinated, open, friendly, receptive. All doors were open and therefore we did not truly appreciate at that time how remarkable this was. One could not do that today. The communications again have improved remarkably and that level of interest and curiosity no longer exists. But Wendy Ramshaw and David Watkins were youngsters, as we were. They had just come out of Royal College of Art and they welcomed us into their home. We spent many hours together. We met other people of their age group who were also newly entered into —

MS. ENGLISH: Sorry.

MR. LECHTZIN: I'll make this change also. Let's see if I can —

[Audio break.]

MS. ENGLISH: — at side three for Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

MS. STRAUSS: Tape two.

MS. ENGLISH: Tape two, side one. Tape two, side one for Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and side two for —

MR. LECHTZIN: Disc two.

MS. ENGLISH: Disc number two for the Archives of American Art.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: This is what is known as a joint venture.

MS. STRAUSS: Let's just say who we are one more time.

MS. ENGLISH: All right.

MS. STRAUSS: And the date.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay, this is Helen W. Drutt English interviewing Stanley Lechtzin in his residence in a suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on the 20th of April in the year 2005. And I am here with Cindy Strauss, Curator of Contemporary Crafts & Design — Decorative Arts & Design at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and we have also been joined by Daniella Kerner, who is married to Stanley Lechtzin.

MR. LECHTZIN: And collaborates.

MS. ENGLISH: And collaborates with Stanley Lechtzin.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay. So we landed in London, spent time with the Ramshaw/Watkins, visit Royal College of Art, visit Central School of Art, visit — I've lost track of the other institutions, but we made the rounds of the London Arts Schools and then went across the channel, which didn't have a tunnel at that time, and landed in France, where we picked up an automobile. Could not at that time, not perhaps even at this time, find anything in all of France to interest us professionally. There is still minimal amount of activity in the metals/jewelry world, but there is some activity interestingly enough now in the CAD-CAM world coming out of France. So while they are in the 21st century, at least a few of them are — they never quite managed the 20th century. Now you know my feelings about the French.

We then went on to Switzerland, which was one of the high points, meeting with the faculty at the school in Zurich and establishing a relationship with Frölich — Max Frölich and his wife — once again invited into the home, into the work shops, et cetera. Met a few other of our contemporaries there and then went on to Germany. The Germans were more interested than anyone else in what it was I had in my pockets. I brought some of the early electroforms with me and that was no end of fascination to them at that point. They had not considered that technology in any way and were interested in what this stuff was; they couldn't quite figure it out. Later on I have on another story to tell about that.

MS. ENGLISH: Excuse me, Stanley, who were the German artists with whom you met?

MR. LECHTZIN: Friedrich Becker — visited him at the school in Düsseldorf. He was Director of the school at that time. Fritz Loosli was his associate, who went and to become the Director of the Pforzheim Museum of Jewelry.

MS. ENGLISH: Fritz Falk?

MR. LECHTZIN: Fritz Falk, I am sorry, Loosli was Swiss goldsmith.

MS. ENGLISH: Yes, Fritz Falk was the director.

MR. LECHTZIN: Fritz Falk. Thank you for the correction.

MS. ENGLISH: You are welcome.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, I am amazed that I can remember any of these names, but they tell me as you age the early memories are the ones that remain, so maybe they are now coming back to me.

In any event, we visited with Friedrich Becker at the school, saw a display of his work at the school, went on a evening or too later to visit him at home and in his workshop and he brought out all of his current work for us to examine and play with. We were entertained by his two pure white Afghans and his lovely wife.

MS. ENGLISH: Hilda, right?

MR. LECHTZIN: Don't remember the name.

MS. ENGLISH: It's Hilda.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Then, off to Pforzheim where we met with Reinhold Reiling, could not establish contact with —

MS. ENGLISH: Klaus Ulrich?

MR. LECHTZIN: Ulrich, yes, thank you.

MS. ENGLISH: You are welcome.

MR. LECHTZIN: Could not to establish contact. We were fascinated by the way the program at that — at the Pforzheim School had developed. You had two studios, the Ulrich studio and Reiling studio, and while from the outside the philosophies did not seem to be that disparate, internally if you were in one studio you did not associate with the other studio. It was forbidden and therefore I suspect that because — I am now in retrospect developing this theory, which perhaps can never be proven — but the fact that we made our initial contact with Reiling probably precluded our meeting with Ulrich.

MS. ENGLISH: What's interesting is at that time Claus Bury was in Reiling studio and — [unintelligible] — [Toni] Snyder was in Ulrich studio at the same time.

MR. LECHTZIN: Who we then met up with later in our careers when Claus came to the states, he visited with me and with Olaf and he gave lectures and Helen, and he showed here and few years later went on to become a sculptor and I haven't followed his career from there on forward. So that was Germany.

MS. ENGLISH: Excuse me, did you meet with Hermann Junger during that trip?

MR. LECHTZIN: No — no, I have never had personal contact with Hermann —

MS. ENGLISH: You know he died?

MR. LECHTZIN: I am aware of that.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: And so that is one opportunity that Lechtzin missed in his life, among many others. But obviously one could not be in this field without knowing of Junger, but at that time he was not very prominent.

MS. ENGLISH: He was in Munich at that time.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, he continued to be in Munich.

MS. ENGLISH: Munich.

MR. LECHTZIN: But he was not all that prominent. We were in Munich by the way, one of the lesser pleasures of our travels in Europe. I won't go any further in to that but keep in mind that I was raised Jewish.

The next stop on our itinerary was to the North countries, Norway — no not Norway, Sweden, Denmark. We didn't do Finland or Norway. It was first to Denmark — visited a school in Copenhagen, met —

MS. ENGLISH: Sigurd?

MR. LECHTZIN: Sigurd Persson. Thank you. I don't know what I would do without you. You are going to be my memory consultant. Yes, we were able to — as I say, we received instant and open invitations everywhere we went. We were the strange young Americans who arrived in their city, they were as curious about us as we were about them, so everything was open to us. Spent many hours — actually, here's a point I missed, but both Olaf and I did not move without our cameras, and so we were photographing the studios and the work, and the studio facilities that we encountered in the schools around Europe were remarkable compared to what existed in this country.

Timing was perfect because upon my return I began the design of what is now the current facilities at Tyler, and I borrowed in great measure from what I saw in the studios in primarily Denmark — the Copenhagen School. I won't try to give you the Danish name but I think it something like Kunsthochschule

It influenced the organization of the facility that I designed for Tyler, as did a few of the schools in Switzerland as well as Germany. We then discovered — and this was fairly typical throughout Europe — that most of the people teaching also had their own workshops and in many cases retail shops, and Sigurd Persson was a typical example of that. He would spend one or two days a week heading up the program at the Kunsthochschule and then return to his workshop where he employed two or three goldsmiths and supervised production as well as doing the design for the work that was on display in his shop, which was in one of the nicer parts of town, although at that point I think all parts at that town were very nice. And he was selling locally as well as internationally by that point. He was well established, and we were able to observe production techniques, et cetera, and there was no reservation at any time, anywhere about us taking pictures and returning to the States with all of this information, which we both used extensively in our classrooms.

Then on to Sweden were the — and that was essentially a return home for Olaf, but I don't recall that we were able to find anybody to really make contact with professionally in Sweden, which is surprising, but I have no recollection of any professional contacts in Sweden. Then we retraced our steps, and came home after about two and a half months.

MS. ENGLISH: So that 1965?

MR. LECHTZIN: '65.

MS. ENGLISH: So we've had the journey to Japan in 1968. We've had the journey to Europe and branching out to Scandinavia in 1965. Would you also like to discuss your journey to England?

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, that one — that one you're going to do better than I can.

MS. ENGLISH: Well.

MR. LECHTZIN: But I will do my best. It's awfully difficult to sit here and try to recount history when surrounded by historians, one of whom may has a much better recollection of these things than I have, so catch me when I go wrong, but in any event —

MS. ENGLISH: It's like *Rushamon,* a story becomes better when it's told from different perspectives.

MR. LECHTZIN: Absolutely, yes. Okay, but my perspective is that at that time the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, housed at Goldsmiths Hall in London, had a technical director by the name of Peter Gainsbury, I am sure you have that — Peter, their technical director.

MS. ENGLISH: Not Graham Hughes, who was the director? The technical director?

MR. LECHTZIN: No, not Graham Hughes. Graham Hughes and I never really got it on properly, but that's because Graham was far more reserved than Peter Gainsbury, but Peter Gainsbury, being technical director, was very interested in my research into electroforming and wanted this made available to the goldsmithing community in England, and so arranged with Graham Hughes to invite me to have a one-person show at Goldsmith's Hall: a very, very distinct honor and one that I was more than happy to accede to, and so it was prepared and shipped off to England. I believe in this case the trunks preceded me. Helen became — when — when did we meet, Helen?

MS. ENGLISH: We met in the '60s; like 1965-'66 —

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay, it seems to be still a fresh relationship and —

MS. STRAUSS: What year are we talking about here?

MR. LECHTZIN: '72.

MS. ENGLISH: Two — because my recollection is slightly different, which is interesting.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, you'll tell me yours after I tell you mine.

MS. ENGLISH: I —

MS. STRAUSS: And if you could describe the work that you sent?

MR. LECHTZIN: It was all electroforms of that that period.

MS. STRAUSS: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: And it was a real problem because it wasn't hallmarked and they had to spend a great deal of time trying to understand —

MR. LECHTZIN: With the politics.

MS. ENGLISH: With the politics of receiving works that were not hallmarked in the traditional manner.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, I didn't recall that until you mentioned it, but the fact is — and by the way there are two hallmarking offices in England. One is in Goldsmiths Hall; the basement of Goldsmiths Hall has a hallmarking office. All precious metal objects sold or entered into commerce in England must be by law hallmarked at either the Birmingham Hallmarking Assay Office or the Goldsmith's Hall Office, and so it was I guess rather sacrilegious as well as potentially illegal to bring in anything purporting to be precious metal that was not hallmarked but because this was Goldsmiths Hall and the people being who they were, they prevailed and we got my exhibition in and they even purchased a piece for their permanent collection — probably the only 'un-hallmarked' item in their collection.

In any event, at that point it was suggested that Helen accompany us. I don't know it was my idea or Helen's, but in any event Helen volunteered and so we embarked on our stay in London, where the show opened to mixed reviews I would assume. I don't recall seeing any. The visits were repeated: Royal College of Art, Ramshaw-Watkins, et cetera.

There was a dinner — a monthly dinner for this — this I remember — a monthly dinner for the wardens of the company.

MS. ENGLISH: It was a lunch.

MR. LECHTZIN: Was it a lunch?

MS. ENGLISH: It was a lunch.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay, I thought it was a dinner — at which the wardens of the company — these are the directors, the members, whatever — they are not in most cases goldsmiths. The guilds — this is a — this is a continuation of the medieval guild system, and just in passing the Goldsmith Company, which this guild is referred to as, now is a — over the centuries has acquired a great deal of property in that part of London and they are probably one of the wealthiest and largest property owners in London. They have, as Helen reminds me, a monthly luncheon. They get together in a convivial manner, drinking and sharing stories, and at that time it was an all male group. When the invitation arrived I indicted that I would in fact be happy to attend as their guest along with my guests who happen to be female. That was not acceptable, and therefore I declined to attend and I guess that was somewhat of a scandal.

MS. ENGLISH: I was at the lunch. I remember at the luncheon.

MR. LECHTZIN: No, no. That's very — I did not attend. I know I did not attend. I was not there and my reason —

MS. ENGLISH: I can remember Lord Asbury sitting to my right and each —

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, I don't know how you — I don't know how you met — maybe — maybe you then went as my representative, but I refused to attend.

MS. ENGLISH: I — I remember the lunch — luncheon, and in an amazing way, every person had a footman behind.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes. Very interesting.

MS. ENGLISH: I was the only woman at the lunch.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, very interesting.

MS. STRAUSS: There was a reason why. Now you know.

MS. ENGLISH: And that each of the members of the Goldsmiths Hall, trustees or whatever, the wardens had a chalice that was made by the silversmith of their choice.

MR. LECHTZIN: Choice, yeah, yeah.

MS. ENGLISH: That I also remember that we had a breakfast one of those of mornings and you were determined not to attend one of the functions.

MR. LECHTZIN: It was that function. It was that function.

MS. ENGLISH: It was that function; you said that you would not and I was pleading with you to go.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, all right. It was function.

MS. ENGLISH: And you were determined not to go, and I was having a fit.

MR. LECHTZIN: As — as one of the first liberated males in this country, I refused to attend.

MS. ENGLISH: But I was invited, and I remember what I wore. [Laughs.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, now that's very interesting. I don't know how that evolved.

MS. ENGLISH: And I remember right —

MR. LECHTZIN: Maybe — maybe they acceded to my concerns and yet I felt compelled to make that statement.

MS. STRAUSS: Were you the first contemporary American silversmith to have an exhibition there?

MS. ENGLISH: Goldsmith. It was 1973. But my —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, yes. I don't think there have been many to follow I think. Arlene Fisch, and I don't know if any others.

MS. ENGLISH: But my recollection is slightly different, because —

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, you want to add it to this tape?

MS. ENGLISH: Well, just very briefly in 1970 at the World Crafts Council, I attended those meetings and Graham Hughes was there, and I arrived very naively with your two brooches wrapped in handkerchiefs in my pocket book, and I was wearing them to all the meetings, and I remember Graham Hughes coming over and saying he had never seen a Lechtzin before and he said, we have to find a way to get this to England, but it's not hallmarked, that was 1970.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well that's very interesting because all of my interaction was with Gainsbury, and Gainsbury —

MS. ENGLISH: Right, and mine was with Hughes.

MR. LECHTZIN: — was indicting that he had to go though numerous roadblocks in order to make this happen, and it was his idea.

MS. ENGLISH: Right, and also — and Graham Hughes made a pact with me and he said he would bring Lechtzin to London; could we get Ramshaw and Watkins to America?

MR. LECHTZIN: That I remember.

MS. ENGLISH: And that was — there was this kind of — there was a kind of exchange —

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, okay.

MS. ENGLISH: And then Matthey Bishop got involved to finance a lot of the travel.

MR. LECHTZIN: That I don't know.

MS. ENGLISH: Well, and David — David, I can't remember his last name. From Mattie Bishop —

MR. LECHTZIN: Wouldn't mean a thing to me because I had no contact with Mattie.

MS. ENGLISH: Because I was involved in that aspect of it.

MR. LECHTZIN: No, it's Johnson Matthey.

MS. ENGLISH: Johnson Matthey and his name was David Matthey, right. Johnson Matthey, right. And —

MR. LECHTZIN: They were — they are a major refiner in England.

MS. ENGLISH: Right, but — but I do remember —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, in any — in any event there were high-level international politicking going on.

MS. ENGLISH: Right, it was 1973 that you —

MR. LECHTZIN: Ultimately, yeah — yeah.

MS. ENGLISH: — finally showed.

MS. STRAUSS: '73 not '72?

MS. ENGLISH: Yes '73.

MS. STRAUSS: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Because I also remember that was the year that I went to Electrum. Remember?

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, right. We visited Electrum at that point.

MS. ENGLISH: We have visited Electrum at that particular point. But could we — you want to go back?

MS. STRAUSS: I just want to go back and ask one more follow up question about — and it relates I guess to your — your trip, this trip to London to Goldsmiths Hall, but also this trip that you and Olaf took throughout Europe. You said a lot of the materials that you gathered you used in your classes and you developed personal relationships that lasted lifetimes.

MR. LECHTZIN: Mm-hmm.

MS. STRAUSS: Did that trip to Europe and this later trip to Goldsmiths Hall affect your own work at all in any direct ways or was it mostly reflected in your classroom teaching and your — just test your intellectual awareness?

MR. LECHTZIN: The latter. Now, my I collaborator and critic can clarify that perhaps better than I can, but I cannot point to any aspect of my activities as an artist that resulted from those travels. I was using pearls in great profusion prior to my trip to Japan and interaction with Mikimoto. Electroforming obviously started well before my international experiences. I got to the computer long before any of my colleagues. I visually — you know, look at the stuff. I don't think there is — you can draw any parallels with any Europeans, but it was very important from the perspective of how the profession conducted itself both academically and commercially or from an organizational or from an economic standpoint.

The traditions and skills were far more prominent in Europe than in this country. I am referring primarily to the development of the machines and hand tools used by the goldsmiths, silversmith, et cetera. I didn't mention that, but I guess I should. Both Olaf and I — there was something good in Paris. The Paris Jewelry district had a well-established supply tool and supply house called Pelerine [ph], and we visited there and stocked up on some remarkably well made hand tools, which we began to put into boxes and ship back, and throughout each of these countries we visited the supply houses and came back with literally a ton of stuff — stakes, hammers, hand tools, et cetera — that were at that not available in this country. They had continued to produce these, or let me put it this way: they resumed producing theses traditional hand tools and small machine tools after the Second World War, whereas in this country there really wasn't any of that going on. It never had really established itself. So we brought back some of the first examples of well-made beautifully functioning hand tools, stakes, hammers, et cetera.

Oh, and at that point I purchased an English motorcycle, and I had it shipped back as well, so I made good use of that stay in London. So we shipped back tons of iron, but other than the hand tools, et cetera, that we encountered, I can't say that there was much effect on my work other than the opportunities that it presented itself for future exhibitions and professional recognition. That was pretty much it.

MS. ENGLISH: Still, in the past 30 years what other travels have been central to your life and work and how have they impacted on your life?

MR. LECHTZIN: Israel in '73.

DANIELLA KERNER: '76.

MR. LECHTZIN: '76?

MS. ENGLISH: Mm-hmm.

MR. LECHTZIN: Everything I think happened in '73. [They laugh.]

MS. ENGLISH: Right, it was a good year.

MR. LECHTZIN: It was a very busy year.

MS. KERNER: I met you in '73.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay, it was a very good year. Okay, everything happened in '73.

MS. ENGLISH: In Israel?

MR. LECHTZIN: No, no, here.

MS. KERNER: In Tennessee.

MR. LECHTZIN: In Tennessee, yeah — yeah.

MS. ENGLISH: Uh-huh.

MR. LECHTZIN: So it was Israel in '76 and I think that was the end of my travels. If you want to explore reasons for that, I'd be happy to explain them to you. Each day brings another reason to not travel, but Israel was important for many reasons. Culturally it was very important to make that trip. One of my first graduate students was an Israeli, Maury Golan, who has studied with Olaf at the Philadelphia College of Art, went to Tyler for an MFA, taught at Moore College of Art here in Philadelphia for two years — maybe three years.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay. We are going to talk about your students actually.

MS. STRAUSS: Okay. Go ahead.

MS. ENGLISH: Yes. This is where —

MS. STRAUSS: This is side two.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: This is side two.

MS. STRAUSS: Of tape two.

MS. ENGLISH: Of tape two.

MR. LECHTZIN: You are not fair. You are looking at my résumé and — [Laughs].

MS. ENGLISH: I just checked this — no, I just checked this one date for Goldsmith Hall. No, I checked the date for Goldsmith's Hall.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay, now — now we know why you are so smart.

MS. ENGLISH: Pardon? I just wanted to check that one date of Goldsmith's Hall. That's all.

MR. LECHTZIN: In any event, Maury Golan then went back to his country of birth, Israel, where he established a company called Golan Fine Crafts and became the owner, director, designer, et cetera, of the largest jewelry manufacturer in Israel for a period of some 20 years where he traveled back and forth to the States on marketing trips, et cetera, so we maintained that contact. We still are in contact because he still maintains his professional involvement.

In any event we had Maury Golan as a point of contact and as a tour guide and he was an excellent tour guide at that point. We were invited — that is, Daniella and I were invited for a three week stint as guest artists, visiting teachers, et cetera, at Bezalel School of Art and Design in Jerusalem and that became our base of operations and we had the opportunity with Maury and a few of the Israeli silversmiths —

MS. KERNER: Arie Ofir?

MR. LECHTZIN: Arie Ofir, thank you.

MS. ENGLISH: Was Arie Ofir at Bezalel?

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, he was teaching at Bezalel at the time.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: And he also took it upon himself to guide us through the countryside and that was my last international trip.

MS. ENGLISH: 1976?

MR. LECHTZIN: Six.

MS. ENGLISH: Arie Ofir was in Philadelphia in September 1974 with Claus Bury, Gijs Bakker — Heissbacher [ph] and — [unintelligible]. And somewhere I have a photograph —

MR. LECHTZIN: I would have never have put those three together at that point.

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: — and somewhere there is a photograph of them all sitting on the floor.

MS. STRAUSS: [Off mike.]

MR. LECHTZIN: But — that's it.

MS. ENGLISH: Well, he had come here in '74, called me from the train station. I had no idea who he was, but Olaf told him to call me because he needed a place to sleep.

MR. LECHTZIN: So there you are.

MS. ENGLISH: It's true.

MR. LECHTZIN: So, now where?

MS. ENGLISH: Okay, Stanley, you spawned an extraordinary generation of goldsmiths as a result of your MFA program at Tyler School of Art, and I would like you to speak about those students who eventually became very major artists in their own right.

MR. LECHTZIN: That's my answer to being unable to conceive and bear children: spawning.

MS. ENGLISH: Spawning. [They laugh.] But it is true, when the history of American metal-smithing is written,

when you think that people like Albert Paley, Eleanor Moty, you know, Gary Griffin —

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: Gary Griffin, Bruce Smith, Robin Quigley — I mean, it is a pretty amazing moment in history and I would like you to speak —

MR. LECHTZIN: There is another generation coming along.

MS. ENGLISH: I know, but I would like you to speak about that particular generation at this — at this time.

MR. LECHTZIN: I don't know what to say other than their —

MS. ENGLISH: Your recollections of those individuals as students and their performances and even Kelly Morris, whom we have lost contact with.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, there have been dozens.

MS. ENGLISH: Yes.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay. The sheer numbers over this period of time is working in my favor. The interesting thing is that there was — that an early group were so successful. I don't know how to account for that. I must admit to the fact that virtually everything I embark on runs counter to what might be considered the establishment. Do I do that consciously or do I do it out of just an innate understanding that certain things should be done and I undertake to do them? I will leave that to others to determine, but in any event at the time, 1968 when I prevailed upon the then dean of Tyler, Charles LeClair to allow me to start a graduate program, I had a good group of undergraduates who were ready to start graduate school and I encouraged them to stay with me. That was Carol Small, Albert Paley, Carol Philips [ph] — can't remember who else was in that group.

MS. STRAUSS: [Lynn ?].

MR. LECHTZIN: Lynn —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: But they came to me. I am talking about my own.

MS. ENGLISH: What about the — and Maury wasn't there at the time?

MR. LECHTZIN: No, no. They came to me. They — at that time.

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: And Olaf then sent me Lugazi, Maury Golan —

MS. ENGLISH: What about Eleanor?

MR. LECHTZIN: And Eleanor was persuaded by me to enter that group of really outstanding people. She came from Bob Von Neumann at Champlain-Urbana and so things just somehow happened historically in much the same way that when I was at Cranbrook, lo and behold, I arrived at a time when Fred Fenster, Brent Kington, Heikki Seppä —

MS. ENGLISH: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Betty Helen Longhi, Michael Jerry — who else? The others you wouldn't recognize, but for some reason these things just happened. They are not planned. I can't take credit for it when it happens in my studio any more than Richard could take credit for the fact that all these people happened to wind up on his doorstep at the same time and there was a true symbiosis.

We — we irritated and encouraged, educated and went on educating one another and went on to a time in history when things were possible. Same — there was an extension of that actually, this went on through the '60s and early '70s, so those people I had mentioned who would come to me in my first class of graduate students had opportunities to establish themselves, which they were well capable of utilizing.

But back to my by and large going against the grain: the studio facilities that were available at that time around the country were very, very modest, whereas I was intent on setting up something that would compete favorably with what I found in Europe.

Graduate programs were little more than extensions of undergraduate activity and I determined that the graduate activity must be considerably different and I established policies, procedures, et cetera, that even to this day cause people who move from the undergraduate program into my graduate program to realize it's not the same Tyler when they hit the graduate program and it is — it continues to be demanding and continues to be looked upon as an odd sort of activity.

I won't attempt to put the words of my colleague or put words into my colleagues' mouth but if you were to survey the country I am sure you will find that people are very, very aware of what is occurring at Tyler currently, and in the past are in strong disagreement. There is and never has been a great deal of support for what it is that I offer to the discipline. The fact that I survive, prevail, and the graduates of the program succeed is testament I think due to the fact that maybe I am doing something right.

MS. ENGLISH: I would like to go back to the exhibition of 1971, which you said there were some controversy in our discussion concerning it, which was Schmuck in "Gold and Silber." Schmuck — [*Gold und Silber, Schmuck und Gerät*]

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes, that was —

MS. ENGLISH: It took place in Nuremberg?

MR. LECHTZIN: No, Munich.

MS. ENGLISH: No, no. It took place in Nuremberg and it took place on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of death of Albrecht Dürer?

MR. LECHTZIN: Oh that's right, the Dürer show? Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: It took place in Nuremberg.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes — yes, yeah. Was it Nuremberg? Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: And you and Olaf were the only two Americans, I believe, in that exhibition.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, that didn't surprise me.

MS. ENGLISH: But I would —

MR. LECHTZIN: I don't have anything to say about it.

MS. ENGLISH: No, no. I thought — what were the circumstances under which —

MR. LECHTZIN: An invitation arrived in the mail.

MS. ENGLISH: Was that a result of your travels to Europe?

MR. LECHTZIN: I don't recall who organized it, but I would expect.

MS. ENGLISH: It was Curt Heigl.

MS. STRAUSS: Mm-hmm, yeah. Heigl. Curt Heigl.

MR. LECHTZIN: Don't know. Don't particularly —

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: It was Curt Heigl. [Laughs.]

MR. LECHTZIN: But I would assume that through all of the foregoing activities, Olaf and I were known to them and somebody there said, you know you ought to invite Lechtzin and Skoogfors and we were invited. I don't know what went on behind the scenes, but I can tell you that at a prior or subsequent exhibition in Munich, an electroform of mine was examined very carefully to the extent that it arrived back in my hands with a part cleanly sawn off.

MS. ENGLISH: Now, in Munich do you remember which exhibition that was?

MR. LECHTZIN: Munich. It would be — well, if you look at my résumé, look for the Munich shows. You will find it.

MS. ENGLISH: Under international.

MR. LECHTZIN: *Gold und Silber, Schmuck* — something.

MS. ENGLISH: Not in Pforzheim, but in Munich.

MR. LECHTZIN: Munich. I am pretty sure it was Munich.

MS. ENGLISH: Because —

MR. LECHTZIN: It arrived back with a piece cleanly sawn off. You have to understand that I am a trained goldsmith and I know a jeweler's saw cut when I see one.

MS. ENGLISH: And I am a trained layman and I know when somebody solders two pieces of an element together without my knowledge — the bracelet.

MR. LECHTZIN: When was that and where?

MS. ENGLISH: When you fixed my bracelet.

MS. STRAUSS: We will show you a picture later on.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well —

MS. STRAUSS: While Helen is looking up that date —

MR. LECHTZIN: In any event, so I —

MS. ENGLISH: Would this be international?

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: Munich, Form and Quality.

MR. LECHTZIN: Yes.

MS. ENGLISH: 1971?

MR. LECHTZIN: That could be it.

MS. ENGLISH: Would that be it?

MR. LECHTZIN: That could be it.

MS. ENGLISH: And there's — in 1971 and there is also 1972, the International Jewelry Show in Munich.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, I'd have to go back in my records to tell you which one it was.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay, but we don't know who they were?

MR. LECHTZIN: But in any event it arrived back with that element sawn off. I notified them, they immediately settled the insurance. No questions asked, okay? So that gives you some insight into the mind of our friends in Germany.

MS. STRAUSS: Right.

MS. ENGLISH: Do you feel — do you consider yourself part of an international tradition or do you consider yourself part of a tradition, a history of American goldsmithing?

MR. LECHTZIN: Neither. I consider myself a continuation of the Lechtzin tradition.

MS. ENGLISH: In the history of ideas, you don't feel that you are part of a broader spectrum?

MR. LECHTZIN: As I mentioned early on, philosophically the underlying philosophical basis for what I do derives from my experiences with Philip Fike. And it will be left to the curators, the historians, the critics, et cetera, to place it any more precisely. I can't. I don't spend much time at all looking at what others are doing. If I do look, it is to say, "Gee whiz, why are they doing that sort of dumb stuff?"

MS. ENGLISH: Could you discuss your transformation from hands-on and electroformation of objects to CAD-

CAM?

MR. LECHTZIN: Everything is related to everything else. One of my childhood friends, Henry Herman — grew up together, went through the Boy Scouts together, spent our formative years in one another's company. He also attended Cass Technical High School and used that experience directly. He went on to a job with the Burroughs Business Machine Company located — headquartered in Detroit. Burroughs manufactured, at that time that he entered, some of the first large mainframe computers.

One night when he was charged with babysitting the mainframe — and at that time mainframes were in these large, glassed-in, air-conditioned facilities that — and they had to be attended and serviced by the digital priests, he secured a job in that area and he invited me to join him one evening in that facility and he showed me around and explained to me what this contraption could do.

This was in the early '60s, and at that point I determined that I had to find out about this stuff, but it wasn't until 1978 that I was able to do so. While a faculty member at Temple University, I was able to secure an account on the university mainframe and I maintained that account for e-mail as it — which was just getting started at that point. And for some very, very rudimentary, poking around without much knowledge, but it was the advent of the personal computers in the late '70s that convinced me things were now beginning to happen and they were going to affect everybody and everybody includes artists, and therefore I'd better get with it. And so I acquired a TRS-80 Model One from Radio Shack and I acquired two and I acquired three and I learned lit bit about programming in BASIC and I tried to find applications directly for art and was unable to do so until Apple came out with — when Wozniak and Jobs came out with their answer.

And at that point I felt vindicated, but my colleagues still resisted. The graphic designers at Tyler when I brought the first Apple computer onto campus and showed them what it could do, said, "Oh well, this is just an Etch-a-Sketch. That's not serious stuff. We don't need that." Well, by — that was 1984. By 1990, they realized their field had changed and they'd better get with it. By that time, I was beginning to create my virtuals and the rest is history.

MS. STRAUSS: How do you see it — as if, you said everything — one thing leads to another. Can you talk a little bit —

MR. LECHTZIN: Everything is related to everything else.

MS. ENGLISH: — and everything is related to everything. Can you draw a line of how you relate the CAD-CAM things to the electroforming, how you really —

MR. LECHTZIN: The underlying — I'd say this again, the underlying philosophical structure hasn't changed.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay.

MR. LECHTZIN: It's still me and Daniella behind this stuff, but the nature of the materials have changed, the processes have changed, the venue in which creation occurs has changed.

MS. ENGLISH: You speak about you and Daniella behind the stuff, are all —

MR. LECHTZIN: Let me take a break.

MS. ENGLISH: All right.

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay.

[Audio break.]

MS. ENGLISH: What tape are we on?

MR. LECHTZIN: Okay.

MS. ENGLISH: Which side are we —

MS. STRAUSS: We are on tape — I'll just say it, let me — I'm going to turn this on. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, we are on tape four, side one.

MS. ENGLISH: Okay, and for the —

MR. LECHTZIN: And this is tape three of three, so far, for the Archives of American Art.

MS. ENGLISH: Which — all right. Very good. So —

MR. LECHTZIN: And we are recording.

MS. ENGLISH: And we are recording. Stanley, would you kindly discuss the electroforming process.

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, by definition, electroforming is the deposition of metal on a nonconductive — well, no, a step back — on a conductive matrix which is removed in whole or in part. That's the definition. So for it to be an electroform, first it has to be an electrochemical process in which you are depositing metal electrolytically. Two, it must be on a mold, model, or matrix which is no longer in place when the piece is finished. If the matrix is in — is left in the deposited metal, it should more rightly be referred to as heavy electroplating. That's the definition.

Now, to elaborate on that in terms of the work that I — or I and Daniela have done, we use nonconductors such as wax or plastics. They are shaped, formed, manipulated to suit our needs and then we make them — or we made them electrically conductive by painting or spraying a silver conductive lacquer onto them in a controlled manner, and then they were placed in a copper bath for an initial very, very ultrathin deposit of copper. This is to protect the silver from — the silver conductive coating from attack by cyanide in the silver electroforming bath. The object would then be rinsed thoroughly to remove the acid from any areas that might have trapped it because the copper is an acid bath. How much of this technical detail do you want?

MS. STRAUSS: No, this is good.

MS. ENGLISH: [Inaudible.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Well, it's boring chemistry. Okay. The acid copper would not attack the conductive coating whereas cyanide would, so a thin film of copper is deposited. It is now protected. Even if you put the copper into the cyanide silver, it would because of its relative position on the Periodic Chart of Elements, et cetera, automatically attract silver rather than dissolved copper. The object was rinsed thoroughly and then transferred to the silver electroforming bath where it was built up to final thickness in pure silver.

We call it sterling because in fact some sterling components are attached. And there is no provision in the United States stamping laws for fine silver. If we were to call it fine silver, it would not be a term recognized by the U.S. stamping laws, so I call it sterling silver which indicates an alloy of silver and some other metal in which silver is 92.5 percent and the remainder is some other metal.

Okay, it is built up to the full thickness in the silver electrolyte. It is then removed, rinsed, and finished, or it would go into a — no, after that, the matrix is removed. And then if it's to remain silver, it would be oxidized or protected in some — with some coating. If it was to be silver gilt, it would then go — it would then be electrolytically cleaned, it would go into a bright nickel bath which creates a barrier coat under the gold, and then it would be gold plated. That's it.

MS. ENGLISH: Stanley, of — what are the significant industrial processes that have used electroforming successfully?

MR. LECHTZIN: Not too many anymore. LP phonograph press masters were electroformed, but nobody is pressing vinyl records anymore so that technology has disappeared. For many years, electroforming was used to create the complex tubes used for air speed indicators. In aircraft, the static tube and the pitot tube are complex tubular structures that at that time that I'm referring to could only be created efficiently using electroforming. Now I suspect they're made using rapid prototyping technologies, but I haven't heard about that. I can think of —

MS. ENGLISH: What?

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: — few if any industrial applications currently — the soles of sneakers and other shoes, I think, initially were molded in electroformed molds. I don't think they do that that way anymore.

MS. ENGLISH: In — go ahead.

MS. STRAUSS: Oh, I was just going to ask — you mentioned plastic and wax, and that you first — the early works were done with Styrofoam. So —

MR. LECHTZIN: The Styrofoam has been removed. It's been dissolved.

MS. STRAUSS: Yes. But you would — would you carve up — you cut out a piece of Styrofoam in the shape that you were —

[Cross talk.]

MR. LECHTZIN: Hot tool —

MS. STRAUSS: Okay.

MR. LECHTZIN: — to create the structure, texture, whatever and sprayed with silver conductive —

MS. STRAUSS: Right.

MR. LECHTZIN: — it went through the process and then —

MS. STRAUSS: And so with the plastic you'd also have to hot tool it?

MR. LECHTZIN: The plastics were cast. The resins have always been cast —

MS. STRAUSS: Okay.

MR. LECHTZIN: — into urethane or silicone molds —

MS. STRAUSS: Okay.

MR. LECHTZIN: — from wax models.

MS. STRAUSS: But this — I just wanted to check about the Styrofoam since —

[Cross talk.]

MS. ENGLISH: Okay. So, I would like to say in closing episode number one, I would like to ask two questions. One, what has assisted you in maintaining your passion for teaching for the last four decades? And question number two would be what are the significant episodes of your career in the past half century?

MR. LECHTZIN: The last one — [they laugh] — is a real whopper. I don't know how to answer that, other than through the recollections that I have already presented.

The first one, what keeps me in teaching, is easy: I really love it. I enjoy being in a classroom communicating my experiences, knowledge, opinions. It's quite gratifying to have that young, captive audience to which this is all new and surprising, so clearly there is ego involved in that. Why am I sitting here rambling in this fashion? Probably the same reason. I enjoy — you know, line me up and I do it and have been doing it for so long that it is painless. It is an enjoyable experience. I like to be around 20-somethings. I've grown up always being in contact with 20-somethings. I was once that age. Being in the classroom, I believe, keeps me that age in many respects. The differential is rarely brought to my attention by my kind students. They don't rub it in. And that, I think, is very healthy.

The only thing that would remove me from the classroom at this time would be health, over which I have no control, and perhaps a more frustrating interaction with the bureaucracy. As yet they haven't managed to totally frustrate. I occupy a unique position in our society, one that is rapidly disappearing, and I think we will be paying a very, very high price when it completely disappears. I refer to the tenured professorate.

I have the freedom to construct a curriculum and deliver it in a manner that is not available in any other field that I know of. No one dictates curriculum to me, no one dictates my means of delivering it. It is a challenge to keep it fresh. It is a challenge to keep it new. It is a challenge to keep it meaningful. It — a challenge to keep it — to use the too-often used term, relevant, but the students continue to come so there must be some relevance, and that challenge keeps me going.

If I had no other reason to continue with my own research, which by the way is another benefit, there are some modest, but yet meaningful rewards for independent and unique research within the academic community. It — that exists no place else. I can go on at great length as to what it means to me to be a teacher, but I would never voluntarily walk away from something that is, to my mind, so precious. The people who do — the people who complain that it is difficult, it takes away from their ability to spend time in the studio, they complain about the quality of students, et cetera, really are missing the real meaning of what it is to be an academician. I love it.

MS. ENGLISH: Well, thank you very much.

MS. STRAUSS: Thank you so much.

MS. ENGLISH: All right. Thank you.