



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Jean Milant, 2015
July 20

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Jean Milant on July 20, 2015. The interview took place at Milant's home in Los Angeles, CA, and was conducted by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

This transcript has been reviewed by Jean Milant and Hunter Drohojowska-Philp. Their corrections and emendations appear below in brackets with initials. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. This is a test for an interview with Jean Milant by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp. I think this looks—[laughs.] I can't see in this light, but it looks like we're recording just fine, perfect acoustics. This is Hunter Drohojowska-Philp, interviewing Jean Milant, at his home in Echo Park, California, on July 20th, 2015, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, card number one. So, Jean.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] Good morning.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Here is the moment.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Here's the moment we're—we've all been waiting for. I might ask you to move here, actually—

JEAN MILANT: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —so you're even closer to me. And now that I see where you're sitting, and how —

JEAN MILANT: Do you want to test this to see if it's recording, or no?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I'm going to do exactly that, but I would—just to say how nice it is to have you be doing this after all the time we've been discussing it, you know?

JEAN MILANT: No, thank you.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And not to worry, because as I say, you are going to be able to fix anything that you ultimately feel is somehow erroneous or ill-conceived. So, Jean Milant, tell me, is that your real name? It's such a beautiful name.

JEAN MILANT: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It is.

JEAN MILANT: It's my real name, right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Where were you born, and when?

JEAN MILANT: Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1943, December 27th.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: December 27th, 1943. That was a pretty exciting year in the history of the world.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] I guess it was, yes. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And where—what did your parents do? What were your parents' names?

JEAN MILANT: My mom's name is Virginia, and my dad's name is Jacques.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what was her maiden name?

JEAN MILANT: Zeller, Z-E-L-L-E-R.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Jacques Milant?

JEAN MILANT: It was Jacques Jean Robert Milant.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Of course.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And how did your parents happen to come to be in Wisconsin?

JEAN MILANT: Well, my mom was raised and born there, and she's from, kind of, German descent. There's a lot of Germans in Milwaukee.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And my dad was born in Paris, and we didn't really know all that much history about my father. He didn't—until really late in his life—but what we have sort of put together, is that he had to—he had to come to America, I think—his mom had sent him to America to live with a cousin or some relative in Michigan. But the backstory was that my dad used to tell us that during World War I, all the kids were taken out of Paris and sent to the country to protect them from, you know, bombing, et cetera. But, you know, we didn't learn until he was in his 80s that the reality of this situation was that his mother had given him away. Sent him to America, so—and then, at one point she wanted him back, because there was tax advantages for the more children you have, et cetera. So it was a very—you know, we—it's very shady. We—I've only met a few relatives. There aren't a lot of relatives, and they don't seem to know a lot about the history.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What kind of father—

JEAN MILANT: So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —was he to you?

JEAN MILANT: Great.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He was a good father to you?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And—so, somehow he just—when he got to Michigan, I guess he was mistreated there. I think he went back at one point and then came back. He got to Sheboygan, which was a small town above Milwaukee, on the lake, and that's where Kohler is located, the factory for—you know, and I think he worked—I think he worked for Kohler as a machinist for a while. And he had some kind of, like, family that sort of sponsored him there, where he lived with—and from there, he got to Milwaukee somehow and he met my mom. I don't really know all the details on that. And he became—because I think it was, like, probably—you know, during the war he would try to help relatives in Europe, but they didn't really believe him. Or—it just was bad, I guess.

So—and he was, like—he was working at a company called David White. And that was a big surveying instrument company. They also developed the first 3-D camera called the Realist—a lot of—he was exempt from the war—so—for America, but the French don't denounce your citizenship, so of course they called him up. But of course, he didn't go. [Laughs.] So basically, at that point, he could never really go back to France, because they would—they would arrest you, and you had to either serve or—[inaudible]—you know, that kind of stuff.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, my god, tragic.

JEAN MILANT: You know, that kind of stuff. So, anyways. So he worked with David White for quite a long time, and he was sort of, like, supervising the entire factory. Then at one point, he left there and he went into his own business, and that sort of was a bad relationship with the partner he had there, and that folded, and then he opened up his final company called Scientific Instruments Incorporated that—with, actually, the owner's son of David White—the first company, with the Realist camera. And that company still exists today.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But we've manufactured—but we did the last sextant for the United States, maybe, and instruments that measure water—flow of water, and the pressure of water in dams and things like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Were you close to your father?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Very close, were you—

JEAN MILANT: Not really—I mean, I guess it's a different kind of—when you think of, like, American kids and how close they are to their parents and a lot of sports and this and that. We never—we never had—I never played sports with him, or he wasn't involved in any of that. But he was very supportive of whatever we did and, you know, I worked in the factory, for instance.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, that's good. So you worked with him in it.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And was your mother a housekeeper?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, she was a house—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Housewife, rather.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So she—okay, she didn't have a profession?

JEAN MILANT: She didn't have a profession, but she—I think before they were married, she was a dental assistant, and she was very smart. She was valedictorian of her high school, and she worked, I think, in—when my father started Scientific Instruments, she worked with him there in the office, doing the bookkeeping and things like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Do you have siblings?

JEAN MILANT: Yes, two sisters, Jackie and Suzie.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. And so you're growing up in Milwaukee, and were you raised at all bilingual?

JEAN MILANT: No, we were not. I think that was part of the issue with the relationship to the—his family, right? And so, I think he kind of disowned that side.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And my mother didn't speak French. So we never were brought up when we were born, but we took it in high school. And he was—[laughs]—very difficult. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Was he? About your pronunciation—

JEAN MILANT: Yes. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that you had very Americanized pronunciations?

JEAN MILANT: So, if we didn't pronounce the R and the U right, and have the right French accent, he wasn't the person speaking with us. So I think we all said, "Screw it." [Laughs.] I mean—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you're, like, in this family where you're working in your father's company, and do you have any artistic leanings at this point? Can you tell whether you're interested in art at this point?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I think it was way, way when I was young. I was always—like, as a small kid. I mean, we didn't have TV, you didn't—we had radio, right? And to—so you had to somehow occupy yourself, and I remember making things a lot and, of course, I guess, early on, was interested in cooking, you know, from—with my grandmother, and stuff for holidays or visits and things like that. You know, we lived in a—I think originally we lived in the city, so I was really young—and kindergarten, probably—and I think school was across the street. I sort of remember that, and it was a top floor of a duplex. And then my father built a home, and he built a home in the suburbs north of Wisconsin, and it was in the Glendale River Hills and Fox Point area —and—so at that

point, I—you know, that was grade school-period.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I went to a parochial school, St. John's Lutheran—and it was—I think they—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you didn't go to a Catholic school?

JEAN MILANT: No.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: My father was not religious in that way. I think we were not brought up—but my mother was brought up Lutheran, and so that was kind of—you know, the old-fashioned schoolhouse with several grades in one room, and— [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nice. And then where did you go to high school?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I went to high school at Nicolet High, which was a brand new high school.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nicolet?

JEAN MILANT: Nicolet. Like the French explorer, N-I-C-O-L-E-T.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Jean Nicolet, and it was close to where we lived. And it was brand new, as I said, so I think when I was there, that was the first year that there were all four classes in place. So I think there probably were, like, less than 1,000 people—kids there or something, I'm sure.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did you take any art classes when you—

JEAN MILANT: I took art classes there, theater. I was into theater and to—and into art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I mean, we could get very elaborate on each of these areas here. That's what I'm saying, so I don't [laughs.] know how far you want to me to go into all this.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I just want to know what—in high—

JEAN MILANT: Because you asked if—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in high school where you developed your—where—at what point do you develop your visual art interests?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I said I think it's just early on.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: I mean, like, cooking is visual, and making things, crafts are visual, or—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In high school you're taking art classes.

JEAN MILANT: —we were part of 4-H, which was before high school, you know, and that was sort of—I remember, there—you know, doing—you know, you do woodworking and do all these sort of things.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: It's like Boy Scouts, whatever.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But there was a cooking class there, and I was the only guy in the cooking class, and was held at — [laughs]—this, you know, young girl's house, and her mom—they had horses, so I—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Lovely little American life you grew up in.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But you're—

JEAN MILANT: Cooking and then riding horses, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But you're in high school now, and so in high school you took some more art classes and theater classes.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And at that point, you probably decide what kind of college you want to go to. Where did you go to college?

JEAN MILANT: Well, you know, in high school—that high school was a very special high school. So it had a tremendous amount of money, and it was a public school, and it crossed over a lot of social—borders.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So there were, you know, very underprivileged people, there were very, very wealthy people, there were middle class people, and I kind of, like, didn't have any one group that I associated with, so I, kind of, you know, had experiences with various different groups. Like, you know—I mean, Molly Uihlein lived down the street from us. They owned Schlitz brewery, which was one of the biggest breweries in the country at the time. She was at the high school, and then there were the kids who were, you know, the motorcycle kids, and— [laughs]—so I kind of, like, enjoyed being part of a little bit of everything.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And the—our teacher was pretty unusual, as well. We had—we had stone lithography in high school, we had etching and ceramics, we had painting, drawing, the whole ball of wax, and we kind of, pretty much, were, like, just—you know, there's the easel. Go to it, you know, and— [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Your first printmaking experience was in high school.

JEAN MILANT: Was in high school, yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's young.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did you enjoy it?

JEAN MILANT: That was great, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I mean—

JEAN MILANT: But that got some kind of award. I mean, they entered something I did into something and I got some kind of award for a silk screen I'd done. So, yeah. So that was probably the first really major brush with the—you know, being involved in the arts.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Kind of higher level than high—than, you know, a grade school. But he also—you know, what influenced me a lot was working at my father's factory because, you know, I did everything. I mean, worked on punch presses, lathes, milling machines, and took apart, you know, surveying instruments, and learned a lot—but there's also, like, lots of shapes and forms and processes that you see, so I was always fascinated by that, working there. And then I think there we rented to a printing company on the first floor. His factory was on the second floor. And I always enjoyed going down there and watching the presses run, and stuff like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. You watched that printing process—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and so now the pieces are coming together. Then—so what happens after high school? Did you go to college?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, I went to college. I went to the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: —and—because I had to work at the factory.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] You know, we were brought up very European. In other words, you got to learn how to earn your own living.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Good. [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: And if—we could do anything we wanted—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: —but if it was something that was bad or something they didn't condone, then—you know, we'd have to pay for it. So I don't think we were ever really limited. But neither of my parents came from an art background, so they had no really, you know, brush with the arts, and I don't remember going to museums and stuff like that, other than, you know, natural history museums. I don't remember at a very, very young age going to an art museum. We probably only had one in Milwaukee, and it was probably wasn't all that—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: When you went—

JEAN MILANT: —large, at that time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: When you went to college, did you continue to take art classes?

JEAN MILANT: Hm?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did you take more art classes when you went to college?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, I studied—you know, liberal arts, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Liberal arts.

JEAN MILANT: Bachelor of Arts, so—but I took—yeah, we had—that was also a very formative period.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: They had a big printmaking department there, but they also had—you know, you had to take everything. So you had painting—I don't remember sculpture too much. That was the one thing I don't remember. But, you know, you had jewelry classes, you had weaving classes, you had ceramics classes, you had drawing classes, painting classes, and I think the person who was teaching drawing was a very interesting character. His name was Mr. Rathsack. Oh, and in high school, the teacher was Mr. Wacholz, and I remember he would be—and the painting class would be playing "Madame Butterfly," and then we'd have to, like, be quiet to hear the knife drop.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: But Mr. Rathsack was a very rigid kind of, like, minimalist watercolorer.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I wonder how you spell his last name?

JEAN MILANT: R-A-T-H-S-A-C-K, I think.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And so, you know, it was a very strict, you know, class, teacher, so—particularly in drawing. And I went to go to Europe. So, like, they had offered a summer class for—you know, for a trip through Europe. It was a pretty extensive European trip. So I went on that, and that was my first trip.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And it was just, you know, really mindboggling—[laughs]—seeing everything, because it just—I think we started out in Scotland and went to—down to England and into—you know, Holland and then throughout all of Europe, Italy, Spain, Germany, et cetera. And we had art history classes, and we had to—you

know, drawing classes, we had to, you know, actually produce on the trip, as well.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, this is great. Was this the moment you decided this is the life for me?

JEAN MILANT: I don't know if I was thinking like that, at the time. I was just enjoying everything. But that's what I liked to do. So I didn't think, oh, I'm going to be an artist. I don't think that really came into my mind, or maybe that wasn't important to say that you were—think you're going to be an artist. You are an artist.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So what happens when you graduate?

JEAN MILANT: Well, what happened from there is that I had a friend who was in the graphic—in the printmaking department, Anthony Stoeveken, and he had—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How do you spell his name?

JEAN MILANT: That one you have to—you'll have to look up. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Anthony.

JEAN MILANT: Something like S-T-O-E-V-E-K-E-N.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And he had gotten this grant to Tamarind. I had never heard of Tamarind.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And so I asked about it, and—you know, found out that it was—they were—like, the first semester was pre-trained in University of New Mexico in Albuquerque with Garo Antreasian, and—Clinton—I can't remember his first right now.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Adams.

JEAN MILANT: Adams. Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Clinton Adams. And so I thought, well, you know, gee, that would be great. I'll apply to University of New Mexico for graduate school. You know, at that time when I was doing my work in undergraduate school, I was doing kind of like three-dimensional paintings of Batman, and— [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What year is this?

JEAN MILANT: '60s.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And using found objects to paint on top of, so they were like constructed paintings. So, kind of very Pop. And also, there's a very important thing. You know, we're going to go back and forth here because it's going very quick. There's so much that I could say, so I'm just going to, then, go back—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: —and forth, okay? So there was another trip that I took when I was in undergraduate school. And that was, like, during the Easter vacation, spring vacation or something like that, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So what year are you in high school when you take that trip?

JEAN MILANT: No, this is—this is undergraduate school, undergraduate college.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, when you're in—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —University of Wisconsin—

JEAN MILANT: Oh.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —you took another trip.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You took one trip for drawing and one for history.

JEAN MILANT: One trip for drawing, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what year in college—

JEAN MILANT: This would've been—I don't know the exact dates, but '60s.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, maybe, like, what—were you a sophomore, junior, or a senior?

JEAN MILANT: I think I might have been a sophomore.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. And so there were some kids in the painting class, and they decided—and I think there were, like, five of us, and—decided to organize this trip to New York City. So—[laughs]—we charged these kids so much, and we rented stations wagons and sent them off to New York. And then we flew out. I think it was the year that—I remember seeing the Andy Warhol balloons and cow wallpaper show, and everything was sort of on 57th Street in the Upper East Side.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And, you know, people at openings—I remember the opening, that we did attend or whatever, people were still walking in the streets with their drinks and stuff. It was very casual. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: I remember Allan Stone was sort of weird, because you had to walk through all this African sculpture to get to the backroom to see a Thiebaud show. Then, I guess, we decided to—someone decided, oh, that Andy Warhol was—the Velvet Underground was good. They weren't named the Velvet Underground, I don't think, at that point, but there was this thing that was going to happen at the Dom Theater, in the Village. And so we were all—there were five of us, we were trying to get a cab, and you can't get cabs for five. They had Checkers, but we couldn't get one, and some—this limousine pulled up and said, "Where are you kids going?" and we said, "We're going to the Dom Theater," and he said, "Okay, hop in." Dropped us off at the Dom Theater—[laughs]—and I remember going upstairs. It seemed to be, like, a second floor, and then there was a big table with big jugs of wine, and it was like a theater with a dance floor on it. It wasn't like a seat—you know, a theater with regular theater seats, and, you know, up and down aisles.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Tables around, and nothing was sort of happening, and it was just sort of really a rundown, dreary place, and there were some, you know, people at tables and some people—you know, women very dressed up, and then just some kids. And then, you know, they were trying to start to play, if they could, and they were—Malanga was cracking his whip, and—[laughs]—finally, they started to play.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Going to—

JEAN MILANT: And one of my friends was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I just want to make sure we're in good shape here. Hang on. Hold that thought, I just want to make sure I'm getting everything. I am, okay.

JEAN MILANT: And one of the four—one of the five of us had just been in a—previously in an accident before we left for Milwaukee, and so he had these crutches and he had pins in his legs and everything, so he's out there on the dance floor, and he's, like, laying on his back, and running—you know, throwing his crutches up in the air, looking under lady—girls' skirts, and *duh duh duh*—so anyways, Andy Warhol invited him to his table—and—so that was my first brush with Andy Warhol, and—then, I can't remember the kid's name, but I remember he lived with Nico for six months until his money ran out and came back to Wisconsin.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So that was—you know—part of that trip, which was a whole—you know, being kind of introduced to that New York scene.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah. It's—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —eye-opening.

JEAN MILANT: Eye-opening, right. And then—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: We're not in Wisconsin anymore.

JEAN MILANT: Not in Wisconsin.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: And then one night, this girl and I were having dinner at this restaurant, and it was, you know, little banquettes that was very close to each other, and this elderly lady sat down next to us. And she had this, like, big turban on, and she started chatting away and telling us all about her life and yah-dah-yah, and she's, like, married to this big, wealthy oil millionaire from London and dah-dah-dah-dah, and then she's just, you know, "Can I take you guys to the theater tonight?" And my friend, she said, you know, "It's too crazy," or whatever. I said, "Well, we'll see. We'll get in a limousine when we go out of the restaurant, so—" [Laughs.] So we leave the restaurant, and I remember the maître d' apologizing, saying that, you know, he didn't know who this person was, and blah-blah-blah-blah. We get outside and of course, there's no limousine, there's no nothing, and we get on the bus. And so she's, like, talking about—you know, to the driver about driving the bus, letting her drive the bus, and then we go to the theater and we get to see newsreels of World War II. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So she's just crazy.

JEAN MILANT: So then we drop—we get dropped back.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know, we walk back. She bought us jelly beans for the way home, or something like that, and we drop her off at where she lived, her hotel or something like that, and that was that. So, okay, an interesting evening. But I remember when I got back to Milwaukee, there was an article in Life magazine about the wealthy power ladies of the world, and there was Cristina Ford, and of course there was Lady Ann Orr Lewis!

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Lady who?

JEAN MILANT: Lady Ann Orr Lewis, who we had just had—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh.

JEAN MILANT: —dinner with and gone to the theater.

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How funny.

JEAN MILANT: So it was, you know—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: —only in New York. It was so great to have, like— [Laughs.] So that was a great trip, and I remember my friend—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So did you get—

JEAN MILANT: —bought the portfolio, *Rake's Progress*, I think it was, by David Hockney—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh.

JEAN MILANT: —at the time, from André Emmerich, I think.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Great.

JEAN MILANT: As a student, you know. Got their money together. A couple shared it, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Fantastic.

JEAN MILANT: So, anyways—going to back to where I went after undergraduate school. So I got into the University of New Mexico, and was accepted. And so I went there as a—you know, for—as an artist, not in the Tamarind program. And, of course, since I've already had a lot of lithography in high school and undergraduate, I did lithography there under Garo. But they also had—what's that—what's his name? It was John Kacere? I don't think it was John Kacere. It was a very tough school. There were 35 of us, I think, and they were trying to make it like the Yale of the West.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So it was a five-year program for an MFA, which none of us knew until we got there.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, my gosh.

JEAN MILANT: You had to have—you had to have a three-hour art history comprehensive test, and if you failed it, you had a second chance. If you failed, you were out. They gave us our studios, and they said, "Okay, in six weeks we're coming by and you can't be in your studio and we're deciding who we're keeping." And they did kick a kid out. And, you know, if you missed any of your classes in drawing, you were out. They already had a critical thing going, where you had to critique your fellow students. And—but most of teachers were from—a bunch of them were from New York. One was London, and the design teacher was—oh, I'm just blanking at his name now. They're in San Diego, Helen and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, Helen and—

JEAN MILANT: Newton.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What?

JEAN MILANT: Newton Harrison.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Harrison, yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right, Harrison—

JEAN MILANT: He was my—Newton Harrison was my design teacher—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Ah-ha, fun.

JEAN MILANT: —at the University of Mexico, and his big idol was Josef Albers.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I remember getting pumped. So anyways, what happened is that you had to write, also, a three-hour—I mean, you had to write a 30-page dissertation, and it was a five-year program. I had the art history credits. Oh, and there was a great teacher of pre-Columbian art, she was the foremost in the country. I loved those classes, they were fantastic. Smith, I think her name was. And so I passed the test, I did a bunch of, like, coursework and everything, and I think it was in a year and a half or something, and then I was writing my thesis, and I submitted my thesis—oh, we—three of us went to the dean, who was—the dean was Clinton Adams. The chairman at the art department was Van Deren Coke.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, how funny.

JEAN MILANT: And so we went—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, of course he was.

JEAN MILANT: We went to Van Deren Coke, and we protested the system. Said they lied in the catalogue, et cetera. And they actually did bring in a group of educators to assess their program. And I think they gave us a Saturday where we could talk to them by ourselves, as students. They did sort of agree the program had been falsely advertised, and so there were—they did make some changes. But anyways, you still had to do your dissertation, so I did my dissertation, and they didn't accept it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So they sent it to the philosophy department and to the psych department, and then someone from the philosophy department gave me a student to help me rewrite it, or to, I guess, you know, get it in

shape so I could defend it, or something. Basically I talked about my paintings. And I think at that point—actually, when I think back, is when I really kind of was really about—because I was painting clouds and mountains that were floating, and this whole interchangeability of physical and non-physical, and I think that's where this all—you know, so even today, that's still the major interest of mine. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Maybe that's why you named your print company—

JEAN MILANT: —that's why I'm Cirrus.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Is that why you named your publishing company Cirr—and your gallery Cirrus?

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: It's the highest form of clouds.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So anyways, I—you know, I worked on that with this woman to help, you know, get it into shape, and then, you know, I decided, you know what? I don't want to do it. So I ask Clinton—I asked Garo Antreasian if there was a—because I always wanted to come to LA, which was another part of my grade school history. We took a family trip to California in 1955, the summer, to visit my cousins who had moved out to Merced, California, and that just stuck in my mind. It was so amazing, you know, being in California and, you know, swimming and seeing all this stuff in a day, and just the whole—it was fantastic. I always wanted to come back here. So, anyways, I asked Garo if there would be any possibility, and my friend had already been sent to LA. And I visited him, I think, during Thanksgiving to see Tamarind.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And which friend is this?

JEAN MILANT: That's Tony Stoeveken.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Anthony Stoeveken.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So he had done his stint at—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: —New Mexico, and went on to the workshop in LA

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So, they—he was already out here with his wife, and so I visited them to check it all out. And, you know, loved it. So anyways, I just decided I wasn't going to try to hang around and get the degree, and I asked Garo if there was any possibility I could get to Tamarind because I wanted to come to LA. And, yeah, they sent me to Tamarind, so that's how I got to LA

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. And that's 19—

JEAN MILANT: '67 or '68.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Good years.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Good years to remember.

JEAN MILANT: And I remember that first trip when I visited Tony, before I left University of New Mexico, that was the year—you know, the love-ins, there was a huge love-in here in Elysian Park, and—[laughs]—Sunset Strip, and the—you know, the weekends, and no cars could go through, so many of us were on the streets, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The Sunset riots.

JEAN MILANT: Right. So, like—yeah, it was really exciting.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you got here, and that was the—that's the story, and you got here and you start to work at Tamarind, which—was June Wayne still involved with Tamarind Press there?

JEAN MILANT: Oh yeah, no, she was. Oh, of course, she was. Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you were on Tamarind Avenue in Hollywood?

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Is that where it was located?

JEAN MILANT: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, so Garo Antreasian sent you to work for June Wayne?

JEAN MILANT: No, I got the grant. It was a Ford Foundation Grant. They only give five out a year.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, this is when you got the grant. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. They only give five out a year. So many printers, and so many curators.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So, I got the grant and came out.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you were—you came out to learn to be a professional lithographer through Tamarind, is that correct?

JEAN MILANT: Well, it was to establish, you know—Tamarind was really about—reinvent—not reinventing, but bringing the medium back.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: So, a lot of people don't understand that June was not a publisher. She was not publishing, necessarily, the greatest works in the world, at the time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: She was establishing a base for how this should be reestablished, so that meant training curators in how to handle prints, in how to, you know, label them and archive them and, you know, the whole thing from that end, and then also to train printers the—all the techniques, et cetera, that were, you know, happening in Europe but not really happening in America. And so from that purpose, she wrote—she invited a lot of educators who were artists to come and work there, so that they would go back and bring this to the various institutions or at whatever museums that they were working at.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And so we had two artists a month, and they each had a two-month stay, and they would overlap, so every month a new artist would come in. So that was what the program was like. It was work. It wasn't a, you know, school atmosphere. It was eight-to-five or whatever.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And that meant you were actually, you know, pulling prints—

JEAN MILANT: Right, every day, you had to pull prints. After you would get your initial training, then you started to work with an artist. And at first you start assisting the printer who's higher above you, and then at one point you start to get your own artist. And then, you know, you were expected to finish your run every single day because those artists are only there for two months, and you have to get all their work done so that it can get signed before they leave.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: So, it was a scheduled day, every day. You know, you had this run, this run, this run with this artist or whatever—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you remember which artists you were working with there?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I was very lucky because when I came—I remember when I first arrived, she had a little patio in front of the little workshop, and there was John Altoon, who was laying on the chaise lounge, smoking a cigar. [Laughs.] And he was just leaving, so I never really got to work with him, and I just said "Hi" to him, or—that was introduced to him. But that was the year that for some reason, June decided to invite a lot of LA artists, which she had not done before, besides Sam Francis.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So I worked with Sam Francis, I worked with Ed Ruscha, I worked with Ed Moses, I worked with Kenny Price. Worked with Billy Al Bengston. I think those were the artists that she invited during my period there, which was really fantastic.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: You know, and since I really loved LA, and this is—you know, came to meet these people, and then—they seemed to like to me, so—like, Ed Moses took me around, introduced me to people, and, you know, Ed Ruscha was like—you know, we were doing—going to his book signings and stuff, and I—that's where I met, you know, Frank Gehry, at one of those—when Ed Moses took me, when I said earlier to you before we started this recording. I first met Frank Gehry at a—at a meeting at Moses's house, which was Peter Alexander and Craig Kauffman, Ed Moses, and Frank Gehry—it might have been somebody else, I don't remember. And Fred Mueller, who was the money behind Pace Gallery. He was the co-owner of Pace at the time. And he was the one who was really interested in the California artists and was bringing them into Pace, and he was out there to visit. I felt really honored that I was invited as a student to be part of this. You know?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I do remember, I was really kind of—it was after Frank had left the—Fred had left, I don't know who said it, but a couple of the artists were kind of joking because Frank was talking all about deconstructing the cube, and then they're going, "Oh, Frank thinks he's an artist."

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: But anyways, Ed Moses had also set up studio tours for me, so we went to see Robert Irwin, and he, like, sat me down in a chair. And there was another printer that came with me, Gene Sturman. And Gene was all into knowing how the techniques were and how, you know, how he did the discs and how he sprayed the spray paint, et cetera, et cetera. But Irwin, like—you know, he sat down—sat us down, he got a disc out, he put it up on the wall, he set up the lights. It was—it was amazing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I know later, we went to Chez Jay, the little hangout place in Main Street, and Irwin and I were talking about, you know, flying saucers and whatever. [Laughs.] So, you know, still on that kind of physical-nonphysical level, I guess, but anyways.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: And we went to visit Kenny, I think, and we went to visit Tony Berlant, Billy Al. So I really felt welcomed.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But they were taking you around as a printmaker and art—and artist.

JEAN MILANT: As a—yeah. Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Not—

JEAN MILANT: Not someone that was working at Tamarind, and—you know. Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So your Ford Foundation Grant was for how long?

JEAN MILANT: Well, that program was—I think it was for, like, two years. And you also had economics classes once a week there, too. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In terms of what?

JEAN MILANT: How to establish a workshop, how to, you know, price out editioning, how to do market of the prints, everything.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right, nice.

JEAN MILANT: And right now was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Valuable tools.

JEAN MILANT: Right. And I did meet Louise Nevelson there, too. She came in to work there, too. Oh, and I met—I met Martha Jackson.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, she was an important dealer for—

JEAN MILANT: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —the LA scene.

JEAN MILANT: I know [Matsumi] Kanemitsu was always at Tamarind, in and out, and—you know, Kanemitsu, I think, showed with Marc—Martha Jackson—when we lived in New York. So, I mean, he always talked about his friendship with those Abstract guys, Ab Ex guys, you know?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So at the end of the Ford Foundation Grant, then what happened?

JEAN MILANT: Well, there was another situation there, too. You know, June was—everybody was scared to death of June. Even her shop manager. So that was the aura of the institution. You know, you just don't talk to June. Whatever. But we would have Wednesday meetings, lunch meetings, and we'd discuss new artists coming in, what we learned, or whatever, and we could, you know, offer our opinions, et cetera. Something had happened. I don't know if it was a marijuana incident or not, but one of the guys, Manuel Fuentes, was caught with marijuana and got thrown in jail and June had to go bail him out.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: So, Manuel was from Argentina, so—[laughs]—and that really, you know, just got June really upset. So, like, there was some big discussion about it, and she was trying to grill us all about, you know, "Do you—did you know this? Are you guys using?" And this and that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And somehow I stuck up for—I think I did something that she didn't like, and then she got mad at me or something and then I wouldn't recant. And so then she fired me. So then, like, I had X number of time—I don't remember how many weeks, or whatever it was. But she's always having visitors come through the shop, and then, you know, she's going like, "Oh, I think it'd be great if Jean opened up a workshop in LA" I'm going, like, "The lady just fired me." So I said to myself, "Well, I got to go talk to her, see what this about."

I went and talked to her, and she said, "Well, if you're really serious—" And I tried to find a teach—I was already trying to find a situation and I didn't—you know, couldn't find a teaching situation, and I didn't have my MFA then, either, because I walked out on that. And—so I went to talk to her, and she said, "You know what?" She said, "Yes, if you're interested in opening up a workshop, I will let you stay on. You can develop your proposal. You can work with Cal Goodman, with the economics guy, to develop your proposal to raise money, and give you some names or whatever, et cetera, et cetera." So I said, "Okay, fine." I think before that, Sam Francis wanted me to work for him. I know I—we had a breakfast meeting at his place, and I just decided I didn't want to work with only one artist only, so I didn't do that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And he wanted to establish a workshop for himself and do book publishing, too, which eventually came out to be Lapis Press, I guess, years later. I love Sam. Sam was fabulous. You know, he was a very generous individual. I remember he would, you know, support a lot of artists, he did all these events like sky writing and things on the beach and—you know, he was great. So anyways, I did that. I stayed there and I wrote my proposal. And I think—I think that June had given me a few names, and then—I remember—I'm also a

swimmer. I swam in high school. And I remember getting, you know, this thing—ear water thing you can get if you're swimming in the ocean. I bodysurfed out here and I got that, and I remember June sending me to Betty Asher's father—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Her husband?

JEAN MILANT: —her husband, I mean—yeah—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: —to, you know, get it fixed. And so then I did that, but then, also, Betty Asher was referred to me —H.C. Westermann, I met him at Tamarind, and we became very close friends, and when I was doing this thing, he says, you know, "Go see Betty. Tell her I sent you." So I went to see Betty at the museum, and she was fantastic. She gave me this whole list of people to call up for money.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: So I would take my beat-up Ford convertible, and— [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: You know, sent my proposal out to people and, you know, called them on the phone and meet with them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Did anybody give you any money?

JEAN MILANT: Well, what happened is that, I wasn't really—there were people interested, but it wasn't really happening, and then—I don't know—I can't remember exactly now how I made the decision. I—my father wouldn't give me any money. And in fact—you know, it wasn't out of any kind of meanness or anything, but, like, when I went to graduate school, my father wouldn't pay for it because it was in the arts and he expected me to take over the company.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And since I didn't do that, I think it kind of demolished him, because he sold it seven, five, or ten years later, whatever. But anyways, I think I was talking to June about it, and she said, "You tell your father, whatever he loans you, I'll match." And so I, you know, called up my father and told him. [Laughs.] He couldn't believe anybody was going to give me money.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] So I think—you know, he gave me 5,000, and she gave me 5,000 as a loan.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's lovely.

JEAN MILANT: As a loan.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nice.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. No, June—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nice.

JEAN MILANT: —was a very, you know, amazing supporter of me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So—and so many people in LA, in those early years, you know. I mean—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So what did you do with your first \$10,000?

JEAN MILANT: Well—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Which in those days was a lot of money.

JEAN MILANT: —I guess. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In 1970. Are we—is that where we are?

JEAN MILANT: Well, we're at 1969.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: '69.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, you know, I was already—you know, I did the gas stations in Ed's studio while I was at Tamarind. Those are my first silkscreens, professionally. Didn't print the red one, but we printed in a little tiny space with lacquer inks and no vacuum table—you know, it's just amazing that we got those thing done—hanging the prints on clothesline.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Speak up.

JEAN MILANT: Hanging the prints on a clothesline—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —with paper clips, you know, clothes clips because we didn't have racks or anything.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: So, anyways—so I had known Ed. And I'd done, you know, prints with him at Tamarind.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: And he, you know, heard that I was opening up—or I told him. I don't remember what, I guess. And he said he'd seen this building and I should go check it out, so—it was not far from his studio, off Melrose Avenue, and it was on Manhattan Place. And Ed was on Western Avenue, just up near—between Santa Monica and Melrose. So I went to see the place, and I, like, signed a 10-year lease. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Great.

JEAN MILANT: And, you know, bought a press and, et cetera. And then, you know, I was still trying to raise money in a proposal, and the—and I had opened already. I had already opened. Started. So I was, I think, doing some prints for—Kanemitsu hired me to do some prints, and Felix Landau was very supportive. He hired me to do some silkscreens for Vasa. So we had some custom work, Ed Ruscha had hired me to do a print or two, and I started publishing. My first publication was a co-publication with Linda Shaffer, who now is a conservator of paper, but she also went to Tamarind. And so she was trying to publish some artists early on before I opened, and so she introduced me to Terry Allen. And that was my very first publication, Terry Allen.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Two prints with him, and it was actually going to be a multimedia print. This one print was going to have a tape of his songs, so—but then Atlantic Records wouldn't let us use it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: So—but that was a 1970s multimedia print.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Wow.

JEAN MILANT: So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Where was the tape going to be?

JEAN MILANT: Well, we would set—we'd give it with the print.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, tape with the—I see.

JEAN MILANT: It wasn't a cassette. It was probably an eight-track, or whatever it would have been at that time. I don't know. Right. And the print was—you know, there was this jukebox with this chair with the pinto bean and the halo, and then the songs were listed on the jukebox.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, nice.

JEAN MILANT: So, anyways—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I have to—I want to pause here, just a moment, to ask you—because you're talking about, already, a rather experimental kind of printing. To what, if any, extent is Gemini in the picture, at this point? I mean, Gemini is up and running?

JEAN MILANT: Oh, yeah. Gemini opened before me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Way before you, and—

JEAN MILANT: Not that much before me, actually.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, '66.

JEAN MILANT: I mean, Ken Tyler opened first.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, so—

JEAN MILANT: Ken Tyler established that workshop—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In—

JEAN MILANT: —and Ken Tyler went with the Tamarind person—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —and he—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So let's backtrack and do a little bit on Ken Tyler, because—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —it's important for context here.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, Ken was like—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And did you know Ken Tyler?

JEAN MILANT: I did not know Ken Tyler—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: —because he had left before I got to Tamarind.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And he had already established his workshop, and it—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —was on Melrose Avenue. And it was behind the frame shop.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Art Services.

JEAN MILANT: Art Services.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: In fact, they gave him—Art Services had rented the building, and they had extra space that they didn't need, and so they actually let Ken use that. And he started Tyler Works—I don't know what it was named, to begin with, but I think it was his name. And then he had worked with Josef Albers at Tamarind, and so Josef Albers was one of his first people that he worked with and published—or printed it for him. I don't remember the financial logistics of that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And so, Ken, you know, was definitely someone who was the major player in this field, because Ken expanded, technically, the entire medium. He took it from, like, a 20-by-30 page to 40-by-60 and beyond, and he developed new ways of doing things, you know. And at Tamarind you were taught only the classic things, and you were never to deviate from that. In other words, everything had to be hand-drawn by the artist, you couldn't use any photographs, you couldn't do this, you couldn't do that. Well, Ken just, you know, didn't care

about that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So—and then I guess what happened is that Ken had some financial problems, and that's when Sidney and Stanley came in. They were taking a class together at USC in art appreciation, or whatever, and they came in to back him, and then it turned into Gemini G.E.L.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And that would be Sidney Felsen and Stanley Grinstein.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And so that's when they—I think—someone told me originally they wanted Ken to, you know, do Chagall and those guys. But I guess, somehow, then Irving Blum—I don't know how that all worked out, but they—I think it was in something that—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, their first print is with—

JEAN MILANT: —some documentation that I read about them, about how they learned about the Pop artists. You know, maybe they should do this.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Probably. Their first one, as you know, is Albers.

JEAN MILANT: Right, that was Ken before they had Gemini, I think.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, it's Gemini, their very first print—

JEAN MILANT: No—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that the—the first print that Gemini does is with Albers, but it's because of Ken's—

JEAN MILANT: Ken.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —long relationship—

JEAN MILANT: Right. Right, okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and it's the first one, that I know, that's true. But you're right. Quickly after that, it becomes some Ferus people.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But most of them with—

JEAN MILANT: But not very many Californians.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —a New York—with a New York focus.

JEAN MILANT: It was all New York focus, and they had a deal with Castelli. So Castelli, basically, to maintain his relationship with those artists and have the rights to sell the prints, had to pay them by percentage of their editions. So they, kind of, had their—a good deal. [Laughs.] So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, explain the economics of that to me, because I'm not—

JEAN MILANT: Well, now, the—Gemini had subscribers' galleries, and so, like, to be able to buy—sell their prints in New York, you had to commit to buying X number pieces from everything they did.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And also, ULAE [Universal Limited Art Editions] worked that way, too.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So you had to buy everything they did. So basically, they had their stuff presold—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see.

JEAN MILANT: —through dealers.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see.

JEAN MILANT: They were no longer at that big risk, because they had these dealers who guaranteed to buy their works—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Once they're published.

JEAN MILANT: —to retain the rights to sell them in that city, and nobody else could buy them from them—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see.

JEAN MILANT: —from Gemini, in that city.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see.

JEAN MILANT: So they had an exclusive for New York, an exclusive for San Francisco, or whatever.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And that's my understanding.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: All right.

JEAN MILANT: Okay. And I know ULAE worked that way, too.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So—I don't know, we're kind of going all over the place—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, no. We're—I—it's important for—it's important in this sense. It's important because the context in which you're—opening in LA, is that Gemini is very powerful, really—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —fairly quickly. But their focus is more toward New York.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And so your focus from the beginning, did you ever think, "Well, my focus therefore will be LA?"

JEAN MILANT: No, I mean—why I moved here. I wanted to be in LA. LA was the most exciting city—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, but your art—

JEAN MILANT: No, the arts.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Yes, of course. That was it. I published only LA artists.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And so you saw that there was a—I guess, a hole here or a—

JEAN MILANT: Right. Not only for the print publishing, but also for the gallery, because there weren't many people doing anything for LA artists, including Irving Blum.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah. Well, he's already come back to New York by that time.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, no. He has not gone back to New York, but he threw those guys out. So he had Ed Ruscha. He kept Ed Ruscha, he kept Craig Kauffman, but he was showing Johns, Lichtenstein, Kelly, Judd. He wasn't backing these other guys, he wasn't pushing them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, his—

JEAN MILANT: He wasn't supporting them on an international—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —no, his heart was—his heart was clearly—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in the New York artists.

JEAN MILANT: So nobody was doing that. Riko had a great gallery with great people, great aesthetic. Did nothing. Nothing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, let's take a moment here to—

JEAN MILANT: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —talk about the '70s in LA, and I have to actually pause, anyway—

JEAN MILANT: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —if you don't mind. I'm just going to put it on—we'll have a little—a little water break, shall we?

JEAN MILANT: Okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Just because I want to—

[Audio break.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, we're recording again. There we are. After our break. Okay, the 1970s is such a—here's this, like, really dramatic time, and you're right, it's a time when there's a big flourish of interest in LA art in the 1960s, and then in the 1970s, I always have heard that that's partly the result of this, like, whopping recession that comes in in the 1970s. There's a lot of pulling back from interest in contemporary art. You're right, Ferus Gallery has closed, Irving Blum has moved to New York in 1970, *Artforum* has moved on. So you are almost coming into a vacuum—not a vacuum, but a period in LA where people were very discouraged.

JEAN MILANT: Right, but I do remember going to shows at Irving Blum during the '70s, so I don't know when he exactly moved, because I do remember—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it's '70, '71. He first becomes—

JEAN MILANT: Ah, okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —remember, he becomes Blum—

JEAN MILANT: Oh, maybe it was '60s, late '60s then.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —he becomes Blum—

JEAN MILANT: Helman-Blum yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —he has a—he has a—he has the partnership—

JEAN MILANT: Joe Helman.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —with Pace.

JEAN MILANT: Joe Helman.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yep. No, first it's Pace.

JEAN MILANT: Oh, first it's Pace, okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Remember, he has a partnership—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —here with Pace.

JEAN MILANT: Oh, okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Then he—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, that's another one that they couldn't make work. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, he goes into partnership with Pace for a very short time, and then that is not working out and he closes altogether, and then he reopens as Irving Blum Gallery, and that—does that for a couple of years, and then he moves to New York, and that's—

JEAN MILANT: I see.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that takes his—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —supports the artists who really interested him, which were all New York-based —

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —as you said. So he's—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —gone to New York, so that's kind of—and you're right, into that breach opens Riko Mizuno.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, right. I mean—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But can't—she can't sell anything, either.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] So you can talk now about opening—printing these artists, and also the idea of a gallery. Tell me how you thought of opening a gallery.

JEAN MILANT: Well, I mean, I think we're going to go back to when I'm still trying to raise money.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, okay.

JEAN MILANT: Okay? Because Irving was a player in that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And—so was Gemini, in a way.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Okay, so, like, I remember thinking I had X number of people involved, and we had a meeting at the space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I think it was Blankfort and Marmor—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That would be Elliot—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That would be—which Blank—Michael Blankfort?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, Michael Blankfort.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And Katherine and Judd Marmor and I don't remember whom else, basically—my, sort of—I had— [Laughs.] I didn't have a lawyer. I had—so, like, I—once, while trying to raise money, I, like, was told about this lawyer, and I—Gerry [Rosen], Gerry, I just can't remember his name—last name right now. So anyways, Gerry passed me on to Mike—Herb Smith. Who was a corporate lawyer, and Gerry was a corporate lawyer, but he went hippy. So, like, he, like, didn't want to deal with it. Michael—I mean, Herb Smith took me on contingency

because he said it was the best proposal that had ever come across his desk, and so he was my lawyer for a long time. So we had this meeting, and that was just, you know, when that recession hit. So these people all backed out. And so there I was, left with nothing, and I had twelve-hundred bucks in the bank, I think. And in the meantime, you know, one of the people Betty Asher had put on her list, was Terry Inch. And Terry—Terry, Thomas E. Inch, Terry Inch.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Huh.

JEAN MILANT: Terry and Becky Inch, they were a young couple here in LA, and Terry was collecting—well, I called him. I sent him my proposal. I just called him on the phone. Never met him. Called him on the phone, sent him my proposal, waited a while, called back. He got it and he says, "Well, you know," he said, "I talked to Irving, and Irving said there's absolutely no sense in investing in you because Gemini's in this town." So, you know, Irving always had a negative—was against me from the day one, which I didn't really realize until Frank Gehry's statement, actually, in the '90s, or whenever I met with him.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know, and so I was always trying to be friends with Irving and be part of the group.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] But there was an undercurrent that I was just too unaware of, or too naïve, or whatever. Also, like, I found out that some of those other people were plants by Gemini to find out how my organization was going to work, that they really never intended to be backers. So there I was. So, like, I started—I made it from there, by myself. Actually Gerry, the lawyer, is the one who put the nails in Chris' [Burden] hands on the Volkswagen, because that print behind you says, "Chris, took bus to work, cannot do nails, couldn't sleep."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's Alex.

JEAN MILANT: That was not Alex, that was Barbara Burden. Because the—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Barbara.

JEAN MILANT: —Barbara Burden's his first wife, and she put that on there—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —leaving, saying she couldn't come back in time to do the nails.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see what you mean. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And so he got Gerry to do it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And I was at that performance.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see. You were—

JEAN MILANT: So my crazy ex-lawyer is at the first—LA is a wonderful town. It's great.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So anyways—[laughs]—to get back to—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, let's just clarify—

JEAN MILANT: —raising the funds—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —okay.

JEAN MILANT: —and getting this thing—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —how I—what eventually happened, is that—so, I've been in business for a couple years, and then I'm at a party in New York at Brooke Alexander's loft. Because Brooke and I—Brooke came to me, and he wanted me to help him get—he wanted to be involved with Ed Ruscha, so he asked if I—please, co-publish Ed

Ruscha with him, and I said fine. So we became friends, and we, you know—you know, worked together. And so I was at his loft with—at a party when I was in New York, and in walks Peter, his brother—Peter Alexander, and Peter says, "Oh, Jean, there's this guy in LA who wants to give you money." And I'm going, "Really?" And he says, "Yeah, he wants you to call him as soon as you get back to LA" And I said, "Well, who is it?" He said, "Terry Inch." And I said, "Terry Inch? He turned me down several years ago." He says, "Well, now he wants to give you money."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So I call Terry Inch—

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I love LA

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And, "Yes, yes, I'm interested in meeting with you, and I have someone else I want you to meet with," and so we set up a meeting and then a lunch. So he comes to Cirrus, and that was his first time ever there. And he brings this guy John Du Pont with him, from the Du Pont family. And Du Pont was publishing—I mean, he was doing *Jesus Christ Superstar*—or, not *Hair*, but I think he was doing *Jesus Christ Superstar*. So, anyways. So we go to lunch at Nickodell's, which was this great old restaurant we used to have lunch at once in a while by Paramount Studios, and John Du Pont wants to buy Cirrus. And he was buying *ARTNews* magazine, and he wanted to have a print publishing company, as well. Well, I did not like him. So I said no, there at lunch, I wasn't interested.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Well, Terry was totally, I guess, turned on, since that was the first time he saw the place, what was going on there—I was already doing shows. You know, because I think, 1970, I'd done Barbara Smith and Doug Edge and, you know, we can go back there later. But anyways—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: —he'd seen this and so he kept calling. "Well, even if John's not interested, I'm interested. Can we talk?"

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: So we spent about six months talking. And they were like the young LA California collectors. So he was collecting from Irving, and then he also—the reason I decided to go with him is, he also collected some of Irving's younger artists. So he collected Guy Dill, and he had Mike Balog, as well as his Frankenthaler and his Stella paintings. And so we made a deal, and that was in 1972, and turned the company into a corporation, and he owns today still a small percentage of the company, but he's been inactive. What happened there is he got divorced, and that the divorce—that went south. Everything went south, and so he didn't ever—he never came into a larger ownership of the company. So, anyways, you kind of get the picture of, you know—yes, it was a tough time starting in this town with the total insider—[laughs]—grip—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —that existed here, and—so, anyways—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, when you're on—when you're on—should remember this because I know exactly what we're talking about, but—you open on—

JEAN MILANT: January of 1970.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: 1970, on—

JEAN MILANT: Manhattan Place.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —Manhattan Place. I want to say—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

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HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —McCadden. Manhattan Place.

JEAN MILANT: Which I always loved, because there was this huge animosity between the East and the West Coast, and I loved that my gallery was located on Manhattan Place. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So on the Man—in the Manhattan Place—so when you opened in '71 as a publishing entity, you had—

JEAN MILANT: '70, 1970, January of '70.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: '70. Then a year later is when you decide to also have a gallery?

JEAN MILANT: Right. What happened is, I had half the space empty.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I—you know, I actually stored some cars for Ed Ruscha and Tommy Smothers, or Mason Williams or whatever.

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I love that you're storing cars for Mason Williams in your empty space.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, the Pierce Arrow, or something like that.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: But I think—I think it was Doug Edge that approached me and asked if he could—if he would build out the walls, whether I would show him. And so, I guess I had already met some of these guys through Terry Allen because they were all hanging out together. They all had—I don't think Terry did, but Ron Cooper, Terry O'Shea, Doug Edge—there's probably a couple of other guys in there. They all lived downtown, actually. They had—they were living on Beaudry Street, and they all have this rose tattooed on their hand called the Beaudry Rose.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So I had met those guys, and so that's how—you know, I said, "Okay. I'll, you know, open a gallery." So—and Greg Card was part of that group. And so that's how the gallery started.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—but that gallery—at that gallery, you showed those people you just mentioned, and then you also showed a Robert Overby—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —installation, which at that point must have been—it's around the house, and across the street.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Is that the poured latex?

JEAN MILANT: Yes, see—casts outside of his house.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Tell me—tell me what that was like, because that would have been a very kind of radical thing to show at that time. Can you explain what you did there? Or what—

JEAN MILANT: Well—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —he did there?

JEAN MILANT: —he cast the outside of his house in a strip, probably about, like—I would say about two-and-a-half, three feet wide, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Of latex?

JEAN MILANT: It's latex.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I don't remember if it was continuous or pieced together, but it was a continuous representation in the gallery of the entire outside of the house. It wasn't broken into pieces. And then, when you were seeing in the house—in the gallery, you were seeing, like—you were inside the gallery, but I think you were seeing the outside of the house. So it wasn't, like, the inside of the casting, it was the outside of the casting. And then he cast a street in front of the house and put it in the house, on the floor in the gallery.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now—

JEAN MILANT: And he came to me and asked if I would show that, and so that's how that happened.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and just to—pause a second, with that very thought is—now, this kind of casting procedure that he did, did you assist him with it at all?

JEAN MILANT: No.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, that was totally what he was doing?

JEAN MILANT: It was a—yeah, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I mean, I really didn't know Robert Overby before that, and I don't—I mean, I knew Ruscha and all those people. I guess he knew those people, some of them, but they never mentioned him. I never was connected to him through them. So—but, you know, my focus was LA. My focus was doing LA artists because nobody else was doing it, and I couldn't do the people that Riko was showing, because they were with Riko, and I couldn't do the people that Irving was showing because, you know, Ruscha and Kauffman were there.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And Price and Bell and Moses and all those other people—Irwin and Celmins—they were all at Riko's. I would have shown them. And if I had known now what Frank had said to me—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what was that?

JEAN MILANT: —at that lunch, that I was a great white hope for all these people at that very beginning time, I would have probably been more aggressive about getting some of these people. I did take them in, you know, '73, to Europe. Nobody else went to Basel art fair from LA, or represented Ed Ruscha or any of these people at that art fair. So that's what they—I think Frank meant, you know, that I was—they were all placing their hope on me, because I was the one that was doing something.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because you were taking the work to show—in Europe.

JEAN MILANT: I was doing something for them. I was promoting them, I was taking it outside of LA I was speaking about it, talking about how great it was, you know? And Riko wasn't doing that. Nobody was doing that. That's my point.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Which, I just now realize, how obviously that was a contention with someone like Irving. You know, because he couldn't go to Basel, actually, in a way. What would he show? Leo's artists—he wasn't there making a statement for LA. I was there making a statement for LA, and I was trying to get other galleries to go, as well, from LA. Because, I think I counted at one point, there were nine galleries from America, and they were all from New York. So I thought if we could get four or five, we'd have half the power. And my point of going to Basel was that I felt I had to stand there next to Leo Castelli with the works that I was showing from California and be judged next to him, by the world. That was it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Now, you've been a—

JEAN MILANT: So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —you have been a—like, a consistent, sort of, supporter and cheerleader for the art of LA—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —since the beginning.

JEAN MILANT: And trying to get LA on the map as an international art center. Because they keep saying it is, but it's not. So, you know, there are issues we can discuss later—[laughs]—how and why that is. But part of it is because no one would join me in 1973 and have a booth at Basel.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it's—it was very ambitious to do a booth at Basel, because it must have been terribly expensive at that point.

JEAN MILANT: It was terribly expensive.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes.

JEAN MILANT: I mean, I was sewing my own clothes. I had no money.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: You know, I got a bank loan, and I had a 30-day payment, I had to pay back in 30 days. Well, my first Basel, I—people fought over David Trowbridge paintings. I sold everything. They—Gene Sturman. I mean, it was amazing. I was going like, "Wow." And that's where I met other dealers from Italy and Switzerland and Paris, and had arranged shows for my artists later on. And one guy who bought the Trowbridge painting, I think it was a year or two later, he had an open house at his place in Basel, and the house started out was, like, 17th Century work, and then each room got more contemporary. And in the pool room, in the base—in the pool room—[laughs]—was his contemporary section, and he hung the David Trowbridge next to his Ellsworth Kelly.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: There wasn't this negativity that was here, and the lack of interest, lack of understanding. Everything.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, but—

JEAN MILANT: You went out and there it was, accepted for what it was. They said it was interesting art, great art. They bought it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —the Europeans have been so much more accepting of the LA artists than anywhere else, really—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in the country. I mean, in our—in America, at least. It seems like there's always been so much support for—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —the—for the LA artists in Europe.

JEAN MILANT: Right. So then, some of these collectors would come to LA that I met, and I'd take them to studios. You know, and I can see where there was—obviously I was doing something that agitated the local situation.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And how was it agitating—

JEAN MILANT: Because they weren't doing that. They didn't have European collectors come in to take them to LA artist studios.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The other dealers?

JEAN MILANT: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So during this time, you're showing a lot of interesting artists at the gallery, but you're going right ahead and publishing. How many prints per year were you putting out in this—around that time?

JEAN MILANT: I never counted, I don't know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I mean, I don't mean like—

JEAN MILANT: Probably, like, 10, 15, maybe 20.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Different artists?

JEAN MILANT: No, editions. Not that many artists.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, that's what I mean. So, to be clear—

JEAN MILANT: I had a weird situation, what I was thinking in my mind, at that time. I had two separate companies.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: I had the gallery and I had the editions. I had separate stationery, I had separate books, everything.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, okay.

JEAN MILANT: So I decided, stupidly—[laughs]—that it would be unfair for me to publish the artists that I was showing in the gallery, because everybody would think that's why I published them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh.

JEAN MILANT: And so, I was kind of not—kind of not letting that happen.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Hmm.

JEAN MILANT: And yet I couldn't show the artists that I was publishing in the gallery, that I wanted to show in the gallery, because they were with another gallery. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, I was kind of like—and I remember that happened. I think it was in—I think it was when I moved downtown in 1979 or something, I just melded everything together and just called it Cirrus.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, so for a whole decade, you operated this bilateral—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —approach, where—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —you're showing artists, a certain—a certain artist, but you're not showing—not printing editions by them?

JEAN MILANT: Some of them I didn't feel I would put heavy publishing into. I did a 1974 portfolio of LA young artists, so it was Chris Burden, and Karen Carson, and David Trowbridge, Gene Sturman, Allan McCollum. Might be missing somebody. Can't remember who it was. And—but otherwise, I didn't do, like, a whole series with David Trowbridge or Karen or Terry —Terry O'Shea or people like that, you know, so, that I was showing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: If you look back, is there—was there a particular point of view to the artists you were showing at your gallery?

JEAN MILANT: I don't think there was a particular point of view. I think there were multiple points of view, but they all had a California sensibility, in my mind. So, you know—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And how would you—

JEAN MILANT: —I mean, maybe Chris Burden wasn't so Californian, because you could relate it to Acconci or to the Secessionists or other people that were working in the perform—that arena, in a way. But I don't—I mean, definitely the Light and Space thing, and the whole environment had affected the work here.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So I always saw that as—versus—and that artists didn't seem to be interested in having to carry forward western historical references to painting, et cetera. They just sort of divorced themselves from this. That was, to me, a California sensibility no matter what they were doing, whether they were making sculpture, whether they were doing installation, whether they were doing painting. I suppose, in those early '70s or whatever, painting was pretty traditional. Pretty much in LA, it wasn't—I mean, Karen Carson was kind of—I mean, we showed people that took—separated the surface from the support—which, you know, we did a show in the '70s with LAICA, which was referencing the Supports/Surface artists from France. And, you know—so, Jay McCafferty, burning with the sun. I had Ludwig Redl, who actually was an Austrian artist that we showed that moved to California, and he did a lot of, like, hanging resin-works that were transparent and sculpture with feathers, et cetera.

We did David Trowbridge, who was painting on Plexiglas—was actually painting, but then projected—hung the Plexiglas away from the wall and projected a theater—very strong theater light to the edges of the Plexiglas, which then create a light—a reflected light, white light on the wall from the paint, and a shadow, a dark light on the wall, which all came together as one surface when you stood in front of it. He was the only person I knew that actually—combined paint and light together. Greg Card, he left Riko Mizuno because she wouldn't show his light pieces. He was doing the cast resin paintings which were very beautiful, and—et cetera, and she wouldn't show his new work that he wanted to do, which was totally pure projected light. There was, like, little things and we, I think, just hung the gallery with black cloth or plastic, or something like a maze, and then you turn around the corner and there was this light thing. I actually sold one of those to Betty Freeman for \$350.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So I had worked with Gene Sturman. He was making paintings, which when you think of it to today's terms, are way ahead—he was using copper, thin copper that he was, like, oxidizing and marking with—well, scoring or marking, but there was no paint involved. But they were hung on the wall as a painting—as a painting sculpture. Some of them were more flat than others. Let's see, who else—well, Karen Carson, she was like—you know, I didn't show her when she was doing the zipper paintings. That was before my time. Then I picked her up, but she was—she was both doing these drawings, which were these metamorphosis-type things that you—started out, looked like she was drawing one thing. At the end of the thing, it would be another thing. And she was also doing these large woodcuts, four-by-eight sheets of plywood which she would ink up and then tear up and then collage back together and put little pieces of tape on top of and draw with chalk and charcoal, and we exhibit it as a painting, four-by-six on the wall.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Right, so this is another—you know. I mean, look at what's being done today.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it was—

JEAN MILANT: Now is when all these people are doing, you know, what—Lucien Smith with the fire extinguishers, I mean, you know, it's sort of—[laughs]—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Process-oriented.

JEAN MILANT: This was very much what I felt was happening only in LA and not other places so much, and so I—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So it was all very process—you were—it's interesting, you were so interested in process—what I—what we would call now process art.

JEAN MILANT: —it's called process, right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And—but coming from a printmaking background or printmaking awareness, I would think—do you think you had more sympathy for the idea that the art would be made in this way, out of these processes and these alternative materials?

JEAN MILANT: I don't think so. I don't think that influenced it. I don't know why it would.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because of print—the way prints are made.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, but, like—I don't—I don't think about that, making—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: All right.

JEAN MILANT: —prints, either.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You don't?

JEAN MILANT: No. We have got an idea to develop, and that's it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: How it happens is how it happens to the best of our abilities. It's not like I think of my technical structures of making a print and bring it to that, necessarily. I do somewhat. But also, I'm open to making it any way possible. I am not, and never was, from day one. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you also were working with some of these key people who were—in your printmaking at that point, you were also making those works with Craig Kauffman.

JEAN MILANT: Well, Craig Kauffman—the first prints we did with him, that I did suggest to him, because based on a show at UCLA that I saw, where he—it was a show with—I don't—Turrell might have been in it. I think he might have been in it with his, like, medical weird thing that—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Irwin was in that show. Irwin was in the show.

JEAN MILANT: Irwin was in that show, Bell was in that show, Craig was in that show.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: *Transparency*.

JEAN MILANT: Right. But, like—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, it's called *Transparency*.

JEAN MILANT: Bell had—I mean, Craig had the little trays of water along—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —the wall, with the little fans blowing it, and then it projected light going down into the water, reflecting these light patterns on the wall. So, I don't know why—if I—I saw it on a magazine. I don't know—I don't think I subscribed to the magazine. Was a *Scientific America* [sic], I remember. And there was this photograph on the cover that looked like these patterns on the wall that Craig had created at UCLA, so I approached him about this. I said, you know, "What do you think? This could maybe make a print. Are you interested?" He said yes, so I had to get the rights. It was the first—it was the photograph of the first recording of a blood cell on an oscilloscope. So, we had to—I had to call the guy who owned the rights, get the rights to reproduce these pieces, and that's the set of four prints we did with him, the first ones. Lithographs.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But those were—those were, again, about that same issue that you were talking about.

JEAN MILANT: And guess who represented them in New York for me?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Pace.

JEAN MILANT: Multiples. Marian Goodman.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, Multiples.

JEAN MILANT: Marian Goodman was a big supporter in the beginning, too. She constantly wanted to co-publish, I got her to co-publish Joe Goode with me, which got her interested in California art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: She showed Larry Bell and Eric Orr at one point.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: You know? So, you know, we'd—I go to New York, I sit and chat with her. We'd—you know, we—I've considered her a friend, a fellow patriot here in LA. I couldn't—I didn't have anybody to do that with.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, do—you co-published with Marian Goodman, and when she had Multiples, when she was sort of starting out—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —on her own?

JEAN MILANT: She didn't have a gallery until the '80s or something.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, well, she was—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —just starting out, doing her own little multiples.

JEAN MILANT: Right. She represented a Celmins print we did, and there—here's another little story with that. I mean, like, she wanted to co—she wanted to co-publish Georgia O'Keeffe. So, like, I remember she sort of had—she had a dialogue with, what, Doris Bry? Was that the person who was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes, that's correct.

JEAN MILANT: Right, Doris Bry, so like—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: —and this was a time when I was—had met John Du Pont, so, like—and this was—that was 1972, my first trip to Europe for the business, before '73—and with my partner, Terry Inch, and we were going to meet his wife, Becky, in London. So—[laughs]—so, alright, Marian gets it all set up, and we're going to go meet with Doris. All right, so the night—the day before or something like that, I don't remember. Marian says, "You know what? Doris changed the appointment. You got to come here by tomorrow morning. She will only meet you tomorrow morning." Probably not wanting to meet us, thinking we wouldn't do it. So we got on the night flight, we got to New York, we met with Doris Bry. She was not interested at all. She just wanted us to do reproductions and *blah blah blah*, and we weren't interested in doing that, so that deal didn't go through.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But that night we met John Du Pont for dinner in New York, and I don't—I don't think he was still interested in trying to get involved with Cirrus at that point. And went to dinner, and then—at the restaurant he chose, and after the restaurant when we get out there's this limousine waiting there, so we go to the Hippopotamus Club—[laughs]—and hang out there for the evening, and got back to our hotel, and we had, like, the six-morning flight—six AM flight, or something—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh. [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: —and it was, like—I left half my clothes in the hotel.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: When I got to London, I found out—[laughs]—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] That was probably a pretty good party.

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What is your personal life, at this point? Are you seeing anyone, dating anyone? What's happening in your—in your romantic life, at this point?

JEAN MILANT: Didn't have much of a romantic life, actually.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, I mean, I don't know if I want to—you know. I mean, Denise Domergue was somebody I knew. So she—you know, there were—people hung around Cirrus. Just seemed—it never seemed to work out, I guess. In a funny way, it was—I got used a lot, in the early days. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You mean people taking advantage of—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —the situation?

JEAN MILANT: Right. And not really being real. So, just sort of decided, "Okay, that's that." [Laughs.] I don't know why. I'm very strong-willed. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it's—just—it could—

JEAN MILANT: I mean, I was handling a lot of shit. Having all, you know, these children—[laughs]—the artists—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, the artists.

JEAN MILANT: —in many ways.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Trying to run a business and survive with no money. Trying to, you know, do this thing for LA and be, you know, important dealer and publisher in the world like my peers were. Be participating with them. That just seemed to, you know—take all of my time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you think—in the 1970s, was there any point in the 1970s where you feel like, "Oh, this is finally working. I'm finally, like, making the money I deserve to be making for the work that I'm doing?"

JEAN MILANT: It was always a struggle.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In the 1970s?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I had—you know, I had really amazing supporters from New York.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Amazing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Collectors?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. You know, Donald Marron. Have you heard of him?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Of course.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Donald Marron walked in my gallery while I was painting the ceiling at Manhattan Place before I even moved—I think I just moved—hadn't moved everything in yet, or whatever, set everything up. And I did know who he was.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: He was a print collector. And so, he subscribed to Cirrus. My very first subscriber—actually, it's a funny story, because I remember sitting in my office, and my parents were visiting. So my parents were sitting in the office with me, and in walked this elderly gentleman with a very beautiful young woman. And he said, "Well, I heard this thing about a subscription." And I said, "Yes," and so he goes, "Can you tell me more about it?" His name was Edgar Lustgarten. He was a famous cellist or something.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: And so I told him about it, and I think it was, like, \$1,200 for the year. And he says, "Okay, I'll take one." [Laughs.] And my parents were, like, totally—[laughs]—couldn't believe it.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So he was my first subscriber. And I think, probably, Donald Marron might have been my second.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: And then Hunk Anderson was involved. And I—I'd have to go through the records. I think the rest were all out of town—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Really?

JEAN MILANT: —actually, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Almost all the rest were out-of-towners?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I had 10 people. Donald was such a supporter, and I—Donald bought Ruscha from me. I didn't sell them paintings directly, but I told him what paintings—he would ask me what paintings from what show at Ace or Irving to buy. Irving didn't approach him, that I know of, or did Doug. You know, I got him to buy one of his first stain paintings, because there was concern that they wouldn't last, and *blah blah blah*—whatever, but he did buy one. And then I arranged—he wanted to meet Ed Ruscha, so we had dinner together and one trip he came out, and we had dinner together at El Adobe. And I think, actually, that was the trip that got Ed into the Castelli Gallery. Because Donald was—and Donald had bought paintings, maybe he bought from Ed directly too—you know, I'm sure he did.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Donald was supposedly loaning Leo money. So I think he had some influence there, because I think—and I do remember this, I just wouldn't make it up. I do remember after that dinner, Ed had called—I don't know if it was weeks later or whatever—and asked me—he said Leo had approached him and asked me what I thought, should he go there or not?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

JEAN MILANT: Should he go with Leo or not? He asked my opinion.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: Leo had a print—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you said, "Hell, yes!"

JEAN MILANT: Well, I said, "Yes, but you're not going to be the top dog." I said, "You're going to be way under Jasper, because that's his only true love."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: "And you're just going have to weather through that, but yes, you should do it." So—but anyways —

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, as you—

JEAN MILANT: Donald, also, was going to stipend all of my artists—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Donald—

JEAN MILANT: —younger artists—Marron.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Was going to do what?

JEAN MILANT: Stipend them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, stipend. Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So he bought Trowbridge, he bought Carson, he bought—I can't think if he bought Greg or not. And I sold him Vija Celmins' prints, because that's all I had to sell—oh, no. I sold him drawings. I sold him four drawings from London from Melissa Samuels because she couldn't sell them. And it was on this trip—I don't know what it—it was in the '70s. I have to check and see. It's another story. We can backtrack to that later, but—made this connection with a lot of aristocracy from Europe through USC. Like, I—because some kid came to me, and he had seen a Charles Hill piece at LACMA.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The what piece?

JEAN MILANT: Charles Hill painting.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Charles Hill, Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And he'd seen that at LACMA. And he asked LACMA, I guess, where he could find more. So he—

they sent him to me, and he came. His name was Alain la Rivière, and he was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Alain?

JEAN MILANT: Alain.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: A-L-A-I-N la Rivière, like the painter. Or, I mean, like the—those portraits of that family by Ingres. And so, he really loved LA, and so he bought some Charles Hills, and then he was interested in other artists, and he was—kind of became a friend. And so he had—was bringing over all these Europeans that were his friends to come to LA, to, you know, show them LA, et cetera.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So one of his friends was Minnie de Beauvau-Craon, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, Minnie?

JEAN MILANT: Minnie de Beauvau-Craon, C-A-R-O-N [sic].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: De Vevau?

JEAN MILANT: No, de Beauvau, B-A-U-V-E-A-U [sic], Caron, C-A-R-O-N [sic]. Princess Minnie, we called her. Anyways, she got—she went to USC for a while because of Alain. So it was on the same trip, I was in Europe, I don't know if it was after Basel, or whatever. But Donald Marron wanted to sign this agreement that he would stipend my artists, and then he would get first right on all the works. And so, I was in Paris, and he was wanting me to sign that, like, right away. So, I don't know, he teletyped it over, or something at that time, to his office in Paris, but I was with Minnie and Charles Hill and Paul—and Minnie owns this famous castle in France, and so we were going there for the weekend, Charles and me. So Minnie, she invited some Belgian princess, Alexandria or something. We drove from Paris to Nancy, where the castle's at, and the whole concept of this trip was that they wanted to take these tapestries and give them to Charles, and he would cut them up and makes Charles Hills out of them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] God, such a bad idea.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So, anyways, the castle's—you know, it was phenomenal. I mean, it was not destroyed during the Revolution, had all the original furniture, it was built, like—George V for his mistress. It's, like, 300 rooms with turrets and moat, the whole bit.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then her father comes in from London. I guess they were visiting Queen Elizabeth or something. And so there we are, together, and—[laughs]—spending the weekend. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] Oh.

JEAN MILANT: It's very formal, even at the weekend. You know, it's like, we came down—we came down for dinner. I had, like, cashmere sweater on, you know, white shirt, and this and that, and he goes, "Ahem—I think you should change."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. [Laughs.] "Do you have—do you have a jacket and tie, sir?"

[They laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: So anyways, this was for four people, you know. Whatever. [Laughs.] In the country. So after one dinner, we're in the library, which was, you know, huge. The books are the original books, you know? This princess from Alexandria was a rare book dealer, so she was chomping at the bit to get some of the books. And the mother, which was—her stepmother, Minnie's stepmother is, like, 30-something. Her father's 60-something, I think. And I'm showing them Celmins portfolios after dinner in the library, and she's, like, picking them up, and waving them—"Mmnn!"

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, no.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: And you know, taking things, like, sword off the wall, ivory sword and stoking the fire. There were jewels laying—I mean, it was amazing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: Amazing experience. So then we go up to the attic with the big scissors and, you know, there's wood Louis Vuitton trunks with the LVs painted on it, and we walked across landscape paintings, Italian, that were laying on the floor. There were these giant tapestries, because the attic was as tall as this. You know, and somebody cuts out a section of the tapestry—

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: —and gives it to Charles to take home to play with. But the tapestries were actually what they call *cartoon*. They were, like, the rough burlap where the image was painted on it before it would go under the loom that they used to—as a map to do the weaving. But they were done by Vigée Le Brun. Court painter to Marie Antoinette. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] This is such a horrible story. So what did Charles do? I have to know.

JEAN MILANT: So, have—probably have to edit this out, you know?

[They laugh.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And Charles cut it up?

JEAN MILANT: No, she cut it up.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, but didn't—so she took it in to Charles—

JEAN MILANT: Oh, he took it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He took it?

JEAN MILANT: Okay, so then the deal is, we're going back to Paris.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: We get back to Paris, and of course, during the weekend in the country at the castle, Chateau de Haroué, they start talking at dinner—after dinner or lunch or something one day, about fortune tellers. So, this is all getting back to Donald Marron, anyways. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. We're just going with it. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Minnie says, "You got to see this—you got to see this woman, and *blah blah blah*," and I went, "All right, all right, all right," so we get back to Paris, and then she sets it up, and supposedly this woman was advising a lot of major political people and—et cetera. So somehow there was a mix-up about where we're to meet, and then she was furious and screaming at the phone. She gets—she gets met at the hotel. We drive out to the suburbs to, like, meet this fortune teller.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Hang on just a sec. I want to make sure we're still—yeah, I want to make sure—I don't want to miss even a word of this. Hang on. God, this light in here is terrible. Am I still recording? I am, okay. So—

JEAN MILANT: So anyway, she picks me up and she's in a foul mood, and we have this Princess with her from Belgium with us, so it's the three of us, me and these two. And so, we're like—she actually drove on the sidewalk, on the Champs-Élysées, you know, just—it was like—she's—she was very strong-willed and crazy. Just—Patiño was her grandfather, a ten-billionaire. So anyways, we get to this place. It's a very normal kind of, you know, condo place outside of Paris and, like, the woman answers the door. She's very young. She has a little child—she has a child with her. And we walk in, and the first thing this woman says is, to Minnie, "You can't be in this room. Out." So this other woman had to come in to translate because I didn't speak French that well.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So we get in there, and this woman, she just takes these tarot cards, which are all rubbed off. There's no faces or anything on them anymore. They look like tortoise shells. She lays out the tarot and she

starts talking. Well, one of the things she told me is, I was forced to sign something. I'd been forced to sign something. I had not told anybody. And that I shouldn't sign it. And then she told me other things. You know, so I decided—you know. I didn't sign it. [Laughs.] Of course then, two years later, a year later, Don become—Donald becomes trustee of the Modern, and he couldn't have done it anyways.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Done what? Oh, have—

JEAN MILANT: To siphon my artists.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see. I see, I see.

JEAN MILANT: They don't allow that kind of stuff at home.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: She told you—she told you not to let Donald Marron—not to sign the agreement with Donald Marron?

JEAN MILANT: Well, she didn't know what it was. She just said someone's—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: She said don't sign this—

JEAN MILANT: —trying to make you sign something, but you shouldn't sign it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So I thought that was an interesting—so that was my only fortune-telling experience. [Laughs.] And then, later, she wired—or she called Minnie and said, you know, "There's no need to pay me, because it was a bad reading," or something, and just because her child was crying, and this and that. So I guess she was sort of the real thing, or something like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Gosh.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Amazing.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, it was an amazing thing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What an amazing experience.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. It was pretty interesting.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, as you're going along, in your publishing, do you feel—as you're going into, like—well, let's move up to the end of the '70s, because then you become a great force in downtown Los Angeles. And what—we're going to talk about the 1980s next. I might take this—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —time to change cards.

JEAN MILANT: All right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay? I might be okay, but I might not be, so I'm going to stop here.

[END OF milant15_1of2_sd_track02.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: This is Hunter Drohojowska-Philp interviewing Jean Milant at his home in Echo Park, California on July 20th, 2015, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, card number two. Okay, Jean, did you want to say anything else about printmaking or your gallery in the '70s, or do you want to move on to 1979—you open in downtown LA?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I would kind of like to—I don't know the exact date, I am sure you do but, you know, we had a lot of people—in the '70's I had a lot of people coming to see me from outside of LA. Come and chat or whatever. So it was a good—a good sampling of people that had good positions in the art world.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Right.

JEAN MILANT: I don't know if they went to see a lot of other people in town or not. But, people were always coming to me for advice. So I was very insistent upon more galleries opening up and trying to help them open

up. So I think I was very instrumental with Peter Goulds from L.A. Louver, because he was really—like, for instance, with Tom Wudl—you mentioned the Tom Wudl piece you saw upstairs.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Peter, you know, asked me for help and how to do it, and this and that, and I was helping him as best as I could and telling him who were the collectors, and *blah, blah, blah*. And he had—it was one of his first, I think more important shows at that time, was Tom

Wudl. [Laughs.] And I remember being at the opening, and Peter said, "Well, you know, Jean, Tom won't come to the opening." I said, "That's ridiculous, it's unbelievable, I can't believe someone would do that," you know. And I had already, you know, taken these European collectors and stuff to Tom's studio myself. So I had a rapport with Tom and that whole, you know, that group of people—of artists, at that time. So, I had to call Tom on the phone at the opening and make sure he came.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: We, you know, helped some other galleries. I don't—some of them didn't last that long. And Grapestake Gallery came about because Tom Marioni came to see me. And with his—I don't know if his sister came, or whatever, and wanted to—people seemed to want to follow my lead of showing California artists, young artists and how do you do it, and *blah, blah, blah*. Because, you know, that wasn't really being done that much at that time. And a lot of these people, you know—we didn't have money. Some did, some didn't. So I was thinking that the more galleries, the better off we are, in terms of the bigger scale of how California sits in the world. Then one day, Bob Smith came by to see me. And he said, "Well, you know, I want to open up a place in my apartment or house," or something like that. And I said, "Okay."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I said, "Okay, but—" You know, he wanted to know if I would help, and I said, "Yes, but I won't do it if you're going to have it in your house. It has to be a real situation." And I said, "Here's my proposed 60-page proposal that I developed to form Cirrus." I said, "You come back to me with something like this. And then we can talk."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And so we did. So then, I think I called Marcia Weisman, and Joann and Gifford Phillips, and he took it from there.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, he started LAICA, which was an alternative—

JEAN MILANT: And I was on the board of that in the beginning.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: LA Institute of Contemporary Art.

JEAN MILANT: Which was the second most powerful non-profit space in America.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Outside of P.S. 1. Alanna Heiss. And I think even Alanna—I remember, we did a whole non-profit conference once at the Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica, you know. And LAICA also, I insisted they have a publication. Because there were no magazines in LA. So we started the *Journal*. And that was kind of my interest too, as part of my involvement with LAICA.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And, you know, we got the space in Century City for a dollar a year. And we had the *Journal*, which was great. And, I don't know what to say, but I think in the beginning it had a lot of influence, and it was also recognized outside of Los Angeles, which was the most important part.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] It wasn't just some rinky-dink little thing happening in LA, it was a serious nonprofit space. Which—both nonprofits formed at that time because there were so many artists coming out of colleges. And there was no place for them to show, because there were very few galleries showing contemporary art. So, I feel that's also part of my legacy, is that I was really, you know—you had to have more galleries, you had to have more spaces for these people to show. You had to have people buy the work to be able to support the system.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, also by that time, the Pasadena Art Museum had just closed in the early 1970's—taken over by Norton Simon. So the timing is propitious, I mean, there was—after Pasadena closes, of course, there only is LA County Museum of Art—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in terms of a venue for contemporary art in Los Angeles, and they didn't show very much.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: They couldn't even show enough, even if they were interested.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you're right, LAICA rises as the result of that.

JEAN MILANT: Right, but it was also part of this sort of national thing happening.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Because there were so many artists—contemporary artists that are more art—contemporary galleries opening, and the institutions couldn't venue non-proven artworks like they do today.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: You know, so how would they—these artists show in an institution. So that's kind of why I think these artist-run spaces started, with Dave Hickey in Texas, and Robert Longo in Buffalo, New York, and I forget who was the one up in Seattle.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know. So it just was a bigger thing happening.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's true.

JEAN MILANT: We then became part of LA

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But now you're a commercial printmaker, you're a publisher, you're a commercial dealer—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —what's your interest in this nonprofit development?

JEAN MILANT: I think I just said that, it's sort of to expand the awareness of it, because we would all benefit from it. It's like—I think that's a rule of competition. You know, the more people around you that are doing the same thing, the more business for everybody.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you're spreading the word.

JEAN MILANT: Well, the more business for everybody.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: It's—you know, it makes something more aware to the general populace that this is happening and people are participating. If you only have one, well, people might not think that much about what's happening.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, the other big thing that happens in your career, I think, is that you move the whole operation to downtown LA

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you move Cirrus to downtown in, what, 1979?

JEAN MILANT: In 1979.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. And what prompted you to go down there?

JEAN MILANT: Well, I lost my lease.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I had a ten-year lease. That first ten-year lease was up.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And they had some furniture company, wanted it for a zillion dollars more than I could afford.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And how much was your rent at—

JEAN MILANT: Well, I originally started at \$750 a month. And—I don't remember, it might have been like twelve hundred, or something like that. Or maybe a thousand dollars at the end. And that was not negotiable. I don't know why I decided on downtown, but I know I always liked downtown.

And I always thought, how can you have a major city in the world that doesn't have a center? Although no one would say that LA had a center, because they didn't—they were negative about downtown. I couldn't see Century City being it. Where else would it be, Santa Monica? No, it had to be downtown. It had to be regenerated sometime in the future. So, that's part of the thinking. And so—and, you know, I lived—for a while I lived at—when I first came to California and was at Tamarind, I lived on Lexington Avenue in a little rear house. And then I moved to this loft on Seventh and Hoover. Which was near Chouinard, which was still in existence then, at that time. The art school across from the tennis courts, and the Granada Buildings, and everything. So there I was, kind of already on the edge of downtown. So I probably explored more around downtown at that time. There were a couple of weird restaurants, like a Greek restaurant that—I don't know what happened to it, but Joe Goode would go to it, downtown.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But anyway, so I started driving around downtown. And Little Tokyo, of course, I was going to Little Tokyo for sushi and stuff like that. And I saw this building, and called on it and got an appointment. When I walked in, it was just so amazing. It was, like, 12,000 square feet, or 13,000 square feet, split on two floors. And the entire top floor had windows on all three sides with a clerestory, 20-foot ceilings, it was like a temple.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: And at that time it was pretty much warehousing. It wasn't dangerous. And so I just decided, you know, what—I was—when I first started—I was by myself. Nobody else was around me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But weren't artists already taking over spaces in that area?

JEAN MILANT: There probably were some artists, but there were artists there in the '70s, downtown.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Like the Beaudry Rose guys. They were downtown. I showed Raul Guerrero. I gave him his first show. And he was living on Wall Street. That's where his studio was.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah, there were already artists—

JEAN MILANT: Laddie Dill was down there, John—both of them I think, Guy [Dill] and Laddie.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And John Peterson was down there, with his series—

JEAN MILANT: Right, and I think we recently published John Mason, and I think he said that he was down there.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, he was down there.

JEAN MILANT: So anyways, I didn't really think about that. I mean, it wasn't the issue, I was just thinking—you know, I survived by myself, to begin with. And obviously no one is much supporting me here in town, as far as buying from me. So, do it. And that's what I did.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, when you moved your publishing downtown, did you—you had so much more space.

[Phone ringing.]

JEAN MILANT: Excuse me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay, I'll put it on pause for a second.

[Audio break.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I was saying that, you know, here you are in this much larger print facility. I mean, you could print huge things if you wanted to, I suppose. Did your print publishing change at all when you went to downtown LA?

JEAN MILANT: It didn't really change, because the size of the press was the same. So, no, it didn't. And I didn't use the whole building to begin with.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: So, like I—I think I was—I had part of the first floor for the workshop, and then I had the upstairs for my—where I lived, because I actually moved there, too, from Seventh and Hoover Street. And then Terry Inch was going to take the other part of the upstairs half.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And so it went through various configurations over the years. I think at one point I had the whole building—I lived there, I had two galleries, one upstairs and downstairs. I think that might have been when I first met you. At one point I rented the gallery to Simon Lowinsky, who was a good friend of mine, another connection from the early '70s, who I brought into showing younger contemporary artists from California. He did a show of Guy de Cointet. Did a show of Charles Hill, did a show of Jim Lawrence. But he actually was really—his background, he was really big in the photo movement that happened in the early '80s and late '70s. And he was a very good friend, and he was interested in all kinds of things, not just photos. So he educated me a lot about African sculpture and photography, et cetera, et cetera.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, he wanted to have a secondary space in LA, so I rented to him for a while. And actually—you know, Andrew Fabricant, he hired Andrew Fabricant to come down and run it for him. So that's how Andrew got to LA. And then when Lowinsky had to fold that gallery, Dan Weinberg was interested in renting it. And we actually were at the point of signing the papers, and then Larry Gagorian moved from Almont to Robertson, and so he took Larry's old space on Almont, Dan Weinberg. So—and then he asked me, "Oh, what about this guy Andrew Fabricant, is he any good?" You know, "Do you recommend him to work for me?" And I said, "Yeah, he's, you know, fine." And so he went to work for Daniel, and then shortly after that he left and went to Larry.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see, I didn't realize that, okay.

JEAN MILANT: So Andrew was, you know, part of our circle at that time at Cirrus.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: And I taught him how to silkscreen a little bit, he helped me print something. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And that—also, at that point, Steven Leiber was coming down to work for Simon. And Steven didn't know anything about art, he was studying law, or whatever. Or going to go to law school. We became very good friends, and I let him use a little apartment we had on the second floor, to stay at and—you know, so we would always have a lot of dialogue together about art and food. We traveled together. I took him to see Bruce Nauman, took him to see *The Lightning Field*, took him to Taos. So, a lot of his education sort of came through Cirrus. Anyway, so—I would get off of like originally moving downtown. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How much were you paying when you were there?

JEAN MILANT: I think I signed a ten-year lease there, too.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And it started out at twelve hundred a month. So I think it was like ten cents a square foot.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Isn't that great?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Talk about the good old days.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But the other thing that happens in the '80s that's beneficial to everyone, is that LA does suddenly get more of an international reputation. And the economy kind of bounces back.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, what changed for you in the 1980s? Fast forward here to your exhibition list and your print-making list. And, you know—you have been consistent with the people you showed. You showed you know Jay McCafferty, and Terry O'Shea, and Jay Willis, and Charles Hill, and you kind of stayed consistent with the people you like and that you show.

JEAN MILANT: Well, I made a commitment that I was a dealer.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: You know, that makes a long-term commitment, so I was working with their careers.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know, I did the best I could, I think. I got them to Europe, which was very important. I don't know of any other young artists of the early '70s and late '70s who were having shows in Europe. But, you know, there is an attitude of LA that's very self-defeating. And I think that, you know, sometimes things can't progress. And so I think I made—it's kind of a decision at some point, where, you know, after 25 years, or 30 years, or whatever, that I just—you know, there was no help, so I changed to be more open to working with artists outside of LA. And I think there's a whole period there that I just was not really focused on that kind of structure anymore. And I think, you know—well, this is getting way ahead, but for the last ten years at least, I really have been really interested in how the world is changing more than how art is—exists. And, kind of, you know—obviously, technology from, not the early '80s, but from probably '86 on, when people first got laptops in their homes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then that wasn't that much in the beginning, but it's now everywhere, and everybody has, you know, the cell phones, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I had been trying to develop a think tank on the visual arts and develop new means of, like—and meld it with the old. So, like—it's not been easy. I was turned down a couple of times from UCLA, they turned me down twice. The development department wanted it, there was this guy Robin Winters, and he was control of all technology, although he taught music, and he was a musicologist. And I met with him and I had to be vetted by him, because the development department said you have to be vetted by this guy with the ideas. He said my ideas were fantastic, he thought they were great, and yes, it's fine. And then they took it to the art department and then Mary Kelly was the chairman of the art department, and she said one thing. I was going to give them everything.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: My houses, everything, everything. To establish this institute.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did you set up an institute?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And, Mary Kelly said I wasn't political enough. That was it. I don't think I have really ever had a conversation with Mary Kelly, my whole life. Then it was reestablished when she left, and Roger Herman wanted it to be reintroduced, so that was reintroduced again. We had a meeting with Robin Winters in his boardroom, and they brought in James Welling and Patty Wickman as representatives from the art department. And, you know, I started talking about it, and Welling's sort of seeing this as the way to publish his catalogues for his shows, which really quite wasn't what I was interested in. And Robin Winters said, "I don't care, I want him here. You go back and you develop a class, I don't care if it's Publishing 101, or whatever it is."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And they disappeared and I never heard from anybody again. I went to USC two years ago. And—to approach that situation there, because I knew that they had gotten a lot of money and were really trying to be the biggest research school in America. And I was told the idea was too big. I'm still on it. I see everything happening. I see more and more things everyday happening.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What do you mean?

JEAN MILANT: Well, the visual arts is so far behind the time. They're trying to hang on to the 19th century model of being special. In fact, there's a little cartoon on Hyperallergic today, I think, there's this little cartoonist and she's asking this question about art and about being an artist, and what you do, and all this kind of stuff. And it really comes down to the fact that, you know, it's really just an object now. And they haven't—they haven't moved with the times.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know, technology has destroyed and is rebuilding everything. Everything. But the art world does not accept it, pretty much. I mean, some people do. There is more and more happening. I'm not saying the whole art world, but I think there's this hanging on that, you know, sees it going, and I really fault the schools for that, too. Because I don't think they're teaching people how to think, instead of how to market.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it depends on—

JEAN MILANT: And that's sort of where I'm at. So—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And the big movement that started—actually kind of starts in the 1980s, I was going to say—I think LA changes most dramatically in the 1980s, because of the—suddenly, what you were hoping would happen, did happen. Where, thanks to CalArts and the great push of John Baldessari and other teachers there, to make sure that their students got to Europe, or that they got out of LA.

JEAN MILANT: Right, and right—I never saw slides by David Salle or any of these people. They didn't show their work to anybody in LA, they went straight to New York.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, you know, what you wanted—wanted to have happen—what you wanted to have happen in LA, kind of happens—

JEAN MILANT: No.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —starts to happen in the '80s.

JEAN MILANT: No, it did not.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: It did not.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You don't think it happened? How so?

JEAN MILANT: Because the people who made it happen were in New York.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: The artists they showed there, and the people that made them famous and made LA aware, are the people from New York or Europe. Not the dealers from LA—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right, that's true.

JEAN MILANT: —so basically, LA is still in that same position. Has not moved one iota.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, it's moved—

JEAN MILANT: Everybody else—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —it's moved an iota. [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: —no, but I'm just saying, you know—and now the people are coming in from outside. Some people are complaining about that. Well, why? You left it open.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You gave it away, you just handed them a platter. Don't complain. I've been on this thing since 1970, Hunter.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, I know. I know.

JEAN MILANT: You know what I mean? And I don't know why I can't get it out of my brain. That's out of my brain now, because obviously I haven't made any money off of it. I don't make money off of that thinking.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No.

JEAN MILANT: You know? And it probably has hurt me—if I would be more focused on, you know, selling art, and this only, and not think about LA, you know, it would be a different thing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, as you—well, as you—as you can look back through the '80s—all right, now you've been in business for—'70—over ten years.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In the 1980s, you're really—you're continuing to publish prints, and are you identifying more with yourself as a dealer? Do you always—do you ever think—is there any point where you think I am more of a dealer than I am a—than I am a print publisher?

JEAN MILANT: See, this is why I'm interested in doing this, because I always thought I was a dealer, period.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: I just happen to have two abilities.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you don't think—

JEAN MILANT: And in 1972, when I was in Europe—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Uh-huh.

JEAN MILANT: —and then 1973, went in to Basel, what am I going, like I'm a printer? No. I'm putting my artists up against the same people that Leo Castelli is showing, et cetera, et cetera. And I was in the avant garde section of the galleries. I wasn't in a print section. So I've always thought that I was a dealer. And I handled these artists' career, 25 years, Charles Hill or whatever. Pushing them, trying to direct, trying to get them shows, you know?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Try to sell their work, et cetera. That's not print publishing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: That's dealing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So—your identity in your mind is more as a dealer than it is as a print publisher.

JEAN MILANT: I don't separate them. I just—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You don't.

JEAN MILANT: —I have the two halves. I'm capable of doing both. Which very few people are.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Because they can't technically think, and I'm an artist background. I'm not an art historian background. I come out of being an artist, I was a painter. You know? And so I understand what the artist thinking is.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: You see? Now someone like my competitors, Stanley and Sidney, are not artists. Their dialogue with an artist when they want to publish someone is a lot different than when I dialogue with them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And tell me about that difference.

JEAN MILANT: Well, I think I can—I think there's a creative element that doesn't exist in the business element. Although I think of business as being highly creative. Probably one of the most highly creative things we have in the world. Because there are no rules in real business. And there are no rules in art. But then, obviously, I think artists make more rules. So, there are a lot of rules in art when there shouldn't be. But—so an artist comes to me with an idea.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And we start discussing. I don't reproduce something. "Oh, let's make this." No, I never say that. I say, "What do you want to do?"

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So, if you looked back at some of the highlights of your—that process, who would you consider some of the most interesting artists whose work you have published when it was—in terms of the actual procedure of going from getting the artist and—

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, I think Ed Ruscha has done a lot of technical things.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: But Ed is pretty defined when he comes in to a project. There's not much—that much dialogue, other than technical or suggesting technical, or this or that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He knows what he wants to do.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, he really knows. He comes out of a graphic background. He studied, you know, commercial art at Chouinard. So he really knows how to do it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: You know? But he has done things like use weird materials like food, for instance, to print with.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you want to talk about that?

JEAN MILANT: Well, we did the *Hollywood* food prints. I think before that we did *Evil*, actually. *Evil* is the one that you saw up in the office here.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm, Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: That's printed on a piece of wood that's backed on a piece of paper that comes from Japan. It's silk-screen printed. But it's sprayed with Cabochard perfume, so it smells.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Wonderful.

JEAN MILANT: And then we did the food prints, the two *Hollywood* food prints. I think he had already done food prints before, with Editions Alecto in New York—in London. But so, that was kind of where—I mean Ed is very—you know Ed—when I work with Ed—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Let's talk about the food prints and what exactly he did.

JEAN MILANT: Well, he used various food products to make the prints. So we used grape jam, apricot jam, Metrecal chocolate, caviar, I don't know, we did other things. He would let us—he would let us—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Were they small?

JEAN MILANT: —he would let us experiment. So we would just, you know—oh, let's try this, let's try that, and then we'd show him a proof.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Would he suggest the foodstuffs?

JEAN MILANT: Huh?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Did he suggest the food?

JEAN MILANT: No. Did he suggest—well, no, it started originally—this is what we're doing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But, he came and he said, I wanted to do these prints with grape jam and caviar and—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —and Pepto Bismol, they were all—

JEAN MILANT: He was thinking this, yeah. But he said, you know, if you have some other ideas, go ahead and do it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So Ed is very open to suggestions. But I think he's not like someone that comes into the shop that's never done a print before and has no idea of how to put something together. And that dialogue is completely different, you know. Now that's a more difficult dialogue.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I love those food prints, I think they're some of the most—actually, I just think they're among the high points of that whole printing.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because the choice, I've always been interested in, like, the choice of Pepto Bismol.

JEAN MILANT: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: To paint the Hollywood—to paint the Hollywood sign. The choice of using the caviar.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You know, that there is such—very specific. [Laughs.] It has such specific meanings outside of their being pink or being black.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Correct? And you must have—you must have gone completely hysterical making these prints.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Is that true? I mean, did it seem—

JEAN MILANT: This *Hollywood* is a disgusting, stomach-wrenching—[laughs]—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —moment.

JEAN MILANT: Cocktail party?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes. Yes, and I think they're about '70—what year are they again? '70?

JEAN MILANT: '70s, yeah. Early '70s, I think, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: '73, maybe in that era? I mean, really early. And I think they always—well, of course, they're terribly valuable now, but—I thought what a fun—they seemed, sort of, full of that sense of experimentation—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —that's so much a part of the LA art world that you liked at that time.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right. Let's just try something. Yeah. So, the point—the point I'm trying to get to here, is that would be, I would think, a high point of the printing experience. Do you think of other printing experiences that you had that were, sort of, particularly amusing, or ingenious, or exciting?

JEAN MILANT: Well—with Trowbridge, we figured how to print on Mylar that was frosted, and make it go transparent, and then print lines that simulated his paintings. Kind of. And with Craig Kauffman, too, we printed on a—very difficult technically to print on, some kind of transparent vellum paper, that didn't have any—it didn't have any structure to it, and it was very hard to register. And you could see every little flaw when the process—when the printing was happening, when the screen squeegee was pulled. I'm trying to think of, you know—it was interesting that, actually, it's going the opposite direction. But, like, when we—I think we did Bruce Nauman's first hand-drawn published print, *Raw-War*. And, you know, he didn't—I don't think he—he didn't have any specific media in mind, sort of, but he asked us how to do things, sort of, and then he would pick and choose what he—I guess what he thought was the best, or what he thought would work. And he chose some very old methods.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Old printmaking methods.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Like what?

JEAN MILANT: Well, like—I think on the—or very difficult too, like on the *Raw-War* and this other one that was part of that project, is like three spinning ball bearings. He did, kind of, like, cold line engraving, which is actually done as a lithograph.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So you coat the stone with a layer of gum, and you take a diamond tool, and you scratch very lightly through the gum to make this very precise little line. And then that actually can be a negative line, so here you have this huge field of color with all this ink that you have to print with this tiny, tiny, little, minuscule white line that has to be saved. Now, I'm sure that could have been done another way, you know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then with the bulb, we had to use the same stone with all these little lines with a very transparent flap that they existed in, and slightly off-registered each time. So, one was purple, one was green, one was—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Which print is that?

JEAN MILANT: It's non-titled.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh.

JEAN MILANT: It's like—it's from that series with the *Raw-War*.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: There were three prints.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And, you know, we didn't mention it earlier, but Nick Wilder was a huge supporter of *Cirrus versus Irving Blum*. And Nick is actually the one that brought that project to me. To help support me. So he and Leo published it, co-published that project. Anyway, so you had to print the same stone, and it's very difficult to print anything a hundred times by hand. And we had to print it 300 or 400—300, 400 times—300 times or plus, because it was the same stone printed three times.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, God.

JEAN MILANT: And each color was super transparent. One was purple, one was green, and one was orange, I think. So the overall background color was this weird kind of green.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But if you had a little bit too much ink on one of the printings, it would be a different kind of green. Because just slight—they're so transparent. So, you know, that was incredibly technically challenging.

Which we, you know—that's interesting for us, too, not just the, you know, using a new material.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: So I would consider him somewhat—he also liked—would just take a great big rag with a lot of heavy greasy stuff and rub it over the stone. Well, it's very hard to tell what you're going to get from that. Technically, the image, how it will turn out.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, very difficult to retain all those strokes of nuances and stuff like that. And then, well, it seems silly now with technology but, there's this triptych that we did with him called *Perfect Odor/Perfect Door/Perfect Rodo*. Well, it's like typeface.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But, how do you do that in hand lithography in 1970? And get perfectly precise text. Printed by hand.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And how did you do it?

JEAN MILANT: I don't remember exactly. We must have had to take a typeface and have someone make a film out of it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then we had to probably—because they didn't have preexisting presensitized photo plates at that time in the industry. So we probably had to figure out how to put a photographic coating on the plate. And then expose the plate, you know. So that's the other thing about technology, which is what I'm interested in. It's like, how it has just allowed everybody to be creative today, which is taking a huge thing away from the domain of the visual artist. Which they also don't think that's a problem, but it is. For them, not for creativity. So, I just—you know, just moving through time and moving through how when we did the Baldessari *Raw Prints*.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: He had never done a print. He didn't want to do a print, he didn't like—wanted to. Connie Lewallen brought him in, maybe because she knew him from when her and her husband were in San Diego, and they taught together.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I know, we should talk about those that you know. It's in 1975, I believe?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, probably '75.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Connie Lewallen, the great—goes on to be a great curator.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: She comes to work for you.

JEAN MILANT: Right, right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you know, since she's friends with John Baldessari, and she—

JEAN MILANT: Right. She brought him—you know, convinced him to come in and do a print—talk to us. And so, you know, he took photographs. Himself. In the mall, in Santa Monica. And then he, not having done a print before, took a crayon and drew a very precise crisp line in a rectangle. That's very hard to do with these terrible, greasy, fatty, crayons.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know. It's surprising, it was so fresh. And then, we had photographs made, C-prints, and we—I thought, well, you know, I don't want it to look like it's sitting on top of the page, the photograph. It's just going to look like it was pasted on there. So I thought if we depressed the paper and put the photograph in the depression it will look like it's on the same page. A part of the page, and that's we did. We blind embossed the print in that area and then glued the photograph in, and it really does look like it's part of the paper, in a way. Well, we couldn't sell those prints. Can you guess why?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because nobody really knew who Baldessari was in 1975.

JEAN MILANT: Well, also, photography was not art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Uh-huh [affirmative], that's right.

JEAN MILANT: That was a very—that was a gutsy thing to do in 1976. And color photographs, C-prints beside, that are going to fade! [Laughs.] But I don't question those things. We just make an artwork. You know. And that's the difference between maybe someone like Sidney and me. I think differently.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, you supported all these extremely—I mean, yeah, I mean that's a—I mean, now it looks like, yeah, right, Connie Lewallen and John Baldessari, but you know—no, nobody was interested in —

JEAN MILANT: And then John didn't want to do any more prints after that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —nobody was anybody then.

JEAN MILANT: But he didn't want to do any more prints after that. And then I got him to do *The Fallen Easel*, which was a giant print, like full scale. I wanted something full scale.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And we printed on metal, we printed on weird papers. We—you know, did this whole thing, in this multiple print, and then we did the other one, *Object (with Flaw)*. That's when Gemini became interested, because I sold them all. And then they saw something there. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And they also did not publish after we worked with him and published him.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Obviously.

JEAN MILANT: And we sold them to their people. In Europe, et cetera, you know. So they—I don't think they were that interested before that. But anyways, after those experiences with John he really got into print making. And started doing tons of it, you know. But if you look at what we've done with John, every project is different.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: It's not the same old thing. They're completely different.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Now, *An Object (with Flaw)* is an extraordinary—*Object (with Flaw)*, which is the three shaped pieces.

JEAN MILANT: Right, well, it's four, something like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Four pieces. Four shaped—four shaped elements.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, one's printed on Plexiglas from the back. So, I wanted to protect the image so it couldn't be scraped off. So I printed it from the back of the Plexiglas.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The woman holding the teddy bear part?

JEAN MILANT: Yes, so you see through the Plexiglas to the print image.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But then I think when we did *The Cliches*, those are the only prints that John actually painted the images, you know. So each print we've done is pretty much different. I think that has a lot to say with the collaborator. And my role, and the artist's role, and how we work. I think if you look at the Ruscha prints, and you look at the other Ruscha prints that have been done, I think you will find that there might be some difference. So —

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, that's why—

JEAN MILANT: —that's what excites me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: So you asked about wearing the two hats.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Okay?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So buying and selling a piece of art is not that interesting to me. Only. You know? I'm very interested in the art itself, and the involvement with the art, working with the artist, why they're doing it, et cetera, et cetera. Which is very similar to collaborating and making a print. So, I just don't think I could be an art dealer—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —just buying and selling art—selling. You know, I just—I have to be involved in the work somehow.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, someone else you printed in the 1980s, who comes out of that same sort of CalArts trajectory, is Lari Pittman.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Who you printed quite early, actually.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I mean, he wasn't—he certainly had recognition for his paintings.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But you got him involved in those early prints, which are also—to me they seem—I don't know, I'm not a printmaker, but they seem very elaborate to me.

JEAN MILANT: They're—you know, Lari understands the graphic media.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So he knew how to, you know, bring—put something together. Like, kind of—you know, so he pretty much knew what he was doing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: In what—in what sense?

JEAN MILANT: Well, a lot of the elements in those prints are kind of like a—I don't know what he used exactly—it's sort of like—they're pre-made elements that he cut and shaped and then pasted onto Mylar. And then some of the elements are painted or done by hand.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: But he knew—he knows how to build a print, because he does the same thing in a painting.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: They build the painting, the same way as building a print, I think. So—but then he's one who says he doesn't like collaboration. And that he doesn't like multiplicity of his work. So, you know, he hasn't done any more work with us, although we've asked him.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I don't think he's done any prints with anybody.

JEAN MILANT: No, that's what I'm saying, that's what I'm saying, he doesn't like the fact that there's more than one of his things.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: So, you know, that's his choice as an artist.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: He did that—how many prints did he do with you?

JEAN MILANT: Three—four.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Three or four.

JEAN MILANT: Four.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, and they're wonderful actually.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, they're great.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Those are really, really, good prints.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, I think they're great.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Because the colors—

JEAN MILANT: That was a project that I started where I decided to do—and I actually had abandoned subscribers, also, in the '80s. And then this was mid-'80s, I think? I don't remember. I decided to reinstate a subscription program. And which I thought was very interesting, because someone like Ben Case in Minneapolis, who was one of my original subscribers—who I had not talked to since the '70s—I sent him the letter, he signed up immediately in '85. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nice. That's nice.

JEAN MILANT: That's nice, yeah, very nice.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: To feel you have that kind of following, that kind of loyalty.

JEAN MILANT: And between this enormous amount of time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: With nothing between.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Who else signed on for your second—your second round?

JEAN MILANT: Well, the Nortons signed on. I don't think I offered it to Donald—I don't know. I'd have to go look. I think there were several private individuals that signed on. There were two corporate entities. I think that—I think that Tressa Miller—Tressa Miller is someone I met very early on. She was one of my original subscribers. I forgot about her.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: And she subscribed for Scribner's in New York.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh.

JEAN MILANT: So she was working for Scribner's.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: As an art consultant?

JEAN MILANT: I don't know. I guess as an art consultant, or something. So, she became one of my original subscribers from Scribner's. And she signed on to that '85 project, and I think she placed a lot of it when she was doing the chocolate people. Carnation Milk, which is owned by Nesbit, or whatever that name—not Nabisco, but the big Swiss company.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Nestlé.

JEAN MILANT: Nestlé, right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So—[laughs]—and speaking of people who I met, too—I mean, there was—someone like Diane Villani, and I don't know if you ever heard of—what was her name?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: Amy Baker. Do you know Amy Baker?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I know the name, help me.

JEAN MILANT: Well, Amy Baker was born in California. And Diane Villani is a New Yorker. Well, Amy Baker, I think, had gone to Tamarind? Diane Vallani is a print dealer and publisher, but she doesn't have a workshop or anything like that. So when I first started out—I don't know how I originally met them, it could have been through Donna Stein. Donna Stein was a curator at the Modern.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I remember, Donna Stein—I stayed with her on one of my first trips to New York. And then she might have introduced me to Amy. Amy and Diane were working for Martha Jackson. Which is now the Hauser-Wirth Gallery. And so, that's how I remember meeting them, and their helping supporting and trying to get people involved in buying things from me. Amy Baker, then she worked for—I think she went to London. And she worked for Paul Cornwall-Jones, a major publisher. Paul Cornwall-Jones also wanted me to do David Hockney *Weather Series*. I didn't do David Hockney *Weather Series*. I told them no, because I don't—I didn't want to—I wouldn't just print them, I would co-publish them. And he said, well, he'll go to Gemini, and I said they won't do it, they've never co-published. Well, of course, they co-publish, and that's how they met David Hockney.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: That was a big mistake on my part! [Laughs.] So anyway, she worked for Paul Cornwall-Jones, and he was a big deal in the print world in the '70s. [Laughs.] And then she came back and she ran John Weber's gallery. And then she had her own publishing company for a while. And then—and I don't know how many people know this, but, like, one of my big supporters also, was Bob Egelston from Capital Group.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Robert Egelston.

JEAN MILANT: Robert Egelston. And he and Donald Marron, we put them together once at a—once at Terry's and Becky's house. And Donald tried to convince them to subscribe to me at that time, and he said that he wouldn't. So it was later that he came on board.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Because he subscribed to Gemini, and wasn't interested in Cirrus at that time. Anyways, he became a very big supporter of mine. He was an amazing supporter of the arts and of music. Unbelievable, unbelievable, great guy. And very, you know, under the radar. Keeps himself under the radar.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: And so, he and Amy Baker—well, he and Amy Baker bought *Artforum* from Charlie Cowles. And he brought Tony Korner in to run it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see.

JEAN MILANT: And Tony was a friend, I think, from the financial world in London. So Amy still is involved in that, I think. And then she married Fred Sandback. So now basically she is dealing with the estate. But these were—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I remember—

JEAN MILANT: —but these were early-on supporters of mine.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know. They were outside of LA, you know. And connected with very big players.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes.

JEAN MILANT: You know what I mean?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes.

JEAN MILANT: So I was always very comfortable in feeling part of that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So that's why I felt I was doing a good job for my artists and for LA. And supporting it and sticking

to my guns.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you went to—and when you went downtown, also, there was a whole other efflorescence of—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —galleries that followed you.

JEAN MILANT: Right, 26 other galleries opened up.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Downtown LA

JEAN MILANT: In downtown LA

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Throughout the 1980s.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, it was the early '80s, I think.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Early '80s. I mean the early '80s.

JEAN MILANT: Because I got the Ovsey Gallery started. Neil Ovsey used to be a collector, and he was buying work from me. He lived in Studio City, or something like that. And then he always kept talking about owning a gallery, he wanted a gallery when he was working for his wife's father. And then —so they did open a gallery in Studio City for a while, and they were buying prints from me, and from Multiples, and from other publishers, Gemini, et cetera, and selling prints. So, when I moved downtown I saw this sign in the building on Third Street and Alameda, the Neptune Building. And I told them about it, and I said you have to move here. So they did. And they moved the Osvey Gallery to downtown. So we became kind of close friends. Even though we were competitors.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then Kirk de Gooyer opened up, and then I think Alice [Ovsey] and I—I was talking, and I said, you know, I think we should try to organize everybody. So we formed LAVA, Los Angeles Visual Arts. And we charged each dealer \$75 a month to be part of it. And then we did that weekend. Now, LACE wouldn't join us, because she said we were dealers. So we paid for her.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: So then, like—[laughs]—and we garnered a lot of support for that. At one point we had a full time employee. It was costing us some \$60,000 to put on that event. I got—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What was the event called?

JEAN MILANT: It was just Los Angeles Art Weekend, or Art Walk, or something like that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I think the maps show that there were 26 galleries at that point. I still have the maps. I have all the paperwork from the LAVA organization and everything. And then, it was a huge success, day one. Fred Croton from, you know, Cultural Affairs, was really behind us, and we got ARCO behind us, and all that. So—and we had Jerry Brown speaking for us, we had Altovise Davis speak for us. And we had, from my knowledge, to me at least, from my history, the first time we had some major international collectors come into LA. Because we had so much press for that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So that was, you know, unfortunate that, you know, as things happen, it lapsed, in the mid-'80s, and moved out of downtown.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Another recession.

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] Another recession takes the art world in LA down. Yep. And that doesn't—

JEAN MILANT: And I stayed downtown, I decided to stay. I just thought, you know, I'm not going to move. And you know what happened, and it was very telling, I didn't have less sales.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, what also happens downtown is that MOCA opens —

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in '84, in 1984, MOCA opens.

JEAN MILANT: I was a big supporter of that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And that was—it did actually generate a lot of interest in downtown—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —so that people still did have to go down there, whether, you know—for MOCA, anyway.

JEAN MILANT: I helped raise a lot of money for that. I got—you know, it was very hard to get dealers to give them money.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

JEAN MILANT: Because of such negativity about the way we'd been treated in this town. You know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And, I won't name them, but some of them were screaming at me. You know, "You're crazy, why give them money, they're not going to do anything for you, they're not going to help the situation," et cetera, et cetera.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You mean the people running MOCA?

JEAN MILANT: No, the dealers here.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, the dealers—

JEAN MILANT: I tried to get the dealers to—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —put 10,000 to MOCA, each.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And they wouldn't do it.

JEAN MILANT: Right. Because of these reasons in the past, which I totally understood, because that's how this town has been. Non-supportive, totally non-supportive. And, you know, I read something recently by some young dealer that's saying this, and I was just shocked. They're still saying this because it's true, I guess, you know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Anyway, so MOCA opens, that generated a lot of—but despite that, it's true that's there's another recession. But then, we have the early '90s, where there's a huge—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —big boost, and that really I think is where LA's art world has another, in my memory at least, a real sort of another big moment. I think of that as the moment where, you know, *Helter Skelter* happens at MOCA, and Paul Schimmel is the curator. And things really start happening in LA among a certain number of artists. What is your memory of that period? You're downtown, and you're involved, and tell me about that, because now you've been involved for a long time and you're still running your gallery, and you're running your publishing and—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, I think it did obviously bring a lot of excitement. I mean, I remember—you know, when we had LAVA we were given the police station that's now the Japanese American [National Museum], because we also did shows for that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: We hired curators and, you know, that was before MOCA got the other building.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Right. I did become a charter funder of MOCA, so I did support that. And I loved Pontus Hulten. When he came to LA, he was, you know, a breath of fresh air. And Pontus Hulten was hired by Pompidou for the same reason. Because the French decided they couldn't hire a French person, because it would be the old French shit again.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: Same thing. So, like, they needed someone from outside to change the dial, you know? And Richard Koshalek I had met in the '70s. I used to try to sell him prints when he was an underling at the Walker Museum. They didn't buy from me, but I knew him from there. So when he first came here, he was, you know, friendly and talked, you know, whatever. Dialogue. Paul Schimmel I first met in 1975, when he was hanging out at the Houston Museum. I don't think he had an official position there. But we—there was a show that Henry Hopkins put together when he was the director of the Fort Worth Museum, called *L.A. 75*, and it was mostly my artists. It was Roland Reiss, it was Eric Orr, it was Guy de Cointet, Michael Brewster. Those were, I think, my artists in the show. And so, Hal Gutzman and I flew down to Houston to try and meet with Paul Schimmel to try to get him to do a show or a performance with Guy de Cointet. And Paul took us around to see painters and stuff, and I don't think he ever did anything with Guy, I'd have to look on the bio to see. He made—he didn't dialogue about the LA artists at that time. At all, that I remember.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, he—

JEAN MILANT: You know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: No, it was much later.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. So now they're all at MOCA. The only one that comes to see me is Pontus Hulten.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] No—

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] He dragged Richard Koshalek there one day—all right, and then Paul Schimmel came to one Charles Hill show. Painting, it was actually not the fabric or paper pieces, he was painting on canvas. And Paul said it was the best painting he had seen in LA That's the last time I saw Paul Schimmel, which was over 25 years ago.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So, my relationship with MOCA, and how it helped the downtown gallery scene, I think you will find similar conversations with other people that were showing downtown as well. Or had galleries in downtown.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So yes, it did kind of spearhead a huge help to Paul. You know, I was at Paul's first show. You know I helped start Newspace. I got Newspace started.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What new space?

JEAN MILANT: Newspace, the gallery Newspace.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The gallery, Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, where Paul first showed.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Paul?

JEAN MILANT: McCarthy.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I lost track of that. But now we're on Paul McCarthy, I kept thinking Paul Schimmel.

JEAN MILANT: You were thinking Paul Schimmel, right, okay.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Paul Schimmel—

JEAN MILANT: I'm just saying for Paul, *Helter Skelter* was his big thing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: And these were the artists that he—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —you know, highlighted. Mike Kelley and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —Paul McCarthy—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes.

JEAN MILANT: —in particular, right? But I was at the original performance of Paul McCarthy. And how that happened was that Charles Hill—[laughs]—at Manhattan Place, we had a huge garage door, you know, and sometimes when it was hot it was open. And there was this bag lady always coming up and down the street. And she'd come in and she'd drop things off for us from out of the trash she had found, clothes for me, et cetera. And then she was always telling us that, you know, that her son was part of the "Our Gang" group. You know, and we're going, like, this lady's crazy, whatever.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: One day she came by, and she said, you know, "My space around the corner is for rent. Do you know anybody who would want to rent it?" And I'm going—and Charles Hill was sitting with me in my office, and we go, like, "Well, do you think she's real?" And, "Well could we see it?" "Oh, yeah." And so we walk over there around the corner, she opens it up and sure enough, she owns this building.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: So Charles says, "I've got to call John St. Pierre right now. We've got to get him, I'm going to go pick him up and bring him up here and we're going to get him to meet with this lady and get him to rent this space." And that's how Newspace happened.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, okay.

JEAN MILANT: So John St. Pierre ran it for a couple of—and that's where those first Paul McCarthy performances took place.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see.

JEAN MILANT: And she showed Chris. I would have shown Chris. But Chris was already committed to John St. Pierre, because he showed him at F Space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's right.

JEAN MILANT: So I didn't really feel I could, you know, enter into that relationship, although I thought Chris is one of the most brilliant artists I've ever met in my entire life. I still believe that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Chris Burden.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: Chris Burden.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: So, like, that's—you know, and I published *If You Drive* and *If You Fly* from another early first or second-year subscriber from Indianapolis or something, who just—I'd never met before. And I introduced him to Newspace, I took him over there, he wanted to support them.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So he paid me to publish those two prints as a fundraiser for my competitor Newspace.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, my god.

JEAN MILANT: Which I did.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, my gosh. I want to take a moment to talk about Guy de Cointet, with whom you have been very close. And tell me how you met Guy de Cointet, and what was your relationship with him, and—

JEAN MILANT: Well, he was—you know, as I said earlier, a lot of people would just come and want to talk to me or meet me or whatever. So Guy came, and he said that Larry Bell said to come and see me. And that he wanted to show me this paper that he had done. *ACR CIT*. The first newspaper that he did called *ACR CIT*, A-C-R-I-T [sic]. And so, I don't know—I mean, I just said okay. We'll show it, or whatever. And I don't remember—we didn't have—I don't think—we showed it, but I don't even have photos—I don't think we did an opening, we just put it up on the walls.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I think I remember. So there's no record of that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: This is at Manhattan Place?

JEAN MILANT: Manhattan Place, yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then, he wanted to do this performance piece, and then—I don't know whether I was friends with Denise Domergue at that time. And maybe you know—I don't know if Denise—I don't think she knew him before knowing me. But anyways, somehow we were kept in dialogue, and he wanted to do this show of his new book. And it was going to be a one-night performance [*Presentation of a novel: Espahor Ledet Ko Uluner*, Cirrus Gallery, 1973]. And he was going to hire this actor Billy Barty to play the role of the author. And that—we did it, you know. So we said, yes. And then we did—I think, after that point, I guess we decided to represent him. So we did represent him. And so the first show was like a one-night performance, and he remained anonymous as an artist. Now, I don't know how many people actually knew Guy at that time.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But the reason he hired people was he didn't want to be known as an artist.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see.

JEAN MILANT: So he remained anonymous, and he was in the audience. And he wanted to have this whole dramatic flair happen, so we had this totally white floor gallery, white ceilings, white walls. And we had a blackboard, a black stool, and a table at the end of it. And so when Billy Barty came in, he wanted—he had hired these photographers using these old-fashioned '40s flashbulb cameras.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: And—because he wanted to have that feel of it. So, of course, Billy came in and, you know, flashing his way up to the desk. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: How great.

JEAN MILANT: And then everybody sat down on the floor, and of course he—and there was a young woman who was his assistant, pointing at things on the blackboard. But Guy, you know, I mean, I don't think there was much direction.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: The book, of course, is in code. And so Billy Barty just started immediately in gibberish. And for a half hour. And that was the performance. And then I think Ed Moses asked a question, or something like that. [Laughs.] And he responded in gibberish.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So that was the first piece we did with Guy.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And what did you think—tell me about your impression of who he was as an

artist. Because he died so young.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So prematurely.

JEAN MILANT: You know, he didn't talk much about his art, or his references, or his sources. At least not with me. I don't know if he did with others or not. So he was sort of like an enigma, and he was sort of off by himself. I think he made some—a few friends. And we would see him at the openings and stuff. He did have a studio with some people that I knew, Jerry Brain, and [Brian] Dailey, this guy Dailey, who was one of his actors. And then he had this studio downtown in LA on Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles and First.

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JEAN MILANT: Or Second. Los Angeles and Second, which was a very cool place. But I think I asked him at one point in the '70s, after that first performance, I think it was. I asked him, how did he work out the codes? You know. Because some of them were not letters. They were shapes. So I said, "How does that work? Do you do preliminary drawings for this to work it out, or whatever?" And he said, "Yes." So I said, could he bring some in. And so he brought these things in, and they were very minimal.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: On different [size -JM] sheets of paper and stuff. And I said, you know, you should really think about making these as drawings. Really, something we could sell to help support you. And so then that's how he started that whole practice. And, you know, he never really ever revealed how he developed the codes or what the sources of the content are. I had a show of drawings up and we had huge openings at that time, huge. And the floor would be just black with cigarettes and red wine. I came in the next morning and the janitors were still there cleaning it up. And this one guy goes, like, "Is this guy a cryptologist?" And I said, "Well, he says you can read these," and he says, "Oh yeah, it's straight out of the military code." I said, "Can you read this for me?" He said, "Well, I could, but I'd have to really sit down and start working on it." So obviously there is a legitimate sourcing of that knowledge. For making these works.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: You know, his family is aristocratic in a sense, they're military since Napoleon.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Wow.

JEAN MILANT: So his father is a general, I think his brother was a general, et cetera, et cetera. So—and I think they might have spent some time in North Africa, so if you look at some of his drawings, and the kind of structures, they have a very Moroccan-like, kind of feel to them, and the colors. Somebody said once that a lot of the quotes are from Borges. So, there is one book you can read. It's called *A Captain From Portugal*, it's a little white one. And he gives you the code in the back.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, I did an art fair once in Bologna. [Laughs.] It was the time when I was running around with those aristocratic kids. So, Minnie de Beauvau came down to Bologna and—it was an 11-day fair, and nobody came.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, my god.

JEAN MILANT: It was so intense, and I did a show every day. I got 300 or 600 pieces or something. And, like, so I decided one day it was a show of Guy's. So, we had all these little drawings for the book, because they were all done by hand. Amazing, amazing, precision in calligraphy, and backward writing, and just amazing. Before technology, you realize.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] You can't make a mistake on these things, because it will show!

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: You can't make a mistake. Amazing, pen and ink or whatever. So I started to translate the book. And I'm going along, and I'm translating, and then, you know, all of a sudden it stops. And it's not working anymore. And I don't know, you know, setting it down and going back and forward and talking to people, or whatever. I came back and I must have, like—either someone turned the book around, or whatever. But I started

trying again to see what was going on, and it was working. And I figured the book had been turned around. So an A stays as an A but a B became a C or something.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Same code. So really amazing, you know. And they were little stories, like, —one was—looks like a hors d'oeuvres cracker with little holes. Or a little hexagon, or whatever. And it's a story about how this is a famous American Indian game. Where you have to shoot arrows into the holes, that's all I remember. But, I mean, another one was about a Mayan stelae and, you know, going on and on about the history of that.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But he didn't do a print with you?

JEAN MILANT: Yes, we did a print.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You did prints.

JEAN MILANT: Oh, he was the other one in that '75 four portfolio.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, okay.

JEAN MILANT: And yeah, Guy was in it. So, a page from my intimate journal.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: And then Viva did *The Paintings*. She did that show, Andy Warhol's Viva came and played the role for our second show [*The Paintings of Sophie Rummel*, Cirrus Gallery, 1974].

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And, you know, the first show was Qei No Mysxdod—was the name of the artist, which was the book, and the second show was Sophie Rummel. She was the artist. And so Viva came and gave the lecture about her paintings at the opening. Michel Auder filmed it, but we don't—I had the tape, we played it, you know, on a big reel-to-reel tape thing at the time. There was a little monitor of some sort, I don't know how we did it. But there it was playing in the gallery after the openings, so you could see the performance during the length of the show.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I gave that tape to MOCA, and it got ruined when they tried to transcribe it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: To digitize it?

JEAN MILANT: No, I don't think it was digitizing at that time, it was early '80s.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's correct.

JEAN MILANT: When they did that show, that show, the LA summer show [*Summer 1985: Nine Artists*, MOCA, 1985] with the LA artists—Suzanne Caporaël, and Guy de Cointet—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I can't believe they—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —I can't believe that.

JEAN MILANT: And I just—actually, to show you the difference, I had an e-mail yesterday from Hugues, Guy's nephew who is running the estate. "And can we—do we have the scripts from *Sophie Rummel*, and from these early performances at Cirrus?" And we don't, we never had them, you know. And then he was—I told him I had, you know, that I had lost my space and that I had to move, and this and that, and he was going, "How could the city or the state or people in LA with money let this historic gallery fold?" That's a different perception.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well—

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] But, you know—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: They raised your rent to how much per month?

JEAN MILANT: Thirty-one thousand. Well, it's a marijuana growing place. But anyways, but I mean, it's sort of

like—so, we don't have any of that documentation from those things. And nobody does.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Now he said, and he e-mailed back—when he e-mailed back about he couldn't believe what happened, that they do have a damaged tape of the *Sophie Rummel*, so that must be the Michel Auder. Michel Auder was married—well, it was, you know, he was living with Viva, and they have a kid together. And Viva was living in Topanga at the time. And now he's being re-brought out, he's had several shows. Kayne Griffin had a show of Michel Auder.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I saw it.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. And, you know, he keeps saying he can't find it, so I e-mailed Hugues back, like, well, is this the tape that Michel Auder did? It has to be, there was no other tape.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Undoubtedly. Because we're running out of time, kind of, I'm going to fast forward a little bit into the '90s. Well, we're in the '90s, you just went backwards a little bit. How do you see in that decade of, like, the '90s to the 2000s, how do you see your gallery changing? Do you see your commitment to publishing changing? I mean, I think it's interesting when people can do something as long as you've been doing it. Where you become more and more knowledgeable and more and more, you know, sort of sophisticated. What do you do to keep it alive for you in the '90s and into the 2000s? What do you do to keep yourself interested?

JEAN MILANT: It's hard for me to remember the '90s for some reason, I don't know.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: I think it was a period where I wasn't functioning at all 100 percent, or something like that. [Laughs.] Because I was letting artists go, or something. I don't—I'd have to go back and think about it really, it could be another discussion.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, you showed a lot of people. You showed, during the '90s, you did show a lot of people. And you showed Jerry Brane [Gerald Brane].

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Who was certainly always an interesting artist. You showed Vija Celmins.

JEAN MILANT: Well, we did some retrospectives.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Like, you know, I did—I think it was '86, so I did the first drawing retrospective of Ed Ruscha in a gallery. I did a Baldessari print retrospective, a Bruce Nauman retrospective, a Brice Marden print retrospective.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And in the '90s you do a Joe Goode retrospective—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —of paper works.

JEAN MILANT: And then Craig Kauffman, I did a drawing retrospective of his. A retrospective drawing show of his, was that in the '90s, I don't remember. So, I think I wasn't looking so much, or I was out of touch, maybe, with what was happening with the younger artists at the time. So, I wasn't, like, actively probably as interested as bringing new artists into the space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: It's hard to stay interested. That's why I was asking you. Because, in fact, it is hard to stay interested as generations come and go.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And you relate to your first or second generation, and then suddenly you think, well, how am I going to keep this interesting for me? But you didn't go out of business, you stayed in business. And you've managed to make it interesting for you on some level.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And I—

JEAN MILANT: Well, Jim Lawrence, for instance, he was someone who we picked up. And I had got him shows everywhere. And then he just disappeared.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: No, I mean, like really, it was pretty amazing. I got him a major big gallery in New York City, this Berlin dealer did a big show of his. This Australian dealer did a whole show, he did a whole show down there. They sold the whole show to a museum. And then some LA art consultant got him all worked up about something, and he decided I was a bad guy and disappeared.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I remember Jim Lawrence. But you're right, nothing has happened recently.

JEAN MILANT: No, I think, last I heard he was—had a garden shop in southern New Mexico.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.]

JEAN MILANT: [Laughs.] But—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, that can happen.

JEAN MILANT: That can happen. But I'm just saying, this is a problem, I think, a lot, that happens in LA. Because I don't think the artists understand the larger scope of the international art world. And how you have to participate in it. They think they don't have to. And that they can be outside of it. And that this is where the creativity happens. Well, then, if nothing happens for you on the other level, then that's your problem. I've been trying to tell them that for years. LA is not on the international map in the art world. And it's still isn't.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: There is no reason for any major person to come here to look at what's happening. They can see it other places and they can see it better.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, especially now that there are art fairs.

JEAN MILANT: Right. But we can't have an art fair. We tried—we try everything. But the mentality here is not on the global level. And that's why it stays the same.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Why do you—

JEAN MILANT: And I've been saying that from day one—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —why do you think that is?

JEAN MILANT: —when I tried to get these other galleries to participate in Basel. I have no idea. I have no idea. And even—I mean, no one knows.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I think a lot of it stems from the artists. Wanting to keep it that way, so they don't have to participate on that level and compete that way. Then that way they can be, you know, in their studios or do their things. But, I'm not saying the younger artists. I mean, like, we gave Jonas Wood—we showed Jonas Wood in 2006. He—and with two other landscape painters. So—and I asked Jonas to—if he—we sold everything. And I asked Jonas if he would allow—let us represent him. And he loves Cirrus, and he said to me, he was very honest—it's interesting, one of the few really honest, I think, things, like Frank said to me that time. He said, "You know, Jean, I really think it's time for Cirrus's second coming." He says, But my peers don't know anything about you."

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And *blah, blah, blah*. So obviously, he wouldn't let us do it. But he says, "Well, we can do some prints together," or whatever. Now, you look from 2006 to 2015, where is Jonas Wood? Because he understands it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah. You know, the young kids really understand it.

JEAN MILANT: And he wants it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, they really understand it very much, they're very involved in that.

JEAN MILANT: So, right.

[Phone rings.]

JEAN MILANT: Time to stop now?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah, of course. We can only talk for so long. Tell me—I like your perspective now, because now—okay, so now we're talking about—still talking about the international scene. What's interesting to both of us, since we've been doing this for so long, being in the LA art world, is that the younger artists seem incredibly aware of the international potential of their work, thanks to the internet.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Don't you think it's all changed?

JEAN MILANT: Well, the whole concept of fine art and what its use is has changed.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yes.

JEAN MILANT: So, it has now become a commodity.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: So, you know, I was thinking the other day that whole story about, like, well, is it really emperor's clothes, because that has always been the conversation over the years.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Yeah.

JEAN MILANT: And I'm thinking, well, it's not going to be framed that way, it's going to be framed, well, it's not emperor's clothes, but it's a product. And that's the reality now. So, is that emperor's clothes or not?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So what I'm trying to do, is to try to find a place now for fine art to exist, in the concept of what we think it is or thought it was. For those who think that way. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: Because the younger people don't think that way necessarily. So, what will fine art, if that word exists in 2035, be? Or will that word not exist? What is the function of art in that coming future? And how can people who come out of this background from our knowledge of our generations, will they be able to exist with that same mentality?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Can you?

JEAN MILANT: Yes, I'm still super excited.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You can?

JEAN MILANT: Yeah.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay. So you're not one—

JEAN MILANT: That's what I'm trying to do, that's what the institute was about. Ten years or 15 ago.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: To bring these things all together and develop new thought processes, new dispersion methods, new softwares, created by artists. And who now, you know, who has started this all ready? Now there's two in existence, one the other day—the New Museum has a think tank. They opened it up last year. It's an 11,000 square-foot building next to the museum. It's funded by Toby Lewis, she's a collector. She bought from us over the years, and she is on the board of trustees now. And they're like—you know, it's very secretive, I tried to get in there the other day when I was at Freize, and then you can't get a hold of anybody. They used to put information on their website. But now you don't know exactly what they're doing. It may—it's not going to be something that replaces fine art, or whatever, but it's just this natural progression of the way the world, and things are going. And to me it's just a progression of information.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Everything is always based on information. So, it's—I don't think people are coming to the galleries. That are younger. Other than for a party. And why is that? I don't think they want to own art. And why is that? Why do the tech people not buy art? These are interesting questions to me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And we should be thinking about this. And I think they don't see the value in it any more. Or the purpose of it. Now, they may see it as something to experience and participate in. And, don't forget, a lot of people have more creative access now. They can make music, they can do videos, they can do Photoshop, they can make movies.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So you're saying that more of those people who used to be the collecting class actually perceive themselves as being artists.

JEAN MILANT: Well, they have the—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Creative artists.

JEAN MILANT: —whether they do or not, they do have the ability to understand these things now. Plus—I'm making \$250,000 a year.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I'm 35 years old, I'm single, okay? I'm going to take \$25,000 and I'm going to buy some art. What am I going to do? Where am I going to go? What can I buy? How do I make these decisions?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Art fairs.

JEAN MILANT: It's daunting.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Well, they go to art fairs.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, you go to an art fair.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: They go to the art fairs—[laughs]—and they buy all—

JEAN MILANT: They see 5,000 pieces.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —they buy all the stuff that we all, like, kind of, raise our eyebrows, thinking—

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, but they buy 5,000—there's 5,000 artists there, or artworks, at least. At some of these major arenas. All right, they've got \$25,000. What are they going to get? Two pieces?

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. One piece.

JEAN MILANT: One piece. So, I don't blame them for not wanting to participate.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But the art, I think—I think there are—there's such a huge market now. It's such a strange thing—

JEAN MILANT: It's about making money. It's not about art.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Oh, I know that.

JEAN MILANT: They can see this—they don't see it as art that way. That's what I'm saying.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do they see it as investment?

JEAN MILANT: They don't see—well, a lot of the current people see it as investment. You know. And they've been making money on it and it goes up a certain level. So, where does it start, how much you can afford, what access do you have, how much, you know—and that plays into it. So, a lot of people in the high end, it's all about access. They will do anything to get access because they're only—it's very controlled. And it's very competitive. And, you know, that's the one-percent level. Then you go down and you go down. Okay, those people are going to be probably not be happy. And more and more people are talking about this. It went from the '70s, when no one was interested in contemporary art. No one.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I know.

JEAN MILANT: And no one bought Andy Warhol, he wasn't good enough. They bought Jasper Johns, right? But who's going to buy, you know, Terry Allen, or Allen Ruppersberg? [Laughs.] You know, right? To now, where everybody wants a piece of art for a different reason. And so, there's so many more people in the game. And there's so many more artists.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Do you feel like—

JEAN MILANT: I don't think it's—well, it's lost its value in terms of what it can affect in the world.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: I think art has to—I think artists have to be responsible. They have to provide something for society other than an object. With a context around it. That they have created, for themselves only. And I think it's very powerful. And I think artists have more power than ever, ever before. Because before, when it's—you know, let's say they had to be commissioned by the Pope, or they had to be commissioned by a private collector, and they had to be this, they had to be that, till, like, art became art for its own sake and, you know, then—that might be coming to an end. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: But you feel actually like you've made your peace with it? You feel like you—it sounds to me like you—

JEAN MILANT: I think we're in a revolution, Hunter. We are in an—this is an amazing time to live.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: It's an amazing time to live. And I feel that the art world doesn't even know it's happening. The other worlds know it's happening, because they either have to address it or die. So that's my—what I see. How do I see it? I read the papers. I go online and look at what's happening in the world. And, you know, I'm around young people. I'm interested in things. And, you know, that's sort of exciting to me.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So, we're trying to—I don't think I'm going to be able to do it because time has passed so quickly, but, you know, this whole bad thing that happened to me probably is a blessing in disguise. So I have a new space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: The move—

JEAN MILANT: Yes.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: You have recently moved—we should close by saying you have recently moved from this space where you were from 1979 until this year, 2015.

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Into another lovely, but quite a bit smaller space—

JEAN MILANT: Right. Well, actually it's—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —in downtown LA

JEAN MILANT: —I wasn't using the upstairs floors for the last year in the old space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Okay.

JEAN MILANT: My old space was 6500 square feet on one floor—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: —this is 7200, so it's slightly bigger.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, I see.

JEAN MILANT: It's about the same.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I see, so it's the same size, but it's a different location.

JEAN MILANT: And it goes back to my earlier, first space, which was the truss-beam ceiling with the skylights.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Right.

JEAN MILANT: Which I didn't have at the Alameda space.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: So now, you're actually in a very nice location—

JEAN MILANT: Right.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: —near some other very prestigious galleries, who have also moved downtown, so it's the—maybe the final efflorescence of downtown LA as a gallery scene. And that must feel somewhat positive to you.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, now that I, you know, now that I've, you know, had to do it—you know, when you're forced to do things, somehow you just get up and do it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And I wasn't like some people who might have taken that opportunity to retire at my age, you know.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: That's right.

JEAN MILANT: And just do whatever. I just don't—I don't know what keeps me—my mind thinking all the time, but I can't stop it. So I've decided, okay, this is the last one, we'll go around and see what happens. And I want to have to do a show that would try to kind of announce this, because people said do this history show, you've got all this history, you've got this, you've got that, *blah, blah, blah*. And I'm just not interested. So we're trying to do this show. We don't have a title for it yet. We've formulated a letter, you'll probably get one, because I think you might want to be involved. It's the show that I'm interested in as a new direction, trying to do these things. So it's taking—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: What, with technology?

JEAN MILANT: It's involving technology.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But it's starting—we're going to start from—we're going to use Magritte, the "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" as kind of a starting point.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But it could reference hieroglyphics and emoji, or emojis, or whatever they are, you know, the little computer symbols.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Oh, okay. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: People are using those to talk. It's a language.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: They are.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah. So it's going to be, basically, starting with the visual language—text image. Pipe, this is not a pipe.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So like that interrelationship through how technology has moved. So, you start from there, and then you reference all the back stuff and then you get to the point of the '70s when the video camera came out to the public. How did that change and how did that make these interactions of language and image, *blah, blah, blah*, and then you had the fax machine, then you had the—well, it was first—no, first you had the Xerox, you had the Xerox and then you had the fax machine.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then you have—let's see, what comes after.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Polaroid.

JEAN MILANT: Well, yeah, Polaroid, and then Polaroid is, yeah—Polaroid is there.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: And then you have like the beginning of the digital age. Which is the softwares, Adobe, Premier, you know, all of these softwares that now anybody can use. You don't have to go to school necessarily at this point. And then you have—after that you have, you know, the YouTube, the Twitter, the Instagram, the this, the that, and on and on and on. The apps. And try to, you know—I would like to be able to find some people to develop some apps, to sponsor that, because I'm thinking of publishing—it's all publishing. That whole world is publishing.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: The internet—it's all publishing. Publishing a YouTube, publishing a book, publishing, you know, a catalog or an image, or whatever. So that's the show we're trying to put together.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: [Laughs.] A small, focused idea. For you and your show.

[They laugh.]

JEAN MILANT: So, I saw this piece by Kutlug Ataman, years ago, at Lehmann Maupin. It was a video, small screen, and it was like this black and white, white kind of lines tracing and moving. And going back and forth, et cetera. It's his bio. In Arabic. He's from Turkey—he's Turkish. So that was something I would want to include. And then I was thinking of, like—Miranda July has come up with this app. And it's called Somebody. And it's a messaging service. So I was thinking of having—of trying to see if a group of artists want to co-opt that. And take that app and make an artwork with it.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: Like if it—you know, a game out of it or sending things back and forth, or whatever. You know, there's this new site, I don't remember the name of it but they have this—it was just absolutely amazing, it's an online site, exhibition online only. And it's this game Telephone. And it's based with Instagram.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: So someone posts an Instagram photo, then people can respond to this photo. And you can—when you see the photo—you see, like, there's four responses here. And you can click on one of the responses and it might be a poem.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

JEAN MILANT: But then click on this other one, and it might be a video. Or what happens is, when you click on this one, you get a poem, then you get that poem and then you get the four responses to that poem. And so you have to go back to the main—but, it's really interesting. Because it's video, it's text, it's imaging.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: I know, it's changed, it's changed so much. It's changed so much, it's changed so quickly.

JEAN MILANT: Yeah, it's very fast.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: And it's very true, and I applaud you for being willing to step up to the plate and be interested in it. That's not something all of us can do.

JEAN MILANT: Well, thank you. I don't know if that's a positive or a negative. [Laughs.] For me to be able to address it, because, like, wow, it's a big deal. [Laughs.]

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Is there anything you'd like to add to this that I haven't asked you? That you want to close on?

JEAN MILANT: No, it's fine. No, fine.

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Are you sure? Well, thank you, Jean.

JEAN MILANT: I hope you've got enough, and—

HUNTER DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP: Thank you, Jean Milant, for a wonderful interview, and—

JEAN MILANT: —well, I enjoyed it very much, and—

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]