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Oral history interview with Holly Barnet-Sanchez, 2019 August 5-6

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Holly Jane Barnet-Sanchez on August 5 and 6, 2019. The interview took place in Albuquerque, NM, and was conducted by Josh T. Franco for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Holly Barnet-Sanchez and Josh T. Franco have reviewed the transcript. 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

JOSH T. FRANCO: —I like your voice.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, you know, I hear it one way, you hear it another.

JOSH T. FRANCO: True.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I hear it on my voicemail message and go, *Ooh*. [They laugh.]

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] Testing, testing, testing. I don't think I'm hearing it in the headphones. Why is that? Okay, can you say something?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: How you doing, Josh?

JOSH T. FRANCO: I'm doing good. I'm happy to be here.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, I'm happy you're here.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, it is coming—in the headphones, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I'm happy you're here. You're hearing okay?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. There's just no—there's not a lot of background noise, but I hear the microphone. Alright.

So let me start with: This is Josh Franco for the Archives of American Art. I'm in Albuquerque with Holly Barnet-Sánchez, in her home. And it is Monday, August 5, 2019, and we're here to conduct Holly's oral history.

So Holly, like I said, we'll start chronologically, and we can go wherever we go from there, but let's just start from the beginning. So tell us a little bit about your family—maybe the photos you were describing downstairs is a good place to start—your family's background and trajectory all over the country.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. My family is from primarily the Midwest but also the Boston area. My dad grew up in Boston. He had two sisters, and his father was one of 13 children. His grandfather came from Bavaria, German Jews. I think the story goes, he came because of a family feud, so that at some point, my father met a cousin he didn't know about that—someone said, "You ought to meet this guy," and they were in their 50s, and they looked alike and everything. But anyway.

So Dad grew up in Boston, and he—there was the family leather tannery, and he had an older and a younger sister. [00:02:12] He was sent away to boarding school when he was 11, so he went to a place called Eaglebrook and then he went to Andover. He was in Andover at the time of the stock market crash, and his father had borrowed on margin and went $800,000 in the hole.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Whoa.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So he finished Andover, and he was going to go to Yale. Because Andover people went to Yale and Exeter people went to Harvard. But he had to live at home, so he went to Harvard. And we always made a lot of fun of him because he didn't go where he wanted to go. Gee, he had to go to Harvard. But he was [still –HBS] paying back those loans after I was born still.

It was interesting because he was one of two Jewish kids at Andover, and I don't know how many Jewish people were at Harvard when he was there. Harvard was open both to Jews—well, to Jews, Catholics, and African Americans up until the 1920s, and then they shut down. Du Bois went there.

But he studied with T. S. Eliot and Alfred North Whitehead, so he had this really interesting undergraduate education in English literature and history. He was a real Anglophile. His older sister was a Francophile and spent most of her later years living in France. She was my Auntie Mame, my aunt Jane. My middle name is from her, and she's the one who protected me from my parents.

And I go into that kind of detail because being Jewish, being a German Jew in Boston, was I think complicated. [00:04:10] He married a Gentile when he married my mother, who I'll talk about in a minute, but they literally did not let me know that I was part Jewish and what that meant until we moved from the East Coast to the Chicago area. Because I had cousins there and they were all Jewish and they went to temple. And so I kind of had to know something. But I think it was a hangover from the war years and Germany.

My dad served in the armed forces. He was older, and he was a noncombatant, for which we should all be very grateful. You don't want to have him using a gun on anyone. But also, because they were in retail, they met at Marshall Field's in Chicago. He first was tasked with setting up a PX in Panama, and Mom moved to Santa Fe so she could be closer, and when he was on R&R, they would meet in New Mexico. And then he got malaria and he said, "Please send me to Alaska, any place cold." And they sent him to London in time of the B-1s and the B-2s [bombs –HBS].

He was in army government under Eisenhower, and then about a month after D-Day, as other US troops came in, he came in with a very small group of men. And he was tasked with finding food for the civilian population where the American troops were going through. [00:06:01] And then he ended up in Berlin, and he was tasked with finding desks and chairs and filing cabinets and typewriters and telephones for the Americans who were doing the peace talks. One of his jobs was to requisition housing for the Americans coming in, the diplomatic [corps –HBS] whatever they were. And the one story—and this is the only story he's told me about his experiences in the war—I have his papers—I haven't yet looked at them—his military papers.

JOSH T. FRANCO: In all these years, you haven't looked at them?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I've been sort of girding my loins. I'm going to. He would knock on people's doors and say, "We need a room in your house" or, "We need your house." He would come back the next day, and more than once, the whole family had killed themselves.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. And so there were people who were not happy that the British—they weren't happy about the Russians, no question. But there were people there who were staunchly nationalistic and National Socialistic and they were—this was not welcome.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And that's the story he chose to tell?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: That's the only story he chose to tell. What I do have in my safety deposit box that he brought back is a Nazi dagger that's about this big. And it's ceremonial. It's for when you're in a dress uniform. It's got enamel and silver and scrollwork, and you take the hilt off, and the blade is inscribed in that beautiful German script, *arbeit adelt*, "work ennobles." And you think about Auschwitz, *arbeit macht frei*. [00:08:06]

So [cries] I once asked him what it was like to be Jewish in Germany at the end of the war—I mean, he learned German from his grandmother. He didn't learn German in school, he learned Latin in school. And he was very closed. The only thing he said: "I was very jingoistic. I was a loyal American, and I was fighting for America." He would not go there at all.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. Should we—we should get some tissue—I forgot to say that—to have on hand.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay. There's some right there.

[Tape stops, restarts.]

JOSH T. FRANCO: The history—will you tap, tap your microphone? [Taps microphone.] Because mine makes a sound when I tap, and yours isn't.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I don't have my hearing aid, so—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Well, it's got the green light. I think we're good. Okay.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So we have this dagger, and my dad actually had a sword and knife collection that he had on the wall when I was growing up, from all over the world, and he collected all sorts of weird canes. At some point, he actually needed a cane. But when he walked with a cane, he was a danger to everyone because

he would use it to point with.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So I grew up looking at that dagger, and when I moved my parents from Hawaii, a young friend of theirs—someone who had been a student when my father was teaching at the University of Hawaii, who was Dutch—her family had left Holland because of the Nazis and the war, and she's a little younger than I am. [00:10:01] As she was helping me pack up my parents' stuff, she said, "I'm sorry, Holly, I cannot touch that. I just—I can't."

So I was going to give it to the Holocaust Museum, and it may end up there ultimately, but my son—the one up in Seattle, my only son—asked that it be kept in the family for the time being because he wants to understand his grandfather. So it's part of his understanding of my father. Someone suggested we could sell it and pay for my grandchildren's college educations with it [they laugh] because you could get a lot of money. The karma with that object is such that I don't want to. I mean, that's Tom's decision. I don't think he would—or his wife would want to do that.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. So he's with your mother at this point, but this is before you were born?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, in the service—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I was born in 1947 after the war. And my parents met in 1936 at Marshall Fields. My mother was from Wisconsin and Iowa, from very tiny towns. She was born in a very tiny town called Lynxville that now has a population of 300, and it's on the Mississippi River. Her mother had been a schoolteacher in a one-room schoolhouse until she went deaf at the age of 20. Her father had gone to divinity school, I believe, in the Chicago area.

And one of his first jobs was at Hull House founded by Jane Addams, the settlement house, which is where Chicago State University is. And they actually have the original Hull House there. [00:12:03] But the huge settlement house that was there and still functioning when I was growing up in Evanston, my parents would take me down to that. And Mom would talk about my grandfather working there. And this would have been when it was just starting and when Jane Addams was fully engaged.

And what's interesting to me about that is, his family in Wisconsin was also in politics. They were in the statehouse. He had brothers who were dentists, who were in the statehouse. And they were friends with the La Follette family, which is a very progressive—Bob La Follette founded *Progressive* magazine, and he was the one who Joe McCarthy defeated to go into the Senate from Wisconsin. But my grandfather was actually very conservative politically. My cousin Bruce, who grew up hearing him preach and was very much in the conversation when McCarthy was happening—and evidently, Grandpa Rice would say, "Well, he's got the names. He's got the names, so it must be true."

My cousin was a cub reporter in college at that point. He developed his own newspaper in San Francisco later. It was very interesting. And he [my grandfather –HBS] was, you know, one of those Bible-thumping kinds of guys. When Bruce would want to go play baseball on Sunday, he would have to go in the garage and change his clothes and sneak out, because you were not supposed to be doing anything except praising the Lord and eating and being around your family and singing hymns and all of that stuff. I only knew him up until I was four or five years old, so Bruce has a different—

But anyway, Mom went to college at Grinnell, and evidently her younger sister and brother-in-law went there as well. [00:14:05] She graduated in 1927. She knew two people, Joe Rosenfield and Louise Rosenfield Noun, brothers and sisters who were at Grinnell at the same time. And that's relevant because they were my father's cousins on the Midwestern side. There was a department store in Des Moines called Younkers, and Joe's family, Joe and Louise's family, were part of that ownership group of Younkers. And my dad, when he was 17, went from Boston to Des Moines, Iowa, where Younkers was, to work in that store. And that's how he got to know those relatives. I have paintings by one of those relatives: Irma Koen [or Kohn –HBS], who was a professional artist and who lived in Cuernavaca for 40 years. She would be my great-grandparent's generation.

My mom divorced her first husband, who she met at Grinnell. He also worked in a department store. And she went to Chicago, to the Merchandise Mart, for a chinaware show and decided she couldn't go back because of her husband. So the story goes—and I heard this from my father because my mother never, ever, ever, ever said a word to me about this—that she called up their family lawyer and said, "Take care of it." She never went back for her clothes or anything, and she found an apartment in Chicago. She got a job at Marshall Field's, and she worked there from 1930 until shortly after Pearl Harbor and shortly after my dad [enlisted –HBS]. [00:16:12]

But they met in 1936. And as I said, they met in September of that year and got married on Thanksgiving. My mother was a much more senior person in her division, but of course she made much less than my dad. And they would talk about having envelopes where they would—because they were paid in cash. No banking per se. And it would be paying back my dad's student loans, paying the rent, paying the groceries, a quarter maybe for a loaf of bread and a nickel for a quart of milk. They had this woman who came in and cleaned for them, who was African American and who was named Rose. I heard all about her even though this was years later.

And then the war happened, and my dad enlisted and went down to Panama to start the PX. My mother moved to Santa Fe and lived in the two little rooms on either side of the chapel at Bishop's Lodge. She ran a mail-order business there for someone and would—they would take the horses in the evening—and these were not all on paved roads—and they would [ride –HBS] down to the La Fonda Hotel. And the plaza had hitching posts everywhere, so they would hitch up the horses, they would go have cocktails at La Fonda, and I suppose they ate and then the horses would take them home. [00:18:07]

And then my parents stopped communicating at some point during the war. Evidently my father had become involved with someone, and he asked my mother for a divorce. And my mother said, "No." And then everything went silent. At the end of the war, he came back on emergency leave because his father had had one of his many heart attacks and so they let him come home temporarily. And then he landed in New Jersey someplace, and this guy said, "Hey, soldier, do you want to get out of the Army?" And he said, "Oh, yeah." So he never went back.

He took a train across country, and obviously they worked things out. I have a lot of pictures of them being in Iowa together as they were driving back across the country. They went to Portland, Maine, and my father got a job for the Soc-O-Moc Shoe Corporation [ph]. His brother-in-law—his oldest sister's husband's family owned that, and that was when they have been married about 10, 11 years.

Of course, some of [those years –HBS] he wasn't around, but my mother was 41 at the time and so they thought that they wouldn't have a child. So they were thinking about adopting, and so they said, "Well, Mrs. Barnet, you're really—you know, you're kind of old, so we want to do a physical to make sure you're"—she wore everyone out, I don't know what they were thinking. But anyway, it turned out she was pregnant, and that was me. [00:20:02]

JOSH T. FRANCO: To do the physical to be an adoptive parent, they found out they're pregnant with you?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's great. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So she was 42 and my father was 35 when I was born. And I was born in Boston. After my mother and I came out of the hospital, we stayed at my aunt's house in Newton. And then my dad's first teaching job—he decided that he wanted to teach because he thought teachers had saved his life. But he knew business. He got his MBA at Harvard.

He felt—you know, he graduated in 1934 from college in the midst of the Depression, and he saw what was happening. He thought about law school, and he said, "Well, lawyers aren't getting paid, and it's a long—it's three years, and the business school is two." So he went and got—and his family had businesses, and he was really avoiding being in the tannery. He wanted to teach, and he got a job teaching at the University of Buffalo and then at the University of Toronto, so he would commute back and forth.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did you and your mother stay in Boston?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No.

JOSH T. FRANCO: You went with—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: We moved to Buffalo. I was three, four weeks old at that point, five weeks maybe. And I have no, obviously, memories of Buffalo then. We did go back when I was about two or three and visited people, and I remember that visit. There's a pastel portrait that was done of me at that time. I remember sitting for it, and it's down in my study.

We moved to—Dad decided to get his PhD at Columbia. That was one of the only places at the time that was giving a PhD in the world of business education. [00:22:00] You could—you know, finance, accounting—he did it in marketing and management. So we moved first to a place called Shanks Village, which was toward Rye, I think it was. But it was married-student housing, and it was Quonset huts from—not from World War II, but from World War I.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So I was bathed in the sink. Those are my first memories: being bathed in the sink, being in that crib, and the potbellied stove. And the rabbit decal on the wall that during the day was benign—this is by my crib—and at night turned into a monster and scared the shit out of me.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So I remember that. I remember my mother going to this land outside the Catholic cemetery—I didn't know what all those statues were for—to cut wild flowers. It's the only time I remember my mother in slacks, because it was so cold. She was from a generation that wore dresses. There are photographs of—well, I showed you that one photograph—but they would wear hats at work. It was a very different world. Department stores back then, they were like art museums. You know, they were—and my dad first worked in the art gallery, which was on the top floor. They aren't like department stores now. And there are really interesting histories of department stores.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's interesting because I—one, I'm curious about the role of art in your family. Because you have this uncle, your parents took the effort to sit you for a portrait in Buffalo, and your father worked in the art gallery of the department store.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Art has always been essential, and my first experience with an art book, I remember really well. [00:24:03] I remember two—well, several books, *The Little Engine That Could*—all of the Little Golden Books—and a book that had belonged to my cousin Bruce when he was—you know, he's 13 years older than I am, and that's the book I learned to read with.

But there were two books. One was a book that was a PR book for the United Nations. And it was for children, and you can still find it. I might get it again online just to have it. It was called *A Garden We Planted Together,* and it was magnificent. It made you want to love the world. It really did. It worked! It did its job! It made me want to grow up and work in the United Nations. And I'm serious. I really thought about that. It was a very—it may have been entirely manipulative, but for a child, it was very loving and welcoming.

The other was this big—what we could now call a coffee table book. And when I was very little, my mother would sit me on the sofa, and my feet would be straight out, and she put this book on my lap so I couldn't move, so she could vacuum. And then she allowed me to turn the pages, and it's the kind that had the sort of—not the cellophane but the paper that was kind of smoky in between the leaves. And it was colored illustrations—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Colored plates? No?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —that were glued in. And years later—I mean, decades later—I realized it must have been from the National Gallery in Washington. So I would turn the pages, and it was the Grant Woods that just knocked my socks off at age three [laughs] because they're very—the Grant Woods and the—oh, the guy from Missouri who did all the murals that are in—[00:26:13]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, Thomas Hart Benton?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. Thomas Hart Benton and—

JOSH T. FRANCO: I just saw his daughter two weeks ago.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Wow.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] That's funny.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I have an interesting anecdote about that. David Craven would not teach Thomas Hart Benton.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Okay, we will come back to that, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. So that was my first exposure. Then, when we would visit Boston, they would take me to museums. And I remember at age four going to the—oh, the one—I'm having a senior moment here.

JOSH T. FRANCO: In Boston?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. The one owned by a woman. It was her home, it was—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, yeah, the—not the Barnes.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Isabel—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —Stewart Gardner.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Stewart Gardner.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Isabella Stewart Gardner.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Isabella Stewart Gardner.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And my grandmother, Rosa—my father's stepmother, who's a very interesting woman—had to sit outside with me. They wouldn't let me in because they didn't let in children under 12. It's changed now, but back in the day. But I went to the—and I remember when we lived at—we moved out of Shanks Village in New Jersey to a house in River Edge, New Jersey, which is right off the George Washington Bridge. And I went through nursery school, kindergarten, and first grade there. We would go in. We would go to the Metropolitan Museum. I don't know anything about the Whitney. We would go to the Museum of Modern Art. [00:28:05] So I was mortally insulted. I remember being insulted that the Stewart Gardner Museum wouldn't let me in.

When my mother worked at Marshall Field's, she developed an interest in Asian art, and we have a lot of 18th-century plates that were made for the China trade that are display pieces. It's a reproduction of a Tang tomb figure. So I grew up with that. There are photographs of me with all this stuff when I was little, so art was always a—when I was eleven, they gave me a life membership at the Art Institute, which doesn't last for life.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Just so you know. Anyway. And I would spend a lot of time with my childhood friend Connie and my mother and Mrs. Mathison, we would go to the Art Institute. And we would go to Marshall Field's, we would go to the Art Institute, and I was raised to think that department stores were museums, literally. I think it was their way of discouraging me from wanting to buy something.

Oh, we also went to the Museum of the City of New York, and they had the most fabulous doll collection. And we went to FAO Schwarz, which at that point had lots of antique dolls and train sets. It was a very different phenomenon. You can see I'm interested in dolls. Always. I've always collected dolls.

JOSH T. FRANCO: It seems like you're interested in representations of people?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Because I'm sure that National Gallery book had some abstract art—but it's not—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And it didn't—and it's interesting. When I talk about Picasso to my students, I've said, "For the most part, except for three paintings of his—the *Three Musicians*, *Guernica,* and *The Old Guitarist*—he hits me in the head." [00:30:12] I appreciate him intellectually, but he doesn't hit me in the heart and the gut. And I always talk about those three things when students are trying to figure out what they want to research and write about. And I said, "It can really piss you off. You don't have to like it at all. That's not the point. The point is you have to connect to it." And except for those three paintings by Picasso, not so much.

The only time abstraction was interesting to me was in textiles. And it's interesting because David, my husband, grew up in Saudi Arabia, so we have a lot of rugs that come from the Middle East from his childhood. And then the quilts—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —those come from his family and are from the 19th or early 20th century.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And they're right behind this thing. I'm just saying that for the—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. And that one over there, it was made by my great-grandmother Molly Kohn [also Koen]—who you saw the photograph of downstairs—and it's embroidered with her name and the date, 1906. So that kind of thing.

So yes, representational art has—but it can—it doesn't have to be naturalistic at all. I became captured by German and Austrian Expressionism. So yeah, representational art has always spoken to me. I've tried to understand artists like Kandinsky in terms of bringing in music, the inspiration of music. And once again, it's an

intellectual appreciation for it. So I grew, I grew up with the arts, I grew up with music. I used to have the 78 records—my parents still had. They actually heard Caruso sing at some point. They always talked about that.

But one of the interesting things—as I started doing my doctoral research and I was looking at the exhibition at MoMA, *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art,* I went to visit my folks in Hawaii, and they had the catalogue from 1940. They saw the exhibition. Did they remember the exhibition?

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, but—but, you know, it was—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, that's a great connection.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was really very, very interesting. [00:02:00] And then my dad got involved in setting up advanced management training programs for industries. That's how he started at Columbia when he was a graduate student. And post-World War II graduate programs—particularly I think in the professions like business and law—were very different than they are now. It was very much more informal, and you had all these older students coming back, and you didn't have a lot of administrators. So while my father was a graduate student, he served as an acting dean and an assistant professor. It's so—you know, the parameters weren't set.

He did have a really interesting experience. He was up in his garret, his attic office, and he came home that day, and he said, "Well, General Eisenhower came to visit me today." Because Ike was president of Columbia at that point, and Dad had worked for Eisenhower, so he was coming to see one of his boys. I remember sitting on his lap and saying, "Are we famous now?" [They laugh.] You know, I knew Eisenhower was famous. And it was really interesting because at that point in the United States, at least in the world I was aware of, Eisenhower was God. He could have—when he was recruited to run for President, he could have run on—they were recruiting him for both parties. My Dad didn't vote for him because he didn't want someone who was essentially a military man—that was his whole career, Eisenhower—being the President of the United States. [00:04:02] He felt very strongly that that should be separated and—

JOSH T. FRANCO: When was your father—when did—he worked in the art gallery of a department store?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: At Marshall Field's in Chicago. That's—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So that was before grad school, then?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, it was back when he first knew my mother, so it was 1936. They moved him around. They started him in the book department, and all he did was read the books.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Then they moved him to the art gallery. And they moved him to the artificial flower department, which was this massive department. I mean, artificial flowers were a big, big deal up through the '50s, I think. And wonderful stories. One story after—and the actress Dorothy Lamour was an elevator operator, and that's how she was discovered, was in the elevator at Marshall Field's. But they closed the store down at night, and Henry Kaiser of Kaiser Steel and his wife, whichever wife it was, came to shop. And this is the depths of the Depression, and they were buying stuff for their various guesthouses. One of the salesclerks, whose name was Mary, admired Mrs. Kaiser's floor-length mink coat, and at the end of her shepherding them around or helping them—because someone big in the store was shepherding them—Mrs. Kaiser gave Little Mary her coat. ["Little Mary" was how my parents referred to her: she was both young and small. –HBS]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Hmm. That's a gesture.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It's a gesture, a kind of bizarre gesture.

JOSH T. FRANCO: A kind of bizarre gesture, yeah. [They laugh.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But the concept of being a salesclerk to someone like the Kaiser family. [00:06:03] One of the things my mother did was, when they were starting to—after William Randolph Hearst died, and they were starting to do the inventories of everything at the Hearst Castle and all the warehouses, she was one of the probably more than a thousand or several hundred people they invited in to help authenticate stuff. Because he bought a lot of stuff that wasn't real. And so she got to go into these warehouses and look at his chinaware. And she didn't talk. My mother's very private, she didn't talk a lot, so I would hear second- and third-hand. But she said that was an amazing experience.

Well, let's fast-forward a few years. Segue—my cousin Bruce Brugmann started the *San Francisco Bay Guardian.* His mother is my mother's sister. And when he was running that paper, he was in a battle, antitrust battle, with

the Hearst papers. And my husband, David, was the assistant to the president of the Hearst Corporation while Bruce was suing the Hearst Corporation.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That was before you were married to David?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was. It was before I was married. I certainly knew him. We went to—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, right, because you went to school—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —high school together.

JOSH T. FRANCO: —together. Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And Bruce got a settlement, and all the papers—it was a group—it wasn't—yeah, it was a class action suit, antitrust. So Hearst has kind of functioned in my family in interesting, peripheral sorts of ways. [00:08:00] The idea of excess, the Hearsts really embodied that.

But I brought that up because the Kaisers were part of that as well. And the Rockefellers were very different in how they did—and I bring that up because I spent a lot of time studying the Rockefellers, particularly Nelson, for my dissertation. Because I was looking at how pre-Columbian objects moved from museums of anthropology, natural history, archeology, into museums of fine art. The role of US foreign policy and Nelson Rockefeller was absolutely critical to all of that.

I had grown up knowing about the Rockefellers because David Rockefeller, the youngest brother, was at Harvard when my father was at Harvard. He came into Harvard when he was like 15, 16, 17. He was a kid, he was several years younger. And my dad was really impressed. First of all, he didn't drink at all, and this was bathtub gin at that point. And he didn't have a car, and he was by far the richest kid there. What his family did do was send oranges up to everyone in the dorm at Christmastime from their place in Florida. But they were Baptists and they were—and the University of Chicago was a Baptist university, which the first Rockefeller [John D. –HBS] helped to fund. I'm just blanking on his—Nelson's grandfather.

So my dad had a different—the way the Rockefellers went about being socially engaged, my dad had a soft spot for the Rockefellers because they clearly had enormous wealth and access to more wealth and power than—and they were ruthless, but they weren't ostentatious. [00:10:13]

JOSH T. FRANCO: They weren't throwing around fur coats.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: They weren't throwing around fur coats.

JOSH T. FRANCO: So, you described your childhood a little bit. Maybe this is a good time to start thinking about your earliest school experiences, and then we can get back up to your dissertation.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. Well, I moved a lot, or my parents moved me a lot, so we changed schools a lot. So I'll just give a running thing, so you get a sense of it. So, for nursery school, which was at the congressional church we belonged to—and then kindergarten, first grade at a school in River Edge, New Jersey. We moved to Evanston between first and second grade because my dad got a job at Northwestern University. He looked at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill at the same time, and it was right about when all of the legislation and Supreme Court stuff was dealing with segregation. He felt being in the South wasn't a place he wanted to be. He was also Jewish, but that wasn't something I was aware of.

So we lived in Evanston, and I went to a school called Lincolnwood School. And I lived across the alley from this girl, Connie Mathisen, who became my closest friend. And after college we lost touch, and now we're back in touch. But she was Norwegian and Swedish and tall with white hair—because it was naturally—and I was short and dark, and we were Mutt and Jeff. We were both Leos, and I was an only child, and she was the closest thing to a sister I had. And she had this younger brother running around in diapers who's now six-five. [00:12:00] So it was fabulous.

And that's where I got involved in theater, in children's theater. And I did theater all the way through my freshman year in college. Our theater person—she was probably my first mentor—her name was Winifred Ward, and she was Ms. Ward. My parents had known her for some reason back in the '30s when they were—and I don't know the connection, but when I came here [New Mexico –HBS], I learned and talked to people I met in the theater department at UNM. Winifred Ward was the founder of the idea of children's theater. So I was working with this person, and she would have us do things like, "Okay, lie on the floor and imagine you're a rug. And what is it like to be a rug?" Well, I promptly went to sleep—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —but my father was incensed.

JOSH T. FRANCO: About the teaching style?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, about—"What is this being-a-rug thing?" My father, who was very creative in some ways—you know?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But anyway, it was wonderful. And then my dad, through his job at Northwestern, was sent with a colleague down to Venezuela, and I spent fourth grade in Venezuela. It was 1956-57, and I had never seen such wealth, I had never seen such poverty. But I learned to play with kids who didn't speak my language. It was Czech, it was Dutch, it was Spanish, it was—I learned Spanish because the school we went to, which was an international school, Campo Alegre, taught most everything in Spanish, which I credit for why my arithmetic and math skills are so bad. Because I learned long division and multiplication while I was learning Spanish, and I was learning it in Spanish. Not really—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —but it was a challenge. [00:14:09] The only thing we really did in English that I remember was English. And so my academic work really didn't move forward very well for fourth grade, but well enough that I didn't have to go back and do fourth grade again. But that was an extraordinary time. I showed you that photograph of the cantilevered house. I remember going into people's homes where the swimming pool, which is all in this amazing tile, would turn into a little stream of water that would go through the entire house.

The first house we lived—we lived in a rental house, and the maid came with the house. It was a Spanish family, they left the maid behind, they went back to Spain, and her name was América. She and my mother would battle over how to cook food. And there were lots of spiders around, and they terrified me. And then we moved into an apartment in the Las Mercedes neighborhood, right down the street from the Hotel Tamanaco, which was this amazing resort hotel. And several things happened there. That's where I played with all the kids, particularly the Dutch and the Czech and the Yugoslavian kids, and some Italian kids, because all the industries were developing there. Except for gold and diamonds, which were all run by Venezuelans.

But we were on a big main street, and Mom would buy fruit from the fruit vendors and then treat it so that we could eat it. [00:16:06] And the wall of our kitchen was open cement block, so every insect in the world could come in there. And that was a challenge for me and my mom, Dad didn't seem to notice it. But what also happened were the tanks that were coming down the street on a regular basis. And these were essentially Sherman tanks, surplus from World War II. Because it was the last year of Pérez Jiménez's dictatorship, and so when we landed there, we were greeted by rows of armed guards, so—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Were you scared?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, I was terrified. I wasn't going to get off the plane. I was standing at the top of the stairs, and what got me off the plane—we took our dog with us, Blackie, named for Blackout, for the blackouts in London. I have to explain that because the term Blackie is a little bizarre.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yes. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But her name was Blackout Wigglesworth McGinty el Tooth Decay Barnet, and we called her Blackie. She taught me to roller-skate, and I dressed her in my doll clothes. I was 15 when she died, and that was pretty heartbreaking. But I have photos of her in my playpen and—only children have interesting experiences.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So I heard—we didn't know whether Blackie would survive the trip because she was in the hull of the airplane. And I heard her barking, and that got me off the plane, and that got us out throughout customs really fast because Blackie wouldn't stop barking [laughs] and so, "She rescued us!" Yeah, it was scary.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And all your parents were there? So it would have been oil and agriculture business?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, my father was there for the Creole Petroleum Corporation, to do an advanced management training program with executives. [00:18:05] And so we were in Caracas and then they traveled all over the place. They took me out of school way too much. We traveled all over the country, it was very interesting. I learned a lot about Simón Bolívar, and I learned a lot about the phenomenon of wives and mistresses, which—I didn't really know what I was learning, but I learned it because it was in our faces with the

people that my parents were socializing with.

Creole was a Nelson Rockefeller-wholly-owned subsidiary of Standard Oil. Nelson Rockefeller was also down there with coffee plantations, and he was starting the first—what we would call shopping centers and they called *automercados*. Sears was a huge presence there. Also because it was the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian population, which was quite substantial, had all these little statues. And I'm interested in miniatures and representations, so I—well, I made my mom get me a statue of—so I was getting things like a little statute of Mahatma Gandhi and the most wonderful German-made building blocks I've ever had.

But, you know, to learn Simón Bolívar, Mahatma Gandhi, [they laugh] extraordinary wealth, people living in the streets. The equivalent of the favelas, the shantytowns that grew up in Caracas later, I don't think were there. They hadn't started building them. [00:20:03] The wild dogs that would come out of the mountains at night and run through the streets at sunset—so we had to make sure our dog was in the house—and then they would go back. They were just coming down and then they would go back. It was a dog ritual. And the spiders, I was terrified of the spiders.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And this is all just one year?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: One year. And I remember going to—yeah, the—[sighs]—there was—that's how I learned, or my parents learned, about where I went to boarding school, George School. Because all the kids—the European kids, the Venezuelan kids, the American kids—left to go to high school, even if their parents were there. And all the kids of the parents of my—that were friendly with them, they're primarily from the church we belong to—sent their kids to George School, which is a Quaker boarding school in Bucks County.

And so we came back from Venezuela and I went to the—we moved to a different house in a different school district, still in Evanston. So for the fifth and sixth grade year, I went to the Haven Elementary School, which also had a junior high component. And during that time, which was '57 to '59, the schools were segregated, and the black school in the south side of Evanston burned down, and so all the kids were farmed out. And so the fifth and sixth graders came to our school, and that was my first experience being with African American kids. My mother had someone, a cleaning lady who came in, who was African American. And one of the girls asked me to go to a birthday party at her house after we had become friendly, and my mother wouldn't let me go. [00:22:12]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And she never explained why.

JOSH T. FRANCO: How did the teachers—were they in the classrooms with you or did they have separate classes in the school?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, they were in our—I don't know what happened to the teachers. That's really interesting. I'm looking at it from such a kid's perspective. The kids were in the classroom with us. I don't know if the teachers—I don't have any memory of that. That's really interesting. And that's an adult way of thinking about it [they laugh] and I still look at it from a kid's perspective I guess.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Okay. One quick question about Venezuela: Did your parents take you to museums there? Do you remember going to galleries or museums there?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, we went to history museums.

JOSH T. FRANCO: History museums.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Simón Bolívar's house, and other places. If they took me to art museums, I don't remember that. We spent a lot of time driving around looking at the architecture, because it was so different. I mean, we were from the Midwest. We didn't have Florida or Southern California that would be in any way comparable. Our idea of modern architecture was Frank Lloyd Wright because [laughs] it was Chicago.

I remember when the Guggenheim was built. I've learned about it. They had a school newspaper, I wish I could remember the name. It was national. And they would have news stories, and that's where I first heard about the Guggenheim. And some of the more interesting exhibitions, I remember as a young person going to it. [00:24:02] They had a retrospective of van Gogh, and they started at the top with his youthful efforts, and they went down the spiral. So the painting at the bottom was the painting he was working on when he killed himself. It was very much a psychoanalytic interpretation of that descent into hell, basically.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow, that's—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: You know, I just remember that. I remember when—so, for two years in this other

place in Evanston, which was two blocks from the football stadium, I had—and this is going to show to you the various things. My father wasn't interested in sports at all. I learned to like sports because my mother loved baseball. She would iron, and we would listen to baseball on the radio. And so he was teaching at university, he was in the Big Ten. And we would go to football games and Dad would talk to everybody, and Mom and I would watch the game. But Ara Parseghian, who became the really revered coach of Notre Dame, was coaching Northwestern. And so we kids in the neighborhood, we would go and watch him practice. And we were learning about football from Ara *Parseghian. You know, it was really cool. We didn't know it was really cool. It was just cool that we were watching this.*

And then we moved to East Lansing, Michigan. And that was for my junior high year, so that would have been '59 to '61. I didn't like it there at all. Children's theater went away. I had done it all through my time in Evanston.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did your father move for a job there?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. He got a job heading up—in the business school. [00:26:05] I can't remember the exact title, but it was doing advanced management training programs for the food industry. So, from general [management –HBS] at Columbia to oil to the food industry.

It was very interesting being there. It was right next to Lansing, and it was next to Detroit. I remember going and seeing the Rivera murals in Detroit. I didn't understand it, and my mother didn't know enough. She could explain Seurat's painting of *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,* which I used to measure my height against when I was growing up. Also there's a huge Surrealist collection at the Art Institute in Chicago, because people in Chicago have always loved Surrealism and have collected it. So I started my interest in Surrealism when I was a kid, and that's carried me all the way through.

There were two exhibitions at the Art Institute. We moved—it was when we were in East Lansing that I started high school at George School. They sent me away, and I was very happy to be sent away because I was very unhappy in East Lansing. And then two years into that, they moved back to the Chicago area. And we lived in Highland Park, and my dad left academia for a while to work as a VP for research for the kitchens of Sara Lee. So while I was at George School, they would send all these Sara Lee pastries, [they laugh] which was embarrassing. Because you don't like to be singled out that way, you know? [00:28:04]

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] It's something to share and make friends—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, they sent it not to me personally. They sent it like—so it could be distributed in the dining room. And the dean of girls would make the announcement, "This is coming from Holly's father," and I thought—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh yeah, that's embarrassing.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, that—it's—my father—I once introduced my father, when he came to visit me at George School, as a friend of the family. [They laugh.] So it gives you a sense. He always embarrassed me. And when he read my master's thesis on Egon Schiele and Franz Kafka, he said, "I did not know you had ice water running in your veins."

JOSH T. FRANCO: What's the connection? What's that mean?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, well, it was very analytical, and I was working with tough stuff. Schiele and Kafka are tough, tough stuff, and I was immersed in it. I actually was rather poetic, I thought. Because I have a poetic approach. I mean, I don't write poetry, but it's kind of a lyrical approach.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I understand, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it rather shocked me.

JOSH T. FRANCO: A Warburgian approach maybe?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But there were two exhibitions that totally moved me. One was of Francis Bacon's paintings. Knocked my socks off! I was reading Kafka in German class in high school, because Kafka's German is very straightforward. It's not like reading Thomas Mann, where it takes a paragraph and a half to figure out what the sentences are.

But I—reading Kafka and Thomas Mann as a senior in high school or a junior in high school was really formative to me because I couldn't, as a nine- and 10-year-old in Caracas, understand that speaking in a different language helped you think a different way. Because you're too young—or I wasn't that observant. [00:30:21] But reading in German, and reading Kafka from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Thomas Mann from Germany, was also a very different—and of course, Kafka is different than anyone almost. But I fell in love with Kafka. And I do

this, I fall in love with what I'm studying. And I thought, "How"—for some reason I felt that Francis Bacon and Kafka had a shared sensibility. So when I started working on my master's thesis, I first wanted to work with Francis Bacon, and my—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —professor said, "You really can find something there?" And no, I really couldn't. So I moved into Egon Schiele because I started looking at his work and I—there was something about claustrophobic infinity. I came up with this concept of claustrophobic infinity that I saw in both of them. So in analyzing the works, I was looking at that experience.

JOSH T. FRANCO: So did you see the Bacon when you were in high school, and then wrote about it when you went to do your master's thesis?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I see.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But the other exhibition I had already seen as a small child: *Guernica*, because it was at MoMA, in a tiny, dinky, little room. *Guernica traveled a lot, and they had it at the Art Institute. They hung it on a stairwell, on a landing, with preliminary drawings all up and down the stairs. So you could stand* and look down at it, you could face at it, you could walk up to it. It was a bit of genius in terms of installing it, and it was just overwhelming. It had the space to breathe. And, you know, its original space in that Worlds Fair was so tight and cramped, if you see the documentary photographs. And where it is now, it has space in the Reina Sofia, but it—that to me was just—that's when I started to become really transfixed by what museums can do, and how works of art can talk to each other. *Whoo!* [00:02:01] And the Art Institute also had the miniature rooms, the Thorne rooms in the basement. Are you familiar with the Thorne rooms?

JOSH T. FRANCO: No

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, they make—I have a catalogue. I'll pull it out for you when we're offline, so you can see them. They're miniature rooms to scale—there are the European rooms and the American rooms—and they were at a Worlds Fair, and they were permanently installed in the basement at the Art Institute.

The other exhibition that was really important for me, and we saw it in Venezuela, was *The Family of Man,* the photographic exhibition. This one. And it becomes important many years later for me, but—

JOSH T. FRANCO: I spent a lot of time with John Tagg in this book. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And that was from Venezuela. That was—

JOSH T. FRANCO: And this is when you were there in the fourth grade?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. I've never been back. And to see it in—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So this is like, the Spanish kind of—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: What do you call it?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Insert.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Insert, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And we got this—and my parents used to—I used to hear Carl Sandburg recite poetry. They would—they took me to the ballet, they took me to the theater, they took me to poetry readings. My dad loved musical theater. I have *My Fair Lady* still memorized, you know, and I was going to be an actress. That's what I wanted to do.

And then when I hit college and we did *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf,* and Brenda Thomas, who is an actress, was playing Martha and I—it was a workshop production, it was just one scene, I was playing the young wife—I thought, "You know what, I'm way too young to manage this. [00:04:03] I have no idea [laughs] what I'm doing." And she did a wonderful job, but at 18 to do *Who's Afraid of*—you have no life experience. I also did a workshop production of *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' So Sad.* That was Rosalind Russell thing. That was fun, but I stopped after that.

But in high school, I did a lot of theater. In my junior year in high school at George School, we did a production of *An Enemy of the People*, a Henrik Ibsen play, which is about a town that turns against someone who's doing the right thing. We were doing it the weekend that John F. Kennedy was shot. And we still did it—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did you make a—was there some acknowledgement of it before the show started that night?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, yes, yes. And there was one TV in the whole school, and they put it on the stage of the theater—you know, it's a TV about this big—and we're all in the auditorium watching the funeral and everything. Actually, it went on the stage also during the Cuban Missile Crisis. I mean, we were pretty isolated there, but certain things—and a Quaker school is an interesting place to be. It's silent meeting for worship with a facing bench, and anyone can sit on the facing bench.

And Mr. McFeely, our headmaster, who was about six-five—and he had gotten polio his senior year in college at Swarthmore, and he ended up—he went down to Warm Springs, Georgia, and he married FDR's nurse. And he came back. [00:06:02] He wore iron braces, so you watched this man, this huge man, walking down the hall like this. He would get in a golf cart—he had been a football player. He got in a golf cart, and he was coaching the boys' lacrosse team from the golf cart. I mean, he wasn't the coach; he would just do it every once in a while. But he was terrified of the threat of the atomic bomb, and so he would speak a lot about that. Quakers are pacifists—activist pacifists—and what one says about Quakers is, they prayed with their feet, they're engaged. The first abolitionists in this country were Quakers. My husband, who grew up a Quaker, also half-Jewish, was a conscientious objector. And his grandfather was a conscientious objector in World War I, and his brother was a conscientious objector.

So we got very much involved in the civil rights movement there. A person who graduated in the 1950s from George School was just coming to prominence at that time, Julian Bond. Julian Bond's father was a friend of Barnes, of the Barnes Foundation. So the last time we saw Julian Bond was at the new Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. And I said, "Wow, that's looks like Julian Bond," and David goes, "Hey, are you Julian Bond?" [They laugh.] So we went over and talked about George School. Another person who was only two years ahead of us was a woman named Kathleen Neal, who was very uppity. [00:08:02] Her father was a diplomat, and she was African American. You know her as Kathleen Cleaver. She went off to the school in Ohio, the really famous, small liberal arts school. Oberlin. Eldridge Cleaver came to speak, and it just turned her life upside down and inside out. Her kids were born in North Korea. The way I realized it was the same person was, she was on the cover of *Life* magazine at one point as "Kathleen Cleaver speaks" wherever she was, because they weren't in the United States, and I said, "That's Kathleen Neal!"

But both David and I were on the race relations committee. I had no idea that the Chicano civil rights movement was happening, that César Chávez was out there, that Reies Lopez Tijerina—you know, I had no idea. I had no idea of the huge Mexican population or Mexican American population in the Pilsen district [in Chicago –HBS]. And I don't know how big it was in the '50s. In the '30s, that was primarily a Polish neighborhood.

But I did one summer work for Project Head Start on the South Side of Chicago, at 63rd and Woodlawn. And that was—I mean, here I am, this middle-class white girl from the northern suburbs of Chicago who lives across the street from Ravinia, which is this amazing summer home for the Chicago Symphony. You know, I heard Ella Fitzgerald there and Joan Baez there, and Seiji Ozawa did some of his first conducting there. [00:10:11] So I was being bused down to 63rd and Woodlawn, which is under the elevated tracks, working to do theater with these little four- and five-year olds, and a couple of six-year-olds. And I was really stupid, I mean, so naïve. I got a really dark tan, thinking that would help. [They laugh.] And those kids had street smarts that I don't have to this day. I would wish that no child should have to have those kinds of street smarts. It was the same neighborhood that—not too long later, Mark Clark and Fred Hampton of the Black Panthers were assassinated by the FBI while they were sleeping. And it was a few years after that that Richard Speck killed all those Philippine nurses—it was the same neighborhood.

JOSH T. FRANCO: What was the program that brought you down there?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Head Start.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, Head Start, right, you said that.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was at very beginning stages. And the following year, I wanted to go down and see the people I worked with, and they said, "We'll come up and see you on campus at the University of Chicago. You cannot go down there. It is not safe." Because the world was blowing up by then. But that—those were—so it was the black civil rights movement that—and my experience in Evanston with the black kids coming into our school and my mother not letting me socialize with them. She said it was fine if I bring them home. "Yes, you can bring them home after school for cookies and whatever, but no, you can't go into her house." And I don't remember what—she gave me some reason. [00:12:12]

We were doing theater, and it was interesting to me because although the Quakers were the first abolitionists—Julian Bond was a student there in the '50s—there were very few black kids when I was there, less than a handful. But there was an incident where Julian Bond, as a student, was going into Philadelphia to do something, and the dean of boys—because we were boys and girls back then—the dean of boys would not let him wear the school jacket. And I don't know what the motivation was, I can hypothesize forever.

And of course, it was an expensive place to go. They did have scholarship money, but they—you know, Julian Bond came from a professional family. A friend of David's and mine, Jeff Speller, who's now a psychiatrist, went there, and his parents were both doctors. So it was the professional class who was there when I was there. No Mexican American students. We had foreign nationals there. But there was a lot of talk, but there was not—there was not the experience of living within a community that was integrated. [00:14:07]

And, yes, they taught Spanish there. There was a kid who grew up in Puerto Rico who—an Anglo kid whose parents were farmers in Puerto Rico who spoke Spanish who ended up teaching there, teaching Spanish. But they were teaching Russian and German and French and Latin. They don't teach Russian and German anymore. They do teach Chinese. It's a changing world.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Sure. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: My second mentor was my German teacher Frau Blaschke .

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did they teach art history, art appreciation? Or studio?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: They had art studio. They had—

JOSH T. FRANCO: But you were doing theater more?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I was entirely in theater. I didn't do any visual arts at the time. My appreciation for art, when my parents would visit—we would go down to the Philadelphia Museum. I didn't see the Barnes, the old Barnes, until I after I was here. And the Philadelphia Museum is a very interesting museum. But—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did you see Bacon at the Philadelphia?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, I saw Bacon at the Art Institute. I was home for the holidays or for the summer. But, no, the visual arts were my family. In college, I did an independent study. I got married to my boyfriend and had my son Tom between our junior and senior year.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Can you say where you went to college again?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Grinnell College—

JOSH T. FRANCO: At Grinnell, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —in Iowa. From 1965 to 1969. Tom was born in the summer of 1968. [00:16:02] The summer before that, I had gone to Europe with my three roommates, and we had adventures in Europe, and I worked in a coffee shop in Berlin and Köln. I got arrested in East Berlin because my German accent was Leipzig, because of my high school German teacher, and they didn't know why an American would be speaking a foreign language. I mean, it didn't last very long, but it was sobering. That was really interesting. But Tom was born in May of 1968, and two weeks later, Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. That was pretty awful. And Martin Luther King had been assassinated. And a couple of years before, Malcolm X had been assassinated. And, you know, we were sort of like this.

Grinnell at the time didn't want married people to be students there, and particularly not the women. And they certainly didn't want someone who had a child. They didn't want me on campus. They did not want me to finish school. It is very different now. But I said, "What's going on here? This is not acceptable." But for first semester senior year, I did an independent study so that I wouldn't show my face on campus all that time. I had taken an art appreciation course, and for some reason, my favorite—I was a history and literature major, and one of my favorite teachers, Philip Kintner, was a medievalist and that was a little—I wasn't so enamored of the medieval period. [00:18:06]

But I had seen a book with the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch, and I said, "I want to write on Hieronymus Bosch." And of course, I didn't see anything real by him for decades, but I spent a semester buried in all the details and reproductions of Hieronymus Bosch, and I thought, "Oh, my goodness, is this fun or what?" Because I was looking—because I was coming out of history, I didn't know how to analyze a painting to save my soul. But I just went and did it, but I had all the history part first. You know, the relationship between church and state, and small towns, and the horrors of hell. And we were there for the 500th anniversary—this is as adults—we were in Madrid for the 500th anniversary of the death of Hieronymus Bosch, and the Prado had this magnificent

exhibition, and I just went and buried myself there!

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's great, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And a video artist had done an immersive video installation of Bosch's work.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow. Animating the paintings?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, and it was all the walls, the ceiling, and the floors. You were just—it was almost too much. There is a museum now in Paris called Atelier des Lumières, and their opening exhibition was Klimt and Schiele. The one that's up now is van Gogh. We went to the Klimt and Schiele one. [00:20:02] It was just, *Chooo* [ph].

So that was my entrée into bringing together all the stuff I had seen as a kid, all the stuff my parents talked about, and my profound grounding as a historian. I did a lot of Russian history and Russian literature. I learned Russian, but that went away. It didn't stick.

After graduation, Cliff and Tom and I went to Ithaca. And he was at Cornell. He was in low temperature physics then he switched to geophysics. He and I split up, and I went and got my library degree at Syracuse. And my next mentor, Frau Blaschke, the German teacher—the next mentor, who was brought over by her uncle into this country in the 1930s because of the rise of National Socialism. She was about this tall. She scared me half to death. I still can conjugate German verbs even if I don't know what they mean.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But she—my [following –HBS] mentor was in library school. It was a women named Antje Lemke. Her father was Rudolf Bultmann, the Lutheran theologian. Their great good friend and neighbor was the philosopher—oh, I'm blanking on his name—a very important, controversial German philosopher because he became a National Socialist, or he was supportive of National Socialism. [00:22:02]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Heidegger?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Heidegger. That she, growing up, had picnics with the Heidegger family.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And she and her sisters played musical instruments. She played the violin. She played violin with Yehudi Menuhin. This is the world she grew up in. When National Socialism came in—her father was under house arrest—she wanted to go to medical school, but they wouldn't let her unless she became a member of the Nazi Party. So she went to library school, and at the end of the war, she found herself in East Berlin working in a factory for telescopes. And people from Syracuse helped her escape. They literally—and obviously they had help on the East Berlin side. Yeah, it was East Berlin, no wall. They packed her in a telescope packing crate, and the only thing she took with her was her violin. She taught me museum librarianship.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow, and that's at Syracuse?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. And I went back [cries] two summers ago. First time I had gone back to Syracuse and Ithaca since I had left. And there was—she had died at age 99. I saw her many years later when I was working on my dissertation research. She was doing some work at CASVA, and she was there, and I was doing work on trying to figure out pre-Columbian exhibitions, and what the National Gallery was doing, and Dumbarton Oaks. And I looked at her, and she looked at me, oh.

So there was this [cries] celebration of her life at—here, this is her. [00:24:03] And people came from all over the world to it. She gave her entire archive to special collections. She endowed the seminar room in special collections at the library. We did a lot of work with her at the Syracuse Museum. And Yoko Ono was having an exhibition at the Syracuse Museum when we were there, and Antje Lemke was—she was very—she was very open to everything, but she couldn't make sense of anything [they laugh] that Yoko Ono was trying to do at the time. She was this wonderful—this is how I remember her, that photograph there. She always had overhead projectors. So the love of the archive came from her.

So these two German women. But Frau Blaschke at George School, she—her uncle was a man named Lucius Littauer, which means she must have been—she was a Quaker, but she must have been also partly Jewish. I don't understand that at all. But the Littauer family were friends with the Barnet family. My father's father, Lucius Barnet, was named for Lucius Littauer. When I graduated from George School, Frau Blaschke had already retired, but she came back for our class to graduate. And my step-grandmother, Lucius's widow—they were both the same height—was there too, and they got to meet each other. So it was really cool. [00:26:02]

My father had a cousin whose name is Richard Barnet. Richard Barnet started the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C. in the 1960s. He and Marcus Raskin. I stayed with Richard and Anne in Washington when I was doing my research there. Richard was an attorney, and he came to Washington—he was first in the Defense Department—he came because of Kennedy, but his first job as this freshly minted Jewish lawyer was the Nuremberg trials.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: He was one of the very, very junior paper pusher—kind of, "Here, here, here's another piece of paper you need." But, you know, it—and he ended up writing *Global Dreams* and *Global Reach*. He had this wonderful sense of the openness of the world, and he was a Soviet specialist, is what he ended up being. But—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So he worked with the famous lawyer—who is the big name from the Nuremberg trials?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I'm not sure who all he worked with. But he would talk about that experience in a way, of course, that my dad wouldn't. And he was many, many years—Dad would babysit him when he was three and Dad was 17, there was that split. My dad was in love with his mother and actually asked her to run away with him, and he said, "It was the most gracious turndown I ever had." [They laugh.] But so, there were all these connections. [00:28:10]

We had—my aunt Peggy, my father's younger sister, married a man named Louis Kovacs. And his family started—his family on that side and my father's uncle Saul both worked to bring a lot of relatives over, to get them out and sponsor them. But we do have some kind of relative who went to Israel. And she's tracked everything, and she sent us an email with a list of names of people who didn't make it out, and most of them died in the trains on the way. But there were an awful lot of them. I don't know how we have so many relatives, but anyway.

But what was so amazing in my upbringing was, my father never walked away from the fact that he was German. He was a German Jew, and he did not equate National Socialism with all of Germany. It helped me to—and that's a very hard thing to do. You know, he saw a lot of—I don't know what he saw, but I'm pretty sure he saw a lot of stuff.

I love spending time in Germany, I love the German language, I love German art, German music. I mean, you know, the Weimer Republic, it—it's such—Germany and Austria are such a mind fuck because they produced [laughs] the greatest and the worst. [00:30:12] But it helped me to be careful in the ways that I am judgmental, and to be able to separate hopefully the horrors that can be perpetrated—separate those from the entirety of a people. Do we condemn all of Cambodia for Pol Pot? I mean, you know, they're just one after the other. But it—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —also—the—you know, I was—I think I sort of grew up in the 1930s, because of who my parents were, and that's when they started sharing their life together. I had a stuffed koala bear that I named Winston for Winston Churchill. So my sensibilities were of a different era, as I was growing up.

And I think the fact that I've—one reason that for me Chicano art was so compelling from the very beginning—that when I say Chicano art, I have to be really careful because it's not just the visual arts. I always see it in terms of the visual, literary, and performing. They are not separate, and I think my upbringing and my education—the fact that I did a master's thesis looking at a writer and an artist, and that so many of the artists were all of those. I mean, you look at—the person who comes to mind the quickest is José Montoya. You know, he was a poet, he was a humorist, he was a musician, he was an artist. He was a pain in the butt if you were a woman. Not because he put the moves on you, that wasn't the issue. It's just—you know, his daughter would go after him, his two wives would go after him. He was of a different generation. But he was so compelling! [00:02:01]

And the fact that it combined with a political movement, which I already understood in terms of the German revolution, the Russian revolution, the black civil rights movement. Although I did not understand African American art in the same way, and I didn't really—I moved toward getting more exposure to African American art through Chicano art.

But theater, I did know something about. And the theater of politics, the performative quality of politics, was very apparent with people like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, which also comes out of the tradition of being ministers. And it doesn't matter what ministerial tradition you come from, what religion, it is profoundly performative. You are pulling people in, you are grabbing them.

And I got to see Martin Luther King in the flesh in Chicago, or actually in the suburbs of Chicago. And I got to see JFK when we were in high school. So that sense of commitment to—the term social justice, as we now understand it, wasn't in play. [00:04:06] I don't remember it being in play then, so I wasn't aware of it. It was

civil rights. You know, it was a different vocabulary. But the idea of social justice broadens the conversation.

And use of the art, I mean, I was so—I first saw Chicano art through the murals in East LA when Marcos and I got together. So the murals were the first thing, but then very soon, it was music and performance. Ruben Guevara of Ruben and the Jets, he was going to be doing something, and he asked us to put together sort of a slideshow for this event, and they were all very *rasquache* kind of things. And Willie was there with his wife. Herrón. And I said, "Oh, wow, wouldn't it be fun to ask Willie to come and talk?" This is long before *CARA* was, you know—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. So it was LA right after Syracuse?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No. I'll go backwards. But meeting the East LA, meeting the Asco folks, meeting Willie, meeting Harry, Marisela Norte—the poet, ah! She's magnificent. Anyway.

No, after Syracuse, I moved to Boston, and I worked as a children's librarian, and I was a single mom of two kids. [00:06:01] And then I moved to Colorado, and Cliff had the kids for a while, and I just went off the grid. I moved to Boulder, I lived in the hills above Boulder—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So not teaching or—just—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, I was not. I was fully engaged in the hippie movement. I worked as a secretary for, first, the VP for administration for the University of Colorado. And I then was working for the treasurer and controller as receptionist. When I was working for the treasurer and controller, we shared the offices with the internal auditors. That's a fun group.

But this was Boulder. This was Boulder in the '70s. The '60s hadn't died yet. And this is when I thought, "Okay, I need to do something, so what am I going to do? Well, I'm going to go to law school, I'm going to work for the Southern Poverty Law Center, I'm going to work for the ACLU, I've got to reengage." I took the LSATs and I wrote to my aunt Jane, my dad's older sister who was my Auntie Mame—she was the person who protected me from my parents—and I said, "Jane, I'm going to go to law school." And Jane writes back—because I had stayed with her in Paris, and it was pretty wonderful. And she said, "Well, Holly, you do whatever you want, but I would've always thought that you would do something in the arts." It was sort of like that ad for V8, "Oh, I could've had a V8." Oh, I should be doing art!

So I went over and applied for that master's program at the University of Colorado with essentially no undergraduate experience except for art appreciation and my work on Hieronymus Bosch. And they let me in. [00:08:07] I had to take a competency exam, which they gave to all people and they said, "Well, there are huge holes here"—that I had to fill up. But I majored in modern, and I also did northern Baroque, and I did Indian and Southeast Asian. Because, you know, you have to have this broad spectrum. And that's where I did that thesis on Schiele and Kafka. I did a lot of work on Rembrandt, on Rembrandt and the Jews and the late religious work of Rembrandt. I continued that at UCLA, working in the northern Baroque with David Kunzle.

So it was in Colorado that I actually moved into art history. And my professor Albert Alhadeff had gone to the Institute of Fine Arts at NYU. He was a really interesting guy because he had written on George Minne, who was—his work was in the *Armory Show*. He was a Belgian artist, very sort of attenuated. His most famous one, he did a fountain of attenuated youths that were—they were kneeling, but they were curved over like that. [00:10:07] So he kind of moved—I took all sorts of things with him, but he wanted me to go to the Institute of Fine Arts, and I really—I didn't want to head back east. But I was looking at UCLA, and someone said to me, "Well, it's all political." Growing up in an academic family, I thought, "Well, yeah, academics are very political." And that's not what they meant, because it was a Marxist department at the time, and that wasn't an issue for me. The woman who told me that studied Sumerian art, and she wasn't really interested in the social history of art.

But when I first got—I went from Colorado to Los Angeles, and I worked for two years as a librarian at the graduate school of management library while I was finishing my thesis, because I couldn't apply for the doctoral program. But Karl Werckmeister was interested enough in working with me, because I was going to do modern German, that he workshopped me with all of his graduate students, which—retrospectively, I should have been a lot more scared than I was. It was Tom Cummins, it was Joan Weinstein, it was all the big boys. Serge Guilbaut, who he kept stealing from T. J. Clark, and T. J. would just take him back again. The politics—it couldn't have been a better place to be, at UCLA. It was just magnificent. Oh, my God. [00:12:01] And I was Karl's research assistant because, you know, I could bring my German back really fast, and he said, "Well, you know, people are intimidated by me." And I said, "Well, I've worked with a lot of Germans before, it's okay." [They laugh.] I don't know where that came from.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That makes sense.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But Karl was from Berlin, and he was six-two, six-three. He had been—I understand

it, it could be apocryphal—but he had been a member of the Hitler Youth. But it would not have been anything that was optional. But it was of the time period. And then, of course, he became a Marxist, and I don't know if he was ever a member of the Communist Party like John Tagg was, which caused him endless grief. Did he tell you about—

JOSH T. FRANCO: He drops those—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —the disasters of trying to get a green card? But he did. Marcos and I wrote on his behalf, for Tagg, because he was honest. He said, "Yes, of course, I was a member of the Communist Party." [They laugh.] And Kunzle said, "What?! Why did you say that?!" But Karl, Karl was definitely a Marxist. His students were called Werckmonsters. It was a very aggressive, take-no-prisoners approach to people who were public speaking. It was really good training on how to stand up for yourself. I was never that aggressive, ever, because that's not how I work in the world. I mean, you can push my buttons, and I'll snap, and I'll be unpleasant, but I don't—I'm a person who tries to understand and pull people together. I'm not a person who's trying to attack. [00:14:14] So being around Shifra Goldman was another experience of an attack-dog approach to scholarship and art history.

But it was interesting, there was a story of Shifra and Karl. Karl's like this, and Shifra is like this. Really tall, and Shifra was slightly shorter than I am. There was some kind of conference in Latin American art, and Karl was very much interested in Latin American art. His wife actually was from Spain. Particularly, the art of people like Rivera and Siqueiros. And Shifra knew Siqueiros quite well. She had a print of his that he signed to her as a fellow whatever. He got up in the middle of this conference, which had a lot of pre-Columbianists in it, and he said something to the effect, "I don't know how"—and, you know, Cecelia Klein was teaching pre-Columbian art at that time—and, "I don't know how anybody would waste their time studying this art that the Aztecs. They're"—something about the—"They were nothing but a bunch of bloody savages, and why would you want to bother?" And Shifra just got in his face and just went—you know, no personal space left.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And I never—this is before I came on the scene, but it was an epic confrontation. [00:16:00] And of course, "Gosh, you study National Socialist art, Karl!" And I studied it with him. It's really interesting stuff. If you're going to study German art of the 20th century, you study the whole damn thing, and the Bauhaus and all of it. But he was so Eurocentric. And within the Marxist community, it was, you know, "It's the economy, stupid." You know, Clinton's phrase was very apt.

The Greek art historian Nicos Hadjinicolaou came as a visiting professor, and he was even more of a Marx—well, more adamant in his work. He and Marcos just got at it like this, because he wanted this—Marcos, this is I think when Ward Churchill came out, and he was talking about how neither capitalism nor communism or socialism are appropriate for the Native American community. It's all screwed. And Nicos wanted Marcos—he wanted to go into a debate with Marcos. And Marcos would defend the Native American perspective, and Nicos would defend the Marxist perspective. And Marcos, who was a big man himself and who could rage with the best of them, said—and this is in the hall of the art department, he said, "You don't want me to get a degree! You don't want me here at school! You keep asking me to do stuff that has nothing to do with my getting through this program!" And he [Nicos –HBS] said, "You! You people should just make art and let us write about it!" [00:18:01]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Whoa!

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Whoa! So—

JOSH T. FRANCO: What comes after that moment? [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, everybody went back into their offices, shut the door, and Marcos could hold his own with anything and with anyone. He was fearless. Well, in a very particular way. After *CARA*, he just walked away. It was too much for him. He was tired of being the token, the representative, to have to speak for this whole group of people who were not monolithic, who were not cohesive, and who ought to be able to speak for themselves. You know, this was in the '80s and early '90s. There were so few, and there was such—and it was very—it was very exhausting. It was psychologically and emotionally and professionally exhausting for him.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Had you officially joined the department at this point, or were you in that two years of sitting in a workshop?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, I was in the department for a couple of years before I even met Marcos. And I was working with Karl. Through Marcos, I met Cecelia. Because Marcos was taking pre-Columbian art history because there was no modern Latin American, there was no Chicano, there was no Latino. The word—well, the word Latino was out there. "Latino art" wasn't out there so much. It was Puerto Rican art, it was Cuban art, it was Nuyorican—I'm not sure the word—I didn't hear Nuyorican at that point. But it was mainland-island, is what they

would—but in Southern California, it was either the Chicanos or the Central American community or the Cuban exile community, and they did not live anywhere near each other in the LA Basin, unlike San Francisco where the Mission District is Latino. [00:20:23] It's everybody.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, it's everybody.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It's Latin American, it's Central American, it's *mexicano*, it's Chicano, it's everything. So it was very separated.

I met Marcos in 1981 or '82, so I had been there a couple of years but—and I had seen Cecelia wandering around the hall. But I knew Al Boime, who was—his specialty was French, 19th century. I knew Marty Powers, who was the Chinese—I moved from Indian and South Asian to Chinese because the person who did Indian and Southeast Asian, I didn't want to work with. Because you had to have these areas. And then Karl, who I was there to work with.

But it was—you know, Marcos changed the whole trajectory of my life, both personally and professionally. The way I knew Marcos was not from being in class together at all, but because we all worked in the slide library, which was the most fun job ever in the history of the world. We were cataloguing slides, we were labeling slides, we were filing slides. It was a massive library. The professors would come in and pull slides, and they would come from different departments and pull slides, and you could see the dynamics of the professors and how they were getting along with each other or not. [00:22:09] The faculty was very active, and they had—the faculty meetings were just astonishing. And from the graduate student association and the undergraduate student association, there were representatives, so we sat in on all the faculty meetings. It was a whole other education in the dynamics of being in a department, and the politicking between the faculty. It was a most extraordinary education on top of whatever content we were getting.

When I decided to switch to pre-Columbian, to work with Cecelia—because I fell in love with her and what she was doing—and then ended up going back from studying it in the time period to looking at the modern uses, because I'm too much of a historian and not enough of an archeologist. It was too—I mean, the things are more grounded now, they have more evidence, but I need evidence. I can't hypothesize from a pot. And people who can are really wonderful, but I need documents. And I was also—because of my growing up looking at these museums and being fascinated by the exhibitions, institutional practices became really compelling to me, and I find that is true, even in the study of Chicano art, is looking at the various arts organizations.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, they're fascinating.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And the few museums, and how the narrative is created and cross-created and argued. [00:24:14] The most—you know, and it was in—so Cecelia was fine. Cecelia was the best. Cecelia is my major mentor. I told her that we were going to be talking and that I would be talking about her. We helped her move when her husband and she broke up. I stayed with her in Washington when I was doing research. I know more about her private life probably than I should, and she knows a lot more about my private life. But, you know, by now—she's 80 now, and her daughter is just turning 50. But, you know, it—she let us all follow our own dream, and she just made sure we did it well.

And she was very tough. I've kept the papers I wrote for her, not because of what I wrote, but because of her comments. I emailed her just recently and have said, "I keep them to keep me honest and humble." Because she was brutal in a very—she was tough, she wasn't brutal. She wasn't Karl, she wasn't nasty, she wasn't Shifra—she was just honest. But she was one of the people who, along with Marcos and this one graduate student who I can never remember [Maria de Herrera –HBS], who was part Argentine and part Beverly Hills—her brother—you know The Beatles song, "Hey, Bungalow Bill"? Do you know that, "Hey, Bungalow Bill"?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Anyway, her brother is Bill in the "Bungalow Bill." [00:26:06] Yeah, I don't understand all those connections. But anyway, the three of us went to talk to Edith Tonelli at the Wight Art Gallery, and Shifra and Cecelia went to talk, to Edith, within two weeks of each other, about, "Let's put on a show!" [Laughs.] So that's how it started. So Cecelia was there at the ground, and she was just very open. And—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Holly, I need to use the restroom. And this might be—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay, let's stop—

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JOSH T. FRANCO: So, this is Josh Franco with Holly Barnet-Sánchez. We took a little break. Still day one, but it's session two. So we were at the point, Holly, where you're at UCLA?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I think we're at the beginning of *CARA*. I have a question still in the same moment in time, but going back to something you said earlier, because you had the history chops from a young age but not the formal analysis training. And I'm wondering if you had a moment, a clear moment or a course or a teacher, where you really began consciously developing your formal analysis skills, your visual—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It started at the University of Colorado. Albert Alhadeff, who was my major advisor and the one who I mentioned had gone to the Institute of Fine Arts—and he was interesting. His family were art dealers out of North Africa, and they were Turkish Jews, and they had lived in an Italian convent during World War II; they were protected. And then he came over here when he was about 10 years old in 1947. He's, to the day, 10 years older than I am. And we really bonded, and he did wonderful work with me on that.

And then Vernon Minor, who did the northern Baroque with me, he was very, very good. And I think I had, just from looking for so long at artworks and so many different kinds of artworks— from the Chinese stuff we had in our home, and a few Japanese things but primarily Chinese, to this really god-awful Italianate portside painting that my dad had bought when he was working at Marshall Field's. [00:02:16] It was this big. I gave it to my cousin Bruce in San Francisco. It's in his study. No, it's actually in their living room now. I saw them a couple of weeks ago, and it looks nicer than it did. But anyway—to all the books that we looked at, to all the exhibitions, to spending all that time in front of Seurat's *Sunday Afternoon* to looking at all the Surrealist work, so that I didn't have the vocabulary, I had the eye.

I never have developed an eye, nor would I ever want to, where I could be an authenticator. That's a different skillset.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's a different thing, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And that includes knowledge of chemistry and a lot of other stuff. And it also gets into a very dubious world, as far as I'm concerned. I did one appraisal of one archival collection, and I did it as a favor, and I didn't have any training for it. I think I did a really good job. I asked a lot of people for help because it was a complicated archive.

JOSH T. FRANCO: But that's a research value thing when it's archives, not a—yeah, right.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Right. But I had to put a dollar amount to it because it was being acquired by a special collections. And I'm very glad I did it. I coveted everything in there. It was Ester's work. It was Ester's archive. So it was Lydia Mendoza's dresses. [00:04:03] It was—the one thing I almost walked off with—there are two things I almost walked off with in my life—

JOSH T. FRANCO: This is Ester Hernandez?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. It was the killed plate for—it was either the *Virgin of Guadalupe Defending the Rights of Chicanos*, or *Libertad*, one of those two. I've got the prints, but that killed plate, I just wanted to walk off with it! I didn't! The other I could make a photocopy of, when I was in the National Archives in—is it Suitland or Suiteland [ph]—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Suitland, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —Suitland, Maryland, for the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. And it was a letter from FDR to Nelson Rockefeller, and it was typed, but it was signed "Franklin." It said, "You have to report to the Secretary of State, you can't go off on your own." *Boom!* The *boom* is mine, but I wanted that letter. I wanted to—you know? I have a photocopy of it, but it was so compelling.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I have that feeling all the time. I can imagine. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, yes! Oh, yes, to walk off with stuff like that. And evidently, Marcos at some point walked off with something. Let's see, is it this one? Yes. It is the catalogue for José Montoya's *Pachuco* exhibition, but look at the stamp on it. [They laugh.]

JOSH T. FRANCO: We won't say where that's from. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No. Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's funny.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Unless it was deaccessioned or something, and that can happen.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Or duplicates, sometimes they—yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, they do that but—[they laugh].

JOSH T. FRANCO: Well, we know who to return it to.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, yes. Well, it's not getting returned, but anyway. [00:06:03]

But I would never do it again. I think I did a really good job. She had a lot of albums. And the guy who teaches music, Chicano music at UCLA, who's a great trumpet player [Steve Loza –HBS]—why can't I remember his name?—and who did his dissertation on Chicano music. He was here at the time I was doing the appraisal, and so for all the musical stuff, I consulted with him.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And he was here—at UNM, you mean?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, at UNM, excuse me. And the woman who is the costumer at UNM in the department of theater [Dorothy Bacca –HBS] worked in Hollywood for many years, and she could help me with Lydia Mendoza's dresses and shoes. I went and spoke to one of the archivists, the Latin American archivist or bibliographer, for other—you know. So I felt I did a good job, but it was—it was very, very difficult. And it also—because these are—you know, I didn't—someone else asked me to do it, and I said I can't. And I realized that if I'm working on these people, I really shouldn't be doing the appraisals.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah, I think it's—from being in the archives it's—it just makes more sense to keep them separate professions.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But there are very few people out there who can—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Who can do it.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —can do anything Chicano or Latino at all. There's a guy here in town, John Randall, who was Margaret Randall's brother, and he used to have Salt of the Earth Bookstore. And he appraised. [00:08:00] I asked him to appraise my books. I gave 20, 30 boxes of books to NHCC because they were starting a visual arts library for research purposes—not for public access, it's for the people working there—but he wasn't available. He was doing Rudolfo Anaya's archive because Rudy was going to give it to UNM. And so John Randall is a good name for you to know if—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, I'm writing it now. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: He's great on books. I don't know his expertise on archival materials. The other people who might be really good—they did the Black Panther archive—is Bolerium Books in San Francisco. Are you familiar with them?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-mm [negative].

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. They're on Van Ness in the Mission, above a furniture store. They have a website, and you can buy things from the website, so you can get the address and—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But they have a wide-ranging expertise.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, that's good to know.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. But, anyway, it was wonderful because I spent days and days in Ester's apartment, just looking at all her stuff and all her papers and all her correspondence. And, oh, my God. Anyway, it was fabulous. But I won't do that again. Yeah. So, before we started *CARA*—

JOSH T. FRANCO: And let's say what the acronym is, just for the record.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation*, and that's a hysterical conversation about how that came about.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was actually—you know, we had this—we had been meeting for a couple of years before we came up with the title. [00:10:02] It was at one of the meetings, and I remember—this isn't where the—there were a bunch of us in the elevator, and we were all staying in that round—it was the Holiday Inn at the

time—the round hotel that's on the 405, right where Sunset comes into the 405. And it was—I remember Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano was in the elevator, and the really well-known Chicano filmmaker—he started out as a documentary filmmaker, and I wish I could remember his name. Well, if we pull out the *CARA* catalog, all the names are there. And they said, "*Lo que salga,* that's the perfect name! *Lo que salga.*"

And this—it had been going on for several days at this point, this meeting. Or it seemed to go on for several days. And, yeah, we—I think—but anyway, this filmmaker—Jesús Treviño, that's it! Jesús Treviño. You know, and actually Marcos is really good with titles. The book *Signs from the Heart* is his title on the California Chicano murals. And the phrase was actually, "Signs from the heart marks on the land." And I wish we had used the whole thing for that. But anyway, *Signs from the Heart*. But he was very good at coming up with titles.

But Jesús came up with this, and he said, "Well, what are we talking about here? We're talking about resistance, and we're talking about affirmation. Isn't it simple? *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation.* And then we have to figure out the starting point and the endpoint." And, oh, the conversations about, "What year does it start?"

JOSH T. FRANCO: I wondered that, how the years were determined.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: What years does it start? [00:12:01] Well, let's see, it's really based on the dates of what the UFW was doing, as far as I remember. They're—I'm trying to remember when the march from Delano to Sacramento was. You know that—it was '65 or '66.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I think '65.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And it was also—when was it that the Teatro Campesino started? Because if—and it was shorthand whether it actually—the art movement started with the Teatro Campesino, with the *actos* on the flatbed trucks getting the workers out of the fields to strike. If you can say that is the beginning—who the fuck knows? But that was—it was used as the marker in conversation. It wasn't just the *CARA* exhibition. It was designating a switch from the sensibility of being Mexican American to the sensibility of being Chicano.

And it's really interesting because César Chávez, of course, was seriously a focused man. He became an icon in the *movimiento*, broadly based, that did not address the fact that what he was working on was labor issues. And that's what he was working on. It was labor, it was about farm labor, it was about benefits and all the things that the UFW was working on. [00:14:00] So he had blinders on. He was not voluble. Dolores Huerta was far more open. Dolores has written about Ester in exhibition catalogues. She went to art exhibitions. César wanted to see it [*CARA* –HBS] when it was in Fresno, if I'm remembering correctly, and the art museum in Fresno said, "No, you cannot come." The reason was that so many of the docents were wives of the growers, and they felt they could not guarantee his safety.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's incredible.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And it was really interesting because in 2011 or 2012, Amalia had a wonderful exhibition there. And the times have changed radically. And when we first went to see my husband's daughter when she first got her tenure track—*whee!*—teaching job at Cal State Fresno, and she was walking us around campus, there is this peace park and there is a bronze statue of César Chávez.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And he wasn't allowed in the museum before.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And now, she has a colleague whose name I'll have to pull up—but he was a student of Teresa McKenna, who was at USC in the English department—who was one of the organizers of the *CARA* exhibition and one of the coeditors of the *CARA* catalog, who is this wonderful person. So when I met William, who's from East LA, who teaches Chicano literature in the English department with my stepdaughter, and we started talking—and I said, "Well, who"—at USC, and of course, I'm a UCLA person here. [00:16:10] I said, "Who did you study with?" And he said "Teresa McKenna," and I went, "Ooh," you know—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —and so it was really fun. I said, "What's this with the statue of César Chávez in the middle of the campus?" And I told him the story about, you know, César not being able to see the exhibition, and he said, "I have sons and daughters of the farmworkers and sons and daughters of the growers in classes together, and it's okay. It works fine." That was a different generation of animosity.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So that made me feel really hopeful.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's really nice.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, it was. It was really cool. But when Ester did the *Virgin of Guadalupe Defending the Rights of Chicanos*, and it appeared on a cover of a monthly magazine kind of thing for the one of the Central Valley radio stations, and they were asking her to come in to the station for an interview—I mean, remember, this is in the '70s.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: They had to do it remotely because there was such blowback on that piece in the Valley, in the Central Valley, that they could do a remote interview, but she couldn't go to the station. And I don't know which town it was.

JOSH T. FRANCO: But she was probably getting it from multiple directions—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: She was.

JOSH T. FRANCO: —because of the sacrilege and the labor movement and—yeah. [00:18:01]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Everything. And well, you know, César was a devout Catholic, and he—personally, he was a devoted Catholic. And it was also a very good strategic position to break his fasts with the priests and to carry the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe along with the UFW banner, because he was trying to make it very clear to Washington that this was not a socialist operation. He did ally himself, as I recall, with the AFL-CIO because the growers hired the Teamsters to smash the UFW. Because the Teamsters at that point were really effective thugs. This was the Teamsters of the originally Jimmy Hoffa. And so all of that was part of the mix of—

And when we did *CARA*, we and Barbara Carrasco—we hired several people to work on *CARA,* and Barbara was one of them. We needed permission from César to use materials. We had these—what we called educational vitrines, and we wanted to borrow stuff with the UFW logo and their materials and issues of *El Malcriado*. Even though we got them from Andy Zermeño, who was the editor of *El Malcriado,* we had to—you didn't do anything without getting César's permission. [00:20:00]

And so we took Barbara up because Barbara had worked with César, with the UFW, for years. A lot of artists did: Carlos Almaraz; well, Andy Zermeño; Magu I think even did work. And so we drove up to the headquarters in La Paz, and we had 15 minutes to talk with César. And we were there for two hours. And he essentially—at the end of it—and I'll give you a little story about what it was like to be there and what was it. But at the end of it, he said, "Whatever Barbara wants, you all can have."

So it was—you walked into that office, and it was about two-thirds the size of this space. It was a box. It was very boxy, and the ceilings I remember as being quite high.

JOSH T. FRANCO: So under 500 square feet?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. We showed him slides of what we were including, including Manuel Martinez's *Altar*. He said, "That's mine! I want it back." [They laugh.] And Manuel was so pissed at him because after he had done all that work and made it, they just left it out in the open and it was disintegrating. He took a truck and brought it back to Golden, Colorado, where his studio is, and it was left in the barn until Marcos and Edith Tonelli doing—we all went on studio tours, and they saw this in the barn and said, "What is this?" And he said what it was, so he had to restore it. It was just about disintegrated because it's wood—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Because it looks beautiful now.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was outside at La Paz for five, 10 years, just outside in the elements. [00:22:03] But we said, "No, you can't have it back." And I don't think he really wanted it back, but he was very proprietary about it, César.

But he said—and this has been published subsequently, and Luis Valdez has talked about this. He said, "Well, I know"—and ceiling-to-floor, academy-style artwork was hung, of paintings by—I'm assuming they were all Chicano artists, but it could have been from anyone who was supportive. Paintings of him, of the farmworkers, of the land, of the short-handled hoe, of—it was just filled with art that had been given to him. And he said, "Well, you know, I really know nothing about art." And he's a very—or was—a very cagey guy, I mean. And Barbara went [gestures], and I just rolled my eyes. And he said, "But no, that's not right. The march, that is my art form."

Luis has talked about it verbally and in print, that the march is theater and the march isn't going to change things. Writing and passing laws is what's going to change things. The march, the artwork, the theater—whatever it is—is what gets the attention and raises awareness and consciousness and gets people to talk to their legislators or gets the legislators themselves on their own to pay attention to do something about it. [00:24:14] But I hadn't—and this would have been around '98, I think. You know, two years before it opened,

because we were starting to pull everything together.

JOSH T. FRANCO: '88, '88.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: '88, excuse me. '88, thank you. Pull things together, and it could have been even '89 by then. We were scrambling at the end, and we had to work with Luis Valdez and his main guy, whose last name is [Phil] Esparza—I'm blanking—to get permission for stuff from the Teatro Campesino. They lent us masks and all sorts of really cool stuff.

The various studio visits were just amazing, the process. But I was totally green—I totally didn't know anything. I had had my two years of experience living in Boyle Heights with Marcos to get a sense of Boyle Heights, to get a sense of the murals, to get a sense of the Asco people, to get a sense of Self Help Graphics. We're always hanging out there. We ended up doing some grant writing and Sister Karen would pay us in prints, *woo-hoo-hoo.*

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, that's great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But everybody had studios there. Marcos and Leo Limón had known each other at East LA College and—no, at—not East LA, at LA City College. And that's where Marcos moved from being a Mexican American to being a Chicano. [00:26:10] He had three teachers, one of whom was Chicano, and I can't pull up his name anymore. He was a Chicano Studies teacher.

And Marcos, who was trying very hard to be an American—if you heard his voice on the phone, you wouldn't hear that East LA rhythm, you would not hear any accent, any of that stuff that is either sort of natural or emphasized if you're Culture Clash and you're going to use it theatrically. It was his younger brother who was transformed earlier. Marcos came here when he was six years old, from Tijuana. He was born in Mexico City, and his youngest brother was born here. But he asked this teacher—I wish I could remember. He said, "What is a Chicano?" And the teacher says, "A Chicano is a Mexican American who's had it up to here."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And that really helped him. The other two were Kazuo Higa, who taught art history, who is the father of Karin Higa. I don't know if you knew Karin. She grew up to be the senior curator at the Japanese American Museum in Los Angeles. She actually went to Columbia University and had studied with Esther Pasztory, and she paid for her tuition by going on quiz shows. She did a wonderful exhibition of documents from the internment camps where her father had spent his childhood, Kaz had spent his childhood. [00:28:11]

If you look in this book, *Give Me Life*, all the early photographs of Estrada Courts, as the murals are going up or before they went up, and it's all graffiti—it was Kaz who took those photographs. And there is a picture of Karin and a picture of Kevin. Kevin ended up working with Peter Sellars for a while. But it was Kazuo, Keiko, Karen, and Kevin in Culver City, and he really made a huge impact on Marcos.

And then the third was Raoul De la Sota, who was an art teacher and who was a really extraordinary artist. He's now well into his 80s. And when I knew him, he was doing these big close-ups of mountains in Mexico that made them almost abstract, and cactus. He is the nephew of Anthony Quinn, the actor. And until Anthony Quinn died, Raoul didn't talk about him at all. He was very quiet about it. He didn't hide the fact, but after he died, he started working on art that addressed his uncle and his uncle's career, and he's particularly focused on when he played the pope and when he played *Zorba*.

So that was Marcos's education, and then there was Leo. They got involved in MEChA [*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano* de Aztlán]. So he knew Leo before we started hanging out at Self Help Graphics. And Yreina Cervantez was there, and Tito Delgado was there, and a guy, a young guy, named Urista. [00:30:06] I don't know what's happened to him. Diane Gamboa was around a little bit, Daniel Martinez sometimes. But, you know, it was a magnificent place to just hang out. There's one story that I want to tell you about, but I don't want it on the record, but it was hysterical. Or we can put it on the record, and we can edit it out, I don't know.

JOSH T. FRANCO: If you don't want it on—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, it doesn't—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, it's a little risqué and it involves Sister Karen and her naiveté as a nun, but it was very funny.

So we were doing stuff with that. We were going to all the Asco stuff, and we were spending time—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —at SPARC, yeah, at SPARC, helping to create the slide archive and catalogue it. Because Marcos and I both worked at the slide library at UCLA, so we knew how to. We used—Sandy Garber, who was the slide librarian, made a simplified cataloging system for slides that would be specific to that. That collection is at the Archives of American Art, and there were two copies—one went to DC and one went to Pasadena. That's where I met Tim Drescher, who's my coauthor here, because he had been documenting community murals all over the country, and he was copublisher of *Community Murals* magazine. That actually was produced in his garage. And—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Can you say what SPARC stands for?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Social and Public Art Resource Center, in the old Venice jail. If people have seen *Annie Hall*, they have seen it. There is a scene that the old Venice jail is in. And that's how they made money, was to rent out the old Venice jail, which was SPARC, and that was Judy's. Judy and two other women started SPARC as an arm that would allow her to fund the painting of the *Great Wall*. So we also took people on tours of the *Great Wall*.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Judy Baca's *Great*—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, Judy Baca's *Great Wall of Los Angeles*. It wasn't finished yet because the last scene is of the '84 Olympics, which was also referencing the '34 Olympics, which were in Los Angeles. So it was still in process, and they had turned the jail block—they had taken most of the cells out, but left two of the cells in, and that was the gallery space. [00:02:07] And there was studio space there.

So Marcos and I would give tours of the *Great Wall*, we gave tours of the Estrada Courts. We never, ever took anyone into Ramona Gardens. That was too isolated. It was very much—it didn't feel like an armed camp at all, but it felt like you were trespassing. I mean, Marcos and I went there all the time. And there was a young man who came from Germany to do his undergraduate honors thesis on the murals of East LA, and we would take him there. Of course, he spoke English really well and his name was Dieter Pinke, and Marcos has a copy of that thesis. It was fabulous.

So we were doing all of these different [things –HBS] before we went and said, "You know, this is"—and we had lots of conversations just amongst ourselves, that, you know, the Wight Art Gallery would be a good place because it's a university museum and it has a different mandate, a different portfolio than, say, LACMA. And LACMA, for what it was mandated to do, it did some magnificent, just groundbreaking, amazing exhibitions. But they weren't interested in Chicano art particularly. And there had been, of course, other exhibitions of Chicano art, but they had been more focused and they hadn't taken—

And it was—you know, we were starting in 1984 working on this, and Edith was able to get an NEA. I think it was an NEA. [00:04:23] It may have been—an NEH! An NEH planning grant to bring everyone together. We would have to look in the catalogue to see who all the everyone was. But it was well over—well, it was probably about 30 people in the photograph of us, was from the first gathering. And of course, José Montoya was there, [. . . –HBS] , and Shifra was really pretty clear at that point that she would be the curator. That's what—you know, she really wanted the opportunity—and I don't blame her. If I were in her position, I would have done the same thing—to put her stamp on what Chicano art was and its relationship to the movement. And that's what was most important to her. She was very much an engaged political activist as well as an art historian. Her dissertation was on Mexican art in the 1960s or—yeah, I think it's the 1960s. You know, she was living in Boyle Heights. When they moved from Brooklyn, they moved to Boyle Heights, and she was a teenager and so she got immersed in the politics. And what's his face was there. Jacinto Quirarte was there, Robert someone [not an artist—an academic –HBS], who was a big muckety-muck somewhere at—maybe UC Irvine. [00:06:13]

JOSH T. FRANCO: I don't think he's even in the show. Was Eduardo Carrillo involved at any point, or consulted or interested?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: In terms of the organizing of it?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, or is he in *CARA*?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, he—there's one of his paintings in *CARA*. Marcos and Edith did a studio visit to him, and it was—as they were taking off from the airport after the visit, Marcos looked down and said, "Gosh, I wonder if there was an earthquake, we could see it happening." And the earthquake was happening as he was saying this. It was one of those, *woo-hoo-hoo*, *Twilight Zone* kind of moments. And it was that big earthquake. That would have been in '88, whatever the big—the one where people were in the Giants Stadium. And Cecelia's house was—she couldn't live in her home. And there was also all sorts of stuff going on. Carrillo's studio was destroyed.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh. I ask about him too because I think in his papers, there was a lot of documents from one of the earlier Chicano art exhibitions.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. Well, he was involved early on and he did—he was a co-painter, a co-artist for the mural that was on the wall for Chicano Studies, in the offices where *Aztlán*, the journal, was produced. And Tim is very close to—was close to him and close to his widow, and the woman who's created that—[00:08:05]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Betsy.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. So he's done work for them. He was also close to Carrillo, Eduardo, because he had his own winery kind of thing, and all the bottles of wine were destroyed in that earthquake. And Tim is a serious wine connoisseur of California wines, so there were several points of intersection. But yeah, the studio visits were fun. But that first meeting was really—it went for two days.

JOSH T. FRANCO: This is all of the organizers of *CARA*?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, what became the—there were people who didn't stay involved. Mario Barrera, the sociologist from UC Berkeley who is one of the makers of the film *Chicano Park*. A guy who is from New Mexico who works on the Jewish community, the Sephardic Jews.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Crypto-Jews.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: The Crypto-Jews, he did. And he just—Mario was oversubscribed, Barrera. This gentleman, he just wasn't that interested. And as you know by now, the complexities of the *hispano* community here vis-à-vis Mexico vis-à-vis Spain vis-à-vis politicized Chicanos—it took me years to kind of suss it out once I moved here, after being in California and then coming here. [00:10:06] And poor Delilah Montoya took—she took great pains to sit me down and kind of walk me through it. You know, sometimes you have to hear it 30 times before—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And experience a whole bunch of stuff for it to click, and it finally has clicked, but why did it have to take so long? But anyway, I think this gentleman was an *hispano*, and the whole Chicano *movimiento* thing wasn't so interesting to him.

And René Yañez, of course. And Judy. Yeah, Judy was at the first meeting. No, you don't do something like that in Los Angeles without Judy. I mean, we can look at the photograph later and kind of fill that in. But it was—and Cecelia was there, and Marcos and I were there, and—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Were you all—what was the room like? Was it a round table or rectangular?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was a very large room. I'm trying to remember whether it was in the Wight Art Gallery. I think it was in the Wight Art Gallery, which doesn't really exist anymore. It's become part of the Hammer. It's been merged, but it was—you could have had 60, 70 people in there easily, and the tables were all put so we were in meeting style, conference style. [00:12:03]

Tomás was there. I had met Tomás before that once. We did this symposium. It was—John Tagg, Marcos Sánchez-Tranquilino, and Holly Barnet-Sánchez put together this two-day symposium called *Arts and Histories Reconsidered*. And Donald Preziosi was there, Aldona Jonaitis , a Native Americanist was there. Cecelia gave a paper. Marcos gave his paper on the Pachuco, which he had—it was his fevered, anguished, furious response to Octavio Paz. You know, "The Representation of the Zoot Suit and Its Misrepresentation by Octavio Paz." He sat down—and he wasn't doing it for anything. He just read the essay and just—whoa! So he had the five-by-eight cards, and he sat there just writing by hand—he thought he was just doing notes—and in three and a half hours, the whole damn thing was done. Of course, it was refined and developed and he and John developed it further—"The Pachuco's Flayed Hide"—and they actually delivered it at a cultural studies conference at Champaign–Urbana, and I will have to set the scene on that one.

So all of this was going on, so this symposium—and John did a, "Is this art history? Well, yes and no." You know, he was doing—and all of this actually got published later on in a local LA art magazine. [*A Contemporary Arts Magazine*. Winter 1987. Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art. –HBS] And Harry Gamboa spoke. [00:14:00] I was one of the discussants, and I was supposed to discuss Donald Preziosi.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, I couldn't make sense of Donald Preziosi's stuff to save my soul. And a couple of other graduate students—and this is when Cecelia came out as a materialist, as essentially a Marxist. A materialist, better than a Marxist. Her colleagues had been sort of encouraging her for years. Barbara Carrasco

did the poster for it, and it was wonderful, and I've got that someplace. Everything was there except for the place where it's supposed to take place on. And so we had to run out and get tape to add to every single poster, so people would know where to go.

So Shifra brought Tomás, and that's when they were just—they had finished up *Arte Chicano,* and it was coming out. I think it came out in '84, and so this was probably in '86 maybe. So we were already—well, I'm kind of getting things confused there because I—it must have been before we went and talked about *CARA* because—or we might have been just in the conversing, and the meeting hadn't happened yet. It's the only time I ever saw Tomás Ybarra-Frausto in blue jeans.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And it's the first time I ever saw him. They were rolled up at the bottom, and he was very spiffy. But have you ever seen Tomás in—

JOSH T. FRANCO: No.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —blue jeans?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did he have his hat?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: He did not have a hat.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. [00:16:00] Was he coming from—was he up north at Stanford at that point?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: He was at Stanford. He became one of the directors of the *CARA* project and then he went to the Rockefeller Foundation and he had to withdraw and not be part of it, because we might want to go to the Rockefeller for funding. It was just by definition a conflict. It also was a brand-new position, and it was in New York, and we were in LA—he just walked away from it.

But it was mostly, as I recall, first the director of the museum—whose name now just went out of my head; it will come back—she sort of set the stage. [. . . –HBS] Someone from San Diego was there. [Richard Griswold del Castillo, a professor of Chicano Studies at San Diego State University. –HBS] And it was Shifra in consultation—Edith Tonelli! Shifra made the list of who should be invited, who she felt, and people from Texas, from the various arts organizations. Someone must have been there from the Midwest, from New Mexico. LeFebre, who's a muralist here in Albuquerque, and his wife who was an artist. And various academics from around. Texas had a huge representation, as you can imagine. [00:18:03]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Colorado, anybody?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, there were a couple of people from Colorado. And I can see his face and his work ended up in the exhibition. And Pacific Northwest, there was someone from the Pacific Northwest, so—oh, I remember who it was from Chicago. [José Gamaliel González and Victor Sorrell –HBS] Once again, I'm going to have to look at all these names. But it was quite a distinguished group.

It was basically José and this person named Robert, who interestingly enough in the 1950s—he was from the Bay Area, as was Jacinto Quirarte, and they had painted a mural together when they were teenagers. I think he was a folklorist, that's it. And Richard Griswold del Castillo from San Diego, he was there. And someone—oh, I remember two people from the Pacific Northwest were there. They had done—from Evergreen State. But I think it was this Robert person, or Roberto, and José. Did you ever hear José s voice?

JOSH T. FRANCO: In the videos at the Fowler exhibition about a couple of years ago.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: His voice—*mmm*—was commanding, and he could modulate it. It was a gift, and he knew what to do with it. And his presence, how he carried himself, and he always wore his vest. He had spent time in North Beach with Ferlinghetti and the Beats, and he had his whole thing together. [00:20:06] It was this wonderfulness and the sense of danger, barely controlled.

And he was very respectful, extraordinarily respectful, but he also said, essentially, you know, "There's this multiculturalism thing going around, and everybody wants to do something now with Chicano art. And we say, 'Okay, that's really great,' and they invite us in and we talk and then until the opening, we don't hear anything. So unless we are part of the process from beginning to end, we're not in it. You cannot have our names, you cannot have our endorsement," whatever he said. It was very eloquent, and this Robert person—I think he was at UC Irvine—but it was very clear that it was going to be their show. "All due respect to Shifra Goldman"—he said he didn't know Edith from Adam, but it was really directed at Shifra. It was very clear that however it played out from there, it wasn't that Shifra couldn't be part of it, but Shifra's voice was going to be a very small part of it. [00:22:08]

And I remember seeing Shifra walking back by herself to the parking garage, and just watching her. Her head was down, her shoulders were hunched over. The rug had been taken out from under her, and I think she was very angry on a number of counts. One, it was one of the guys who had done this, and she felt disrespected because she was a woman, and I think there was an element of truth to that. José was very chauvinistic. He's also very supportive but there's—you know, he is a patronizing kind of guy, or could be. And she understood that also she's an Anglo, and this was a statement of, "We need to speak for ourselves. We want your help but you"—and this is my putting voice to it—"but we don't want you to speak for us." And, you know, Shifra could be kind of a Jewish mom and speak for everybody. It's an interesting process, negotiating Shifra. [00:24:02]

She actually—she wanted to take—after that conference, with Marcos's thing on the Pachuco, she wanted him to give it to her so she could have it published in *La Opinión* in their supplement, magazine supplement. He said, "No." She runs over to me, and says, "Convince Marcos to give it to me!" And I said, "You have to talk to Marcos." And she just went and took it, and published it and had the ending changed.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And that was before it was published in the catalog?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was long before it was published in the catalog.

JOSH T. FRANCO: But regardless of what was—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it was—there was this magazine, art magazine in LA, called *Journal*, and it was published there the way—along with Tagg's "yes and no" presentation ["Should Art Historians Know Their Place?" is the title of the presentation –HBS] and Harry Gamboa's discussion of Chicano artists in LA that was part of that conference of arts and history. So the three of them, they—and Marcos was the guest editor of it. So it came out under his auspices, but Shifra just went and took it and had it published in *La Opinión.* And they modified his criticism of Paz because Paz is the great man.

JOSH T. FRANCO: What was Marcos's reaction and when he sees this?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, Marcos was livid. And Marcos's tongue was very sharp and he just—he said, "You know, I'm not having anything to do with you anymore. This is totally unacceptable." I don't remember all the language he used. He didn't' swear a lot, so there wouldn't have been a lot of obscenities, but he was extraordinarily—he felt betrayed. [00:26:07] It wasn't hers to do; why did she feel she could do that? I think what he said—and here she is this great Marxist, Stalinist actually she was—"You're just nothing but a colonizer!" Let's see, what can I say to this woman that will hurt her where it matters? And she rightly saw herself as an ally, but she also wrongly functioned. And we all can cross lines, and we probably all have crossed lines, and it's so easy to do in these situations. It's so complicated and—but that wasn't complicated. That was not complicated.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did she offer any explanation?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: "Well, it needed to be out there!" No, it—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So, no. [They laugh.] Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: [Laughs.] "I was doing you a favor; you're published!" "You fucking messed with my text."

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That's rough.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So we were doing all these things at the same time, and then I kind of all pulled together. It was the same time I was starting to work on my research for my dissertation, which meant I was going to Washington, DC; I was going to New York; and I was going to Boston. When I was in New York, I stayed with the mother of a friend of ours in LA, and she lived in Flatbush, in Brooklyn, two blocks from Brooklyn College. And I had to take a gazillion subways to get in. [00:28:01]

We also were working with a woman named Barbara Braun. And Barbara Braun did a wonderful book called *Pre-Columbian Art and the Post-Columbian World* that was published by Abrams. She was a pre-Columbianist, and I met her when Cecelia put us both on a panel at College Art. That was my first public outing of my being a scholar. Barbara left the field. She now is a literary agent, and she still lives in her apartment on 14th Street in New York, and now she's primarily an artist. When I go to New York, I try to see her. But when she was doing her research for this book—if you're familiar with the exhibition that the two-volume catalog that was at MoMA, *Primitivism and Modern Art?*

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: There was supposed to be a pre-Columbian section, and Barbara was going to curate that section. And then they realized using the term "primitive" with pre-Columbian art is very—well, the term

"primitive" is very problematic, but there's no way that imperial art of—well, art of empires—can even in those days safely be called primitive. So they just excised it. So this book is what she would have done.

And so the *Pre-Columbian Art and the Post-Columbian World*, she did a section on modern takes, including Henry Moore, sculpture. She came out, and we gave her a tour of two things: One, the Mayan Revival style in downtown LA, and then we took her to Estrada Courts. All of that is in her book. [00:30:02] I have a wonderful photograph because Barbara and Jeanette Peterson, who is a Cecelia Klein—Cecelia's first PhD—who taught for years at UC Santa Barbara, and me and Marcos all went to see an exhibition at LACMA, which was the Impressionists that had been confiscated from private collectors at the time of the Russian revolution. So they had all been in the Soviet Union in museums there. You could go to the Soviet Union to see Matisse and Cézanne and—you know? This was Glasnost, so they brought this exhibition and so we all went to that together, and there's a photograph of all of us together that Marcos took. But the one thing about that exhibition is, you couldn't see a damn thing because so many people were—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —there. But I did see Ginger Rogers, so I followed her around the exhibition because I could look at her, and I could think of her dancing in high heels and backwards to Fred Astaire's, because [laughs] I couldn't see the art. So anyway.

But Barbara Braun was part of that. So all of this was kind of—everything was happening, and everybody was doing that amount of stuff. And the poetry readings, Marisela Norte was just extraordinary. I remember one poem that ended—she did epic poems, and one of them said, "I never knew fear until I looked in the face of the man that I loved." And I've clearly thought about that for a long time.

So everything was happening. And Marcos was starting to work on his thesis, which was looking at the relationship between graffiti and murals at Estrada Courts. That work was truly groundbreaking. Everything that comes out of this—where we have looked—"we" meaning just not me and Tim, but anyone who's worked on murals in LA—has to refer to Marcos and what he did. Because Chicano murals are both universal and very local. They're universal themes, but they also address the local realities. And the fact that murals went up in these housing projects, because you have these great big walls, means that you are contending with the reality of youth gangs, because that's where they are. There was, at that time, one gang per housing project.

And so the negotiation between the housing authority, the non-gang residents of the projects, the gang—which at Estrada Courts was the VNE [Varrio Nuevo Estrada]—and the Chicano artists who are coming in, some of whom actually had some kind of prior gang affiliation, which made their being in VNE territory a little dicey. [00:02:29] Cat Felix, Charles Felix, who was the project director and who painted a lot of the murals including this with the kids, he was with an entirely different gang, an entirely different project. Because he was *compadres* with some of the people at Estrada Courts, he was okay, he was acceptable. But he never could go to Ramona Gardens. He never saw the murals there. He just couldn't. So those dynamics were uncovered by Marcos.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Speaking of graffiti, was Chaz Bojorquez around for any of this?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Chaz was around. He was—yeah, he was definitely around. He wasn't doing anything in the projects. But Chaz is a phenomenon unto himself.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Right, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: We got to know him when we were—I was with Marcos when he was doing all the oral histories and interviews for his thesis. And Tim and I used those for the book [*Give Me Life: Iconography and Identity in East LA Murals* –HBS], and Marcos did a chapter in the book, and we had permission. In fact, he just gave them all to me.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I was going to ask if they're all with you now.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, I have them all, and it's really interesting. That's how we learned how important the gangs were, when Cat said, "No, I've never had enough time to go to Ramona Gardens." *Aah.* [00:04:07] We thought about that a little bit.

But Willie Herrón, whose brother was head of one of the gangs, the Loma Geraghty gang—and why he did *The Wall That Cracked Open* was because his brother was stabbed in the alley right below that. Yeah, he was stabbed by people in the Hazard Grande gang, but Willie was one step removed. Willie had tremendous—he has tremendous respect for everyone. Whether he does or not, that's how he comports himself. But if you look at his oral history, and he talks about his uncles who were *pachucos* and then the younger generation who were *cholos*, who were different, and the gang members, he does not diss or patronize or say anything that is—it isn't

just not pejorative. It is—he's not pitying them. This is part of the world, and these are people who are negotiating the world, and we all negotiate the world in our own way. So, he painted at Estrada and Ramona, and he could've painted anywhere in that East LA environment because he was both part of it and not affiliated. [00:06:03]

And that—it wasn't that he wasn't going to be—when they were all at the high school, they went to the one that was in *Stand and Deliver* [Garfield High School –HBS], I can't—you know, he had that shit beaten out of him because he was this skinny kid who was all dressed up in white suits and—you know?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. [They laugh.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Jetters. Jetters, they were jetters. But the gang—he's quite remarkable in how he negotiates the world at all.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. Were there women taggers?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: There have always been women taggers.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. In Marcos's interview project, then?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, and there were reasons for that. Women taggers would have had boyfriends or husbands, and having another person who was male talking to them who wasn't their husband or boyfriend would have been problematic. And Marcos had a very healthy respect for the gangs and was a little fearful. He went into Ramona and Estrada when I was with him because I was—because he also wanted to make very sure he wasn't mistaken for being a gang member from a different territory. So you come along with this white lady and that neutralizes you.

And I never felt unsafe any of those places. There was a man who was made famous in a photograph who was—his photograph was published in the *LA Times*. They did a series that they won the Pulitzer Prize for, on Latino Los Angeles, and this was in the early '80s. [00:08:12] And this guy was head of White Fence Gang. And he was 21 years old and his—what do you call it? Moniker isn't—*placa* is what he would've tagged with, but that's—was Yogi. And he was a very handsome young man.

But the one thing that Marcos taught me when I came into Boyle Heights in East LA is you don't look a gang member in the eyes. That is a challenge by definition. You just don't look them in—and I was—he was driving down the street in his car, whatever it was, it was a lowrider of some sort. It was big, it was a 1940s car. And I said, "Wow, look at that!" And Marcos took my head and went like this and he said—

JOSH T. FRANCO: You don't want—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —"You don't do that. [They laugh.] You just don't do that."

So, you know, you saw Yogi. Yogi was a presence. And his photograph is in *CARA* where he's tying the bandana around a younger man's head. We wanted that photograph ["Home Boys/White Fence," 1983 –HBS] in here [*Give Me Life* –HBS], and the photographer said, "I've used it too much over the years; I'm not letting people use it anymore." And Yogi I think was dead by the time he was 23.

One of the most poignant things that I ever experienced when we were working on this book is talking with one of the surviving heads of Mechicano. [00:10:04] We were in Judithe Hernandez's apartment, and Joe [Rodriguez]—. Anyway, he showed me this rough footage of a mural, the first mural that went up in the Ramona Gardens area that was outside of Ramona Gardens. It was on a market. Wayne Healy was there. It was sort of like, "Let's paint a picture," and they got some scaffolding and then—and it was—some Swedish guy had a video camera, and he kept focusing on this one young woman because he thought she was cute, but he did focus on other things.

But Joe would go, "This guy is in prison, this guy's dead, she's dead," *bam, bam, bam, bam*. He said, "We did this." Of course, it was already starting at Estrada Courts, but the Mechicano folks did this because we created this project. We were painting these murals to help to make a difference in these people's lives. He didn't say, "We wanted to save them." It wasn't that presumptuous, but it was like—it was—he ran smack up against the fact that there is—in the real world, there is a limitation in terms of what art can do to save lives. And I was talking to him in, say, 2014, and that was made in '71, and he was still heartbroken. [00:12:03]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. So we diverged from *CARA* through Marcos's research, which is great. It was great. But I want to get back to *CARA* and thinking about Shifra and what you were just saying about your first times in Boyle Heights. How were you negotiating your own whiteness in, like, the meeting space and then the first conversations?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, it was interesting. I didn't know enough to know that that was going to be an issue, and that sounds really naïve. I mean, I learned very quickly that I needed to do that. But—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Can you recall a moment—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —I—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, go ahead.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, I think the first—actually, the first time I was aware of it was when José pulled the rug out from Shifra. There were several things going on there. But the most predominant for me personally was—this is a woman who is very involved from a very—she's the first person outside of the community that took the community seriously in terms of its art, in terms of its politics, in terms of its—a lot of things. There were a lot of people within the community that took it seriously but—and I'm talking primarily, she was looking at the art as if it was—it had value, and it had value in and of itself, and it had value as a way of understanding the community from which it was coming. [00:14:00]

JOSH T. FRANCO: And she speaks for the discipline of Art History, which is—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And she speaks for the discipline of Art History. What is interesting is her PhD was looking at Mexican art. You know, her first experience was in Boyle Heights as a kid, but as a scholar becoming a professional, she was looking in Mexico, and her closest friend was the scholar Raquel Tibol. And they stayed—they're very similar.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: What she was doing was looking at Chicano art through the lens of Mexican art, and that is a huge problem. It is not Mexican art. It isn't trying to be Mexican art. What I was doing, because I didn't know anything—except I lived in Boyle Heights, and we were doing all these different things, so I had snippets—and I was put in charge of certain things in the catalogue. Dana Leibsohn, who I hijacked from pre-Columbian and Spanish colonial art, she was a fellow grad student, we put together the chronology in—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, so helpful.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —the text. All the various chronologies, and I talked to a lot of people. I left out—I left out!—the taking of Chicano Park.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I don't know if the San Diego folks have forgiven me yet. It just—*chooo*. [00:16:02] But everybody was proofreading, nobody saw it, but it was my responsibility. I still have the boxes of cards with all those—the things—or I think I still have them that—putting those together. So it was this huge, huge learning curve for me, and I was fascinated by the dynamics of the various parties, the fact that it didn't matter what part of the country they were from in that first meeting. They all knew each other. This was all family, and because they were all family, they fought all the time, and they hugged all the time, and they argued and—what is more Chicano? I, in my life, have seen fistfights over what is Chicano art. And then a lot of argumentation, but there have been a lot of conferences. The Califas conference in Santa Cruz, that was key. We have all the documents from that.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I think that's what I was thinking of when I thought of Carrillo. Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. And that was amazing, and that was really important for a lot of my work. I used it for this. I've used it for many different things. That was—you know, and Luis Valdez was involved in that. Jorge Klor de Alva. So there were different attitudes.

So in those first meetings, I was essentially a fly on the wall, and I didn't speak up while things were going on unless I felt I wanted to hear some clarification. [00:18:06] I didn't understand what someone was saying, and I felt that I could ask for clarification. I am also slightly dyslexic and reading is some kind—it's an adventure for me, and sometimes I use a ruler because I'll start on one line and end on three lines below, and that makes for an interesting narrative. [Laughs.] It's sort of a Borges kind of thing. [They laugh.] But hearing does that. I reverse things in hearing so I ask—my whole life—when I finally realized that I wasn't hearing [laughs] what I was supposed to be hearing—I would ask people to clarify. So I've always—I've been in that mode.

But it was—I felt at first—and it was interesting because Edith Tonelli, the director of the museum, is this statuesque—she's well over six feet tall—very beautiful woman. She worked on an artist of the WPA era, wasn't a WPA artist but—so she's an Americanist. She had a presence about her, so all the energy toward white females was going to Edith or Shifra.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Interesting.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So I was—there was one other Anglo, a woman—no, there were a couple of other Anglos there. A couple of men who were involved. Philip Brookman?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. [00:20:00]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And a guy who was head at that point of the Children's Museum in Boston, who was a very well-known museological kind of person. I don't know whether he was brought in at the beginning or he was brought in as a consultant as we were starting to think about traveling. But the other woman who was Anglo—and there was the Anglo guy, the people from Evergreen State in Washington state, they had put together this exhibition of Latino art of the Northwest. And that's how I learned about—what's his face—the Seattle-based artist who does the really—patterning—who was originally from Mexico? He's got to be close to 80 right now. [Alfredo Arreguin –HBS]

JOSH T. FRANCO: I don't know.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: If I could think of his name. And he put together this most wonderful book of photographs of the installation in the opening weekend of *CARA,* and I can't find it anywhere! I wanted to show it to you and—it was just lovely that he did that.

So there were a few Anglos who were in museological positions that could inform the discourse of how to make this work. Because I was with Marcos, that gave me a kind of cover. It was interesting when Marcos and I separated, and it was in '96, '97, so we were here. [00:22:05] I was very concerned because by that point, Chicano art was my world. It was my vocation, it was my career, and while I was hired to teach modern Latin American art history here, within a couple of years, I said, "I'm going"—UNM is wonderful. You can pretty much—if you're assigned to teach a course, you've got to teach it, but everything else they—in art and art history, you teach what you want. So it was never an issue, and it made it really fabulous for all of us. So, you know, I did seminars on *Pacific Standard Time*, I did all—that was very at the end of my career, but I was teaching. But I was concerned, honestly, even after all that time—because we started working on *CARA* in '84, and I was involved since '82.

JOSH T. FRANCO: It was all done by '96.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. And I was already working on *Just Another Poster?*. I mean, I was legitimate in the field. But I was wondering, in terms—not in terms of the museum world, not in terms of the institutional world. I was concerned in terms of the artists and the writers, that I felt that it was Marcos who had legitimacy, and I was sort of a fellow traveler. So I actually went on a field trip to meet with people to find out—

JOSH T. FRANCO: After you separated?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. We were divorced by then, so it would have been '97. I remember I—the person I remember most was Ester Hernandez, and she and René were together at that point. [00:24:10] I went out there and spent a few days with them and sort of broached the subject, you know, "Is this okay?" I'm this white girl. Marcos was kind of the lead in terms of being project coordinator. Well, we were considered a team, but he was the Chicano and I wasn't. I didn't have any anxiety about my intellectual capacity or my visual capacity.

I did remember trying to get a really dark tan [they laugh] when I was working at Head Start down in the South Side of Chicago and how, you know, it's—and I've never gotten over that, that sensibility of, "I can't walk in your shoes, I can't." I just read this wonderful book about Harper Lee. I have it downstairs. And so I'm rereading—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, that's an interesting comparison, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, rereading *To Kill A Mocking Bird.* And this wonderful young woman who wrote this book said, you know, If you look at it, her [Lee's –HBS] white characters are beautifully drawn and her black characters are pretty amorphous.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, very silent.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: She didn't have the experience of the black community or black individuals to be able to articulate them. And being a woman from Alabama, she had her own belief system. [00:26:04] It's a very complex discussion of her and her work, and it's marvelous but it's—and I—there always have been people who have been suspicious of me and have looked at me—and Tim had his own experience with this, and it was with someone I know quite well, an older academic—but, of being a Chicano wannabe. Well, no. I have a very strong identity as who I am, and I don't need to be anyone else. That doesn't mean that I'm any less interested, committed, enthralled by, moved by. You don't spend this much of your life doing something if it has no

significance for you, you don't believe in it.

My colleague Joyce Szabo in Native American art, who is retired, who is Anglo working in Native American, we've had long conversations about what it's like to work in the field. And I think it's—and I don't know because I'm retired, but I'm watching what's happening in the world. It might be harder for me to do it now than it was then, because there is a sense that if you are not of a particular group, you can't say anything. [00:28:13] But people like Amalia—because I had a long conversation with Amalia, and of course, Amalia is one of the most wonderful people on the planet and one of the great thinkers that we have. She's one of our philosophers. And Tomás. I never asked Tomás that kind of question until very recently actually.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I wonder about him and Dudley sometimes, and Dudley's feelings about this.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I think they're probably—because he wasn't working in the field, I think it made it a little easier. He had a career with REI, so it was an entirely different thing. And Tomás's experience growing up in San Antonio was not just in the Mexican American community. I think it's the McNay Art Museum? He would spend time, a lot of time there as a teenager so he has—he is very open and nonjudgmental.

JOSH T. FRANCO: You were saying about Amalia.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Amalia was—and I had this conversation with her not that long ago. Because I was getting blowback from Marcos when Tim and I were working on this book. [00:30:00] Marcos and my relationship is a complicated one. We were very good partners when we were working on the various projects. I think our professional relationship was really productive. Our personal one was complicated, I think is the best way to put it. But it's sort of like, at various moments, he would want to pull out of the project [*Give Me Life* –HBS] and not contribute his chapter. There were a lot of reasons for that, but the way he would talk about it was, you know, "You two people are not Chicanos, what are you doing?" And this was, like, in the 20-teens. This is was a long time later for Chrissake.

And so I talked to—and this was when I was trying to get this exhibition of Amalia, Judy, and Ester together. And so I was talking with her—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —quite a bit. I went out to see her exhibition at Fresno. And we worked on a project, the *Latino Literary Imagination* that was here. We did it with Rutgers. It was honoring the Nuyorican Poets Café and Rudy Anaya. It was a humongous project, 2010, 2011. She and Pepón Osorio had two installations at 516 Arts.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, that's great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, it was so cool. Anyway, so I spent a lot of time talking with her, and I said, "Am I problem, Amalia? [They laugh.] I mean, it was that blunt. I've known her long enough, and she said, "No, Holly, you are not a problem. You are an ally." But I did tread lightly, and it was more around men than women. Men were more—I never had an occasion where it was a problem with José Montoya. Because I was a much younger woman, and he was always entranced by much younger women.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Even if nothing happened, it was sort of a muse kind of thing and so he was—so he never came at me. He had decades with Shifra, and so this was his time to say, "*Ya basta*, Shifra. It's our voices." I was an unknown, and I was always very respectful, and I was always asking questions, and I wasn't voicing opinions. It took me a while to voice opinions. In meetings at the Wight Art Gallery, I voiced opinions, but that was a different situation. [00:02:04] But it was some of the men, particularly the *tejanos*, the older guys. Pedro Rodriguez in particular. He would be polite, but I—there was no reason to talk to me, there was no reason to take me seriously, there was—you know, I might as well have been the person pouring coffee.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And was he representing the Guadalupe at that time?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I think so, yes.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And, you know, he would—he and Shifra had a decent working relationship. He opened up a—you know, when you work on something from 1984 to 1990 and beyond, as it started to travel—and we had a lot of meetings, and we didn't have enough meetings because we didn't have enough money to bring people in all the time. There was a huge period of time where we were working a lot with the various committees. And if you look in the *CARA* catalog, you can see we had enormous numbers of committees. Some

of them met every week.

But there was a period where I think we went dark, as far as the regional committees were concerned, for over a year. And people got really angry with us, and we should have reached out. [00:04:03] What we were trying—you know, in the best of all possible worlds, dreaming what we were going to do, we were going to have a newsletter once a month that we were going to send to everyone, and I think we had one newsletter in all those years. It just—it would have been much easier if we had email at that point. Because then you could have just sent it out. But even organizing that, it was very intensive work.

Marcos and I were both graduate students. And he was writing his thesis, and I was doing the research for my [dissertation –HBS]. We were working at SPARC, we were doing all these different things, and we put in—in the first two years, we probably put in about 30 hours a week. In the last four years, it was close to 80 hours a week. And they didn't pay us overtime, so what happened is, when I went off in the middle of all this to do my research trips, I would be gone four, six weeks at a time, I was being paid the whole time even though I wasn't there. It was all my overtime money. When we—at the end of it, when it opened in 1990, we didn't have to work for three months. That's how much overtime we had accrued.

So it was just—it was constant, and it was—you know, herding cats doesn't even come close to it. The studio visits were really fun. We went up in spent time with Malaquías Montoya. [00:06:02] That's when I first met him. We spent time with the RCAF.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, they all gathered in somebody's backyard. And that was just—

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's the Royal Chicano Air Force.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, Royal Chicano Air Force, and that's when I first met Tere Romo. And Tere and I, for years and years after that, going to CAA meetings or the museum association meetings, we would always room together. For years and years and years, maybe a decade, and that was really fun. In fact, I owe her a phone call right now. Because we lived through both of our times at the Mexican Museum, so that that was a bonding experience. But getting a sense of that, and getting a sense of the women of the Royal Chicano Air Force, and I'm so glad what's her face did the book on the women.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Ella Diaz?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. Who's at Cornell. I went and visited her in Ithaca. We were at this conference a couple of years ago at UC Santa Barbara to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of Chicano Studies and the *Plan de Santa Bárbara*, and they brought in—*whoosh*, *whoosh*, *whoosh*. It was the 50th anniversary of the blowouts in the high schools in East LA, and they brought in four of the original organizers. And of course, they're not kids anymore. But one of them I had known, Marcos and I had known, from our years hanging out at Self Help Graphics because she used to hang out at Self Help Graphics, and we hadn't seen each other for 30-plus years. [00:08:07]

So that's how I met Ella Diaz. And her work, it was challenging because the women of the RCAF had a lot of their own issues. But during all of this, we also met people like Cherríe Moraga. I didn't meet Gloria Anzaldúa till many years later.

JOSH T. FRANCO: What was meeting her like?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Gloria or Cherríe?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Gloria.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, by the time I met her—it was when I first came here and she gave a talk at Salt of the Earth Bookstore, John Randall's bookstore. She had gotten to a point where, based on what I had heard about her before, she was pretty mellow. I had a frame of reference with which to talk with her, and the importance of *This Bridge Called My Back*, how important that was, and her poetry particularly. My favorite poem, it was right there in the *Borderlands,* "To Live in the Border Lands." And so I had a framework to talk with her. She wasn't as easy as Cherríe. [00:10:02] She's—well, Cherríe is not a *tejana*. There's something about—

JOSH T. FRANCO: I know. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —*tejanos* and *tejanas*. I mean, Connie Cortez. And Connie is the easiest of them, but there is an edge there. You're pretty mellow for—

JOSH T. FRANCO: It might be generational.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, it could be.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Although it might appear—yeah, no, [laughs] I can think of some edgy *tejanos* my age.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But there is a wonderful—so, I knew that I could never get as close to her as I did to Cherríe. And we involved Cherríe in different projects. When David and I got married, Delilah brought Cherríe and Celia to the wedding.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: They crashed the wedding, which was wonderful. They brought some really beautiful candles and, you know, I'm—I'm not in personal correspondence anymore with Cherríe, but I'm certainly in the loop when she sends out stuff. And I knew that was never going to happen. And then she was—shortly thereafter, she was so struggling with her health because of diabetes, which ultimately killed her, that that narrowed down her life.

And also, Cherríe was far more open to the visual and visual arts and being involved in it, and I didn't get that sense with Gloria. Her interest was in wordsmithing, and in metaphysical and philosophical thought, which is fine. [00:12:10] I wish I had met her 10 years earlier and had the opportunity to maybe forge some kind of pathway for conversations.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. I had to ask about her. But you were talking about the RCAF women.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. Well, that's how I met Celia, who—you know, I didn't ever get—except for Celia, I never got to know—and Tere, who occupies a singular role within the RCAF because she's not a practicing artist. That the others—that's one of the places that I realized I was a white girl. And it's interesting because Ella Diaz talks about the fact, she might as well have been white girl—she herself—because her experiences growing up was not within a Chicano community, and so this was all new stuff to her. Yes, of course, she is a Mexican American, and I think she calls herself a Chicana, but she didn't have that kind of shared community history in her own experience, so she felt very much as an outsider and she had to do a lot of work.

So what those kinds of experiences illustrate is the—just because you might look phenotypically like a particular group does not mean that you are part of or are welcomed necessarily within a situation that has the potential to be fraught. [00:14:27] This isn't just moving into the neighborhood and being a good neighbor. This is a movement. This is an effort to make change. This is an effort to create art that has meaning. This is an effort to define oneself, both narrowly and broadly. And we have a lot of people who are trying to denigrate us, ignore us, wipe us out, so if you're going to come in, you don't have to join us in the sense of being a participant, but you don't have to come in with an attitude. You have to come in as a respectful listener, and—which of course Ella was, but—for there, it was also generational because by the time she was looking at the RCAF women, they were in their 50s and 60s, if not older. And she was this young cub, and there's—you know?

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I remember at a symposium—it was when *CARA* was in San Francisco, and it was—we brought in, of course, Amalia, and Harry was there, and I don't know if Cherríe was there. It was about five people. Marcos was the speaker. And Amalia always spoke last because she was really great at sort of bringing together everything else everybody else was saying, and then say her own stuff too. [00:16:15] I've never seen anything like that. It's a tour de force. Oh, Celia was there. But Amalia said, "I was recently at a conference. There was a question and answer after the panel, and this young person got up and said, 'Okay, you folks or you guys have had the reins for 10 or 15 years at that point, 20 years'"—this would have been—no, it was longer than that, but anyway—"When are you giving us a place at the table? We want a place at the table." And Amalia said, "You take it. I'm not giving it to you."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So there is that attitude that you have to show your chops. You have to be worthy to be at the table. And that's for everyone who wants to be at the table. And we had a most—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ:JOSH T. FRANCO: Alright. This is Josh Franco here with Holly Barnet-Sánchez, to record her oral history for the Archives of American Art. It's day two, August 6, 2019, and we're here in Holly's home in Albuquerque.

So, Holly, we've determined yesterday where we would pick up today, and it was still in *CARA*, still in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation*, the exhibition. So I'll just ask you to describe this moment where Peter Sellars

proposes something and Marcos Sánchez-Tranquilino has a response.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, it was when Peter—Peter was invited to be the director of the Los Angeles Festival, which turned out to be very successful.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, that was a predecessor of *CARA*. Or related? Simultaneous but separate event?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was simultaneous. And it was citywide, multicultural—there were—and it was an arts festival, and it was the entirety of the art spectrum, with performance—considering Peter Sellars is an opera impresario, it was really appropriate in some way. They were bringing in people from South Central, people from Japantown, the various communities that make up Greater Los Angeles, and what back in the day we would call nonwestern communities, and Asian communities, and European. There's a very large Armenian community in Los Angeles. If you just look at the public school system and all the languages they contend with, it's a huge mix.

So he got—I don't know how *CARA* in process came to his attention, but it did. [00:02:04] He came to talk to us several times. And we had a meeting, and it was with Marcos and me as project coordinators, because that's what we were, and members of the national selection committee, and we both contributed ultimately to the catalog along with Elizabeth Shepherd, who is the curator of the Wight Art Gallery. I don't think Edith Tonelli was in this conversation. The woman [Cindi Dale –HBS] who was [director –HBS] of education was there.

We were at this table that was a little bigger than this one is. Say, a table that could hold up to 12 people. Peter Sellars was at one end and Marcos was at the other, and the rest of us were in the middle. Peter was speaking very warmly and openly about the idea of multiculturalism and how the LA Festival was supposed to embody the best of that. And Marcos said his response—and Marcos was very quick in his responses—that he felt very strongly that as long as the Anglo population and power structure, whether it be in the government or in the arts, set the table and acted as hosts and invited everybody to participate, that it was just a euphemism for minority cultures, for example. And that multiculturalism would not work in this country unless the Anglo-European population of the United States sat down at the table as just one of many. [00:04:13] And he really felt that very strongly.

And Peter said, "Well, that makes sense, but I don't think"—it may have inflected Peter's own thinking as he moved through the process and tried to bring up people to have more decision-making authority for the festival. Peter is not in a position to affect that kind of systemic change in a major sort of way. But that was, I think, a very important point for all of us because we hadn't quite wrapped our heads around what multiculturalism was meaning, except that it allowed us to do the *CARA* exhibition, the Hispanic show in Houston happened, the *Latin American Spirit* happened at the Bronx. All of a sudden, museums were getting money to do exhibitions of artwork by people who had been underrepresented.

The Guerilla Girls were really active at that point, but multiculturalism didn't incorporate feminism. And so that was an entirely different phenomenon. And the whole issue of the intersection of multiculturalism and feminism and the issues in the movement itself, the *movimiento*, the socioeconomic-political part of it, and the arts part of it, in terms of the discourse of the *movimiento* and the discourse of feminism was—it was sort of coming like this. [00:06:18] If I were going to do *CARA* again, how women artists work and women were represented in *CARA* would hopefully be substantially different.

JOSH T. FRANCO: So, your gesture you're doing is, like, parallel but not touching? Is that how you—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: —would describe that?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was sort of—while we were working on *CARA*, there was a Chicana feminist conference on campus. Angie Chabram was one of the hosts of it and—or it might have been women of color. It was more substantial than one group. And *This Bridge Called My Back* was so important that those—right? That that book—I had—when we went to visit Luis Jiménez, his wife Juanita pulled that book out and was quoting different things from it because she got really pissed at Shifra about something, and she was quoting the essay about why you white women have to do your homework before you start asking us questions.

And the push for women's voices within the *movimiento,* they were always part of the *movimiento*. The women artists were always making art, but their art wasn't being made visible in exhibitions adequately. [00:08:02] And when Jacinto Quirarte wrote the essay on the history of Chicano exhibitions for the *CARA* catalogue, we went, "Uh-oh, there are no women's exhibitions. Holly, would you go do some research and write a three- or four-page addendum?"—which ended up in the catalog—because it just didn't occur to people. And Marcos I think had blind spots. I didn't know enough at the time. So when you look at how it was set out, there were very few women artists in the first sections, and we had one room that was just women, and then at the end, "Redefining American Art," we had women in there. And one of the things in Alicia Gaspar De Alba's book called *Chicano Art*,

which was about the exhibition—that was one critic she had that I felt was a strong critic.

So you had the multicultural issue. You had the mainstream arts institutions issue, because it was Houston Museum of Fine Arts, the Bronx Museum, and the Wight Art Gallery at UCLA. You weren't going to have LACMA involved, although they did a Los Four exhibition in the '70s. You weren't going to have MoMA involved. You weren't—you had places in New York, you had INTAR, you—and all of those places were interconnected. Everybody knew everybody. We would travel from city to city, and we would just be part of the conversation in all these different smaller alternative art spaces. [00:10:06] But INTAR was a big, important space in New York for a long time. And that's one of the places that showed Amalia Mesa-Bains to begin with, and that's—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Was Inverna Lockpez in the—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, it was Inverna Lockpez. And I got to know Amalia not as an artist—I got to know her as a critic and an educator first. It was Ramón Favela who did the work on *Diego Rivera: The Cubist,* and we went up to San Francisco to hear his talk. And Marisela Norte said, "You have to meet Amalia Mesa-Bains" and so she helped organize the talk, and it was wherever the exhibition was at the Museum of Fine Arts, the Modern Museum in its old building, and that's when we met Amalia. So I didn't even know she was an artist for a few years at all. So anyway, I segued away from stuff.

JOSH T. FRANCO: No, that's okay. Well, we still want to talk about *CARA*, and you wanted to say more about why —

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: About the dates.

JOSH T. FRANCO: —the dates. Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. When we were talking in our first meeting as we could—when we were looking at the photographs this morning in the catalog of the meeting, the first meeting, we—it took us two years from when the grad students and the faculty went into the Wight Art Gallery to say, "Let's do an exhibition of Chicano art." I felt like *The Little Rascals* in those movies, "Let's put on a show!" It took two years to get the funding and get everybody together and find a time. This was a very painfully slow process, this exhibition. [00:12:01]

So we were meeting in 1986, and one of the reasons we stopped the exhibition at '85 is we were meeting in '86, and we had to have it contained ahead of time. So that was the pragmatic reason for the date. The sociopolitical-artistic reason was, by 1985, what we understood as the Chicano civil rights movement itself had morphed into something phenomenologically different than what it was in its most modern iteration, what's called Chicano, starting in the early 1960s through the early 1970s. And some people even felt that the Moratorium March on August 29, 1970, where Ruben Salazar was killed in the Silver Dollar saloon, that that for some reason changed the tenor of the movement. And that it became, for lack of a better word, less militant. Whether that's actually historically accurate, that was part of the conversation at the time.

And so 1970 seemed awfully early to me, when we started to have these conversations for the *CARA* exhibition. But we were functioning in the midst of a change movement itself with people who are activists and educators and artists—all of whom were activists—in the movement itself. [00:14:03] And in the art movement, we were trying to make sense of it historically while it was still happening. So it—I always felt that the *CARA* exhibition was kind of our contribution to the movement. That was part of the movement, part of the art movement, part of the civil rights movement. But it was changing.

You know, the people who were in their 20s and 30s when it started were now in their 40s and 50s, and they had some perspective, and some people had gotten mellow. I have to say, Malaquías Montoya probably has never gotten mellow, but he was always more gentle in his verbal presentations. His words are very pointed, but his presentation is very gentle and mellow while his art and his written words are fierce. And José, his brother, was not gentle or mellow. I mean, he did have a whole scale of emotions when he presented, but he was—at the panel when *CARA* was in San Francisco and he was one of the speakers, he said, "I just came back from France where they love Chicano art."

And different countries position Chicano art differently. In Japan, they position it as a part of Americana and particularly like the lowriders. [00:16:02] In Japan, they were buying up 1950 Chevys and shipping them back to create lowriders, so it was part of the American experience, which is really interesting if you think about it. In France and Spain, it was part of a revolutionary movement against the monstrosities of the military-industrial governmental complex of the worst aspects of the United States. And also, I don't think we can ever underplay the significance of Vietnam for all of this and for our country as well, what happened in the aftermath of Vietnam. People like Rupert were involved in Vietnam, Ramón Favela was involved in Vietnam, José Montoya was involved in Korea because he as the older generation. But that all impacted it.

But José said, "I just came back from France, and someone asked me in the audience, 'When will the movement

stop? Are you always going to be this engaged?'" And somehow, the way that question was asked was, it sort of challenged his identity as a Chicano, as a Mexican American, as a *nuevo mexicano hispano*, his presence in the United States. [00:18:10] And he said, "And I said to them, '*Aquí estamos, y no nos vamos,* you motherfuckers.'" So that was José, you know. He was always like that. And Harry just used words like nobody else. He played words like a musical instrument. And Marcos was always a fighter.

And the women fought differently. Cherríe spoke. And have you—if you've ever heard Cherríe speak, it's very soft, and she's a very good speaker, and her tone and her voice, the sound, the tenor of her voice is very pleasing. But she will also talk about things that are very personal and very universal and very difficult, in ways that grab your attention. The way that Amalia speaks, and the way that Judy Baca speaks—their presentations—or Celia Rodriguez, the way she speaks. The voices and the tone of anger and resignation and hopefulness, the dynamics of how the women were. And Josie Talamantez from San Diego, who's really involved in Chicano Park. And the dynamics, and the women in Texas, of course, involved in the movement—those voices, the way they were coming at their men—and their men, I don't mean their partners or their lovers necessarily. Their fathers, their brothers, the way—the literature. [00:20:23] They tackled it in the literature before they tackled it in the visual arts.

All of this was feeding into our sensibilities, but to really pull that together for the—and the reason I've talked about this so much—the *CARA* exhibition—is, to pull that together the way I would do it now or even 10 years ago, we would have had to have another five years of education to understand the women's voices and the women's art in a way that could have been a point-counterpoint on some cases, more of a woven textile in other places, more of harmony, more of a dance, more of something that would have made it more complicated. Edith Tonelli and the staff of the Wight Art Gallery kept hitting us over the head with the fact, "You make maximum three points in an exhibition, that's all you can do." And of course, we had 50 points that we wanted to make in that exhibition. It was this constant battle between good curatorial practice as of the mid-1980s, and what we were trying to get across. [00:22:00]

And that's why we had the film series and the poetry series and the music series with all the rock-and-roll bands. Because we had to indicate the richness that—and we had the vitrines, the educational vitrines, because there was so much going on, we didn't want to simplify it. And you had to. We came smack up against—it's like, a map is not the same thing as the territory it represents. This exhibition could not be [laughs] the same thing as the richness and complexity.

And I think that's one reason, ultimately, I—aside from the fact I just didn't have the necessary skills and talents to be a museum person, a curator, except on a guest basis—was because the limitations of the curatorial experience frustrated me too much. And people like—well, there are so many people who are in the museum world now within the Latino-Chicano communities who are so good at what they do, and they've only gotten better. And why that exhibition I wanted to do of Amalia Mesa-Bains, Judy Baca, and Ester Hernandez couldn't have happened—because it was too grandiose. We were trying to do too much with institutions that couldn't sustain the cost nor the space that was necessary. You bring in *The World Wall,* you need a lot of security. NHCC is in a part of town—well, no part of town, of any town, can secure that without an enormous cost, physical and economic cost. [00:24:11] So I had a better time in the classroom.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. Mm-hmm [affirmative]. I want to get to the classroom and teaching, but there were a couple more *CARA* points, one you wanted to hit and one I wanted to. You said you wanted to say a little bit more about being Anglo in this context, or a couple of different moments.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. *CARA* was sort of my—well, I've said it over and over again. It was my graduate education even though I was getting a PhD in pre-Columbian art history, which actually has been very valuable. And my background in European art has been very valuable. I have this big hole in American art, which I've had to fill in in order to understand how Chicano art fits into the broader thing of American art. But American art [laughs] hasn't really been taught that much longer than Chicano art. And it isn't—you know, in certain sectors of the world isn't taken as seriously, pre-'45, certainly as European art. And even, say, Chinese art, Japanese art.

So I had certain bona fides. I had participated in a meaningful way in the *CARA* exhibition, and I had learned an enormous amount. But I really—the ways in which Marcos and I functioned, we were not—we were working with a team. The staff at the Wight Art Gallery had all the expertise in terms of curatorial education department, PR, fundraising, *blah blah blah blah*. So we just fit into a structure that was already there. [00:26:13]

I was brought in by Marie Acosta-Colon to the Mexican Museum as the first sort of curator that was separate from being a director. And Marie came out of theater arts. She was with the San Francisco Mime Troupe. And Peter Rodriguez, who was the founding director, also functioned in a curatorial way. And I'm blanking on the guy who followed him as a director/curator. He went off to Hawaii for a while, he came back, and Tere Romo followed me as curator.

But there were two reasons why I shouldn't have been hired, even though I was very glad for the experience. I wouldn't trade it for anything. It was a very difficult experience. The first reason was, I wasn't qualified to—I would have been a great assistant curator to work with someone who had the kind of chops for the fullness of what it meant to be a curator. I did not have sufficient skills to occupy that position, and I was sort of like a deer in headlights. The dynamics of the San Francisco Chicano and Latino community—but this is the Chicano-*mexicano* community, really, for the Mexican Museum. [00:28:04] And the fact that I was Anglo. And while there should always be an openness, and the best person should be hired for the job, first of all, they weren't hiring the best person, I felt. I think Marie was just dazzled by *CARA*. She came to the opening. And it wasn't that Anglos weren't employed there. There were plenty of Anglos employed there, but this was such a key position.

I got real blowback when I was announced at some kind of big fête. Peter Rodriguez, Peter himself got up—and of course, he was a very kind of cranky guy, or could be—but he got up after Maria announced me. As the founding director, he was supposed to be part of this, and he got up and he said something to the effect that, "I'm sure"—and I don't know how he referred to me. He could have said Holly, he could have said Ms. Barnet-Sánchez, I don't remember how. I mean, he put a name to me. He didn't say "that person," but he said, "While I'm sure she has good intentions, and she certainly has participated in an important exhibition, but we"—and if my memory serves me, he said, "We need someone in this job who has Aztec blood running through their veins."

And it's important that that be on the record because it was a sensibility, and whether you actually came from the Central Valley of Mexico where your ancestors were Aztec or not wasn't the point. The point was, I was not Mexican American, I was not Chicano or Chicana. [00:30:22] And that this was a moment in time that should have focused on that and—

[Tape stops, restarts.]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Pick up at why you want this on the record.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, I think it's important because it signifies a moment in time where there were opportunities to open doors for people coming into the field. And this was before the Smithsonian started its—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —project. It was before the "Willful Neglect" study happened. And, you know, getting *CARA* into Washington was a challenge. We can talk about that. It was really—and the name of the exhibition, how that was problematic in certain locations, like here. But what was interesting—and of course, this made the newspaper, this made the *San Francisco Chronicle* or whatever the paper was. And at the time, Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco were there, and they were doing something.

But I remember Guillermo talking to me, and I had known Guillermo since his days in San Diego because we would go down to the Centro in San Diego and hang out. This is when he was doing his *Border Brujo* and I—his work and Coco's work, you know, are just together and separately—and he said to me, "Holly, I support you in this." I think he felt, as a *mexicano* who had come in to the world of being Chicano and Latino and had his own pushback most predominantly in San Diego, that—and with people at the Centro Cultural de la Raza—that he felt a lot of empathy and was very supportive of me. Because he was trying in a different way than Gronk to erase borders and find a place of solidarity between Mexicanos and Chicanos and Anglos. It was, I think, one of his missions. I've had him come here many times over the years. But that was very helpful.

And Amalia, Amalia was very sweet and gentle but also helping me to understand that while this is all very nice that "You got this job Holly," it would have—"and I support you completely in your efforts, there's no question"—that this was an opportunity that was missed. I don't know who else applied for the job, so I don't know who else they were looking at, but it became a very public issue. On some level—and, you know, it's kind of embarrassing to admit it, how naïve. I mean, I was in my 30s, mid- to late-30s at that point, and it was hard for me to fully understand the dynamics. I mean, I understood it, but I didn't grock it, if you get that term.

But I also—it was really important to me that I have some kind of legitimacy myself as a person who was studying this material and who had participated in a lot of stuff by then. [00:04:11] Granted—and we never went up to the Pacific Northwest. We spent a lot of time in the Midwest as we were pulling—we spent time in Texas, oh, my goodness—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —with César Martínez, San Antonio, and the older artist, the one who did all the big paintings that were—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Jesús Treviño?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, not Treviño, much older than that. [Mel Casas –HBS] He had been their teacher, all of those guys' teacher, who—he had untitled works, and they all look like they were in drive-in movies, and he helped start and he—oh, we'll have to fill this in. He had a cane that he kept brandy in; it was a snifter of brandy. I was there with René Yañez, and this was August in San Antonio, and we had spent the evening with him and we went out to eat, and we came back and both René and I were really uncomfortable the next morning. We went to meet César Martínez at his home and studio, and he said, "You spent the day yesterday with"—so-and-so, I can't remember his name—he said, "Everybody is hung over when they"—[they laugh].

But so, I had got a sense, and I felt that I had a real—well, it played out in two ways. Yes, I felt I had a meaningful contribution to make, but for those of us who never leave school—and that's what educators are—this is what I wanted to study, this is what I wanted to learn about, this is what I wanted to make sense of. [00:06:15]

And Cecelia Kline sort of gave us that permission. She would do seminars because she had a question she wanted answered that she was curious about. So we would all participate in this group education because that's what Cecelia was curious about, and so we were all curious about it. For me, that is what the value of being an educator is: You are a perpetual student and you learn from your students as much as or more than you do just on your own. I'm a great collaborative kind of person. Doing things solo is very difficult.

So I didn't want to be sidelined within the Chicano arts community, I didn't want to not have a voice, but I also realized that working in museums as a career was not the right path for me. It just wasn't a good fit. So there were multiple things, but that was the first place where I felt the real blowback of not being Chicano or Chicana.

The second place is, I was asked to apply for the position that ultimately several years later went to Jennifer González at Santa Cruz. And it was clear—although people were very gracious to me, the guys who taught at Santa Cruz—and they weren't in art history and they weren't in HISCON. [00:08:03] They were in whatever was the equivalent of Chicano studies at Santa Cruz—that they saw me—and I heard about it because I had a friend who was on the search committee who told me what the conversation was. And it was, you know, "She's just a Chicano wannabe. This isn't anyone we should take seriously."

So, you know, that. And I think it took a long time. There was—and it wasn't necessarily—it was an interdisciplinary—that one of the people they were looking at was Sonia Saldívar-Hull, and she's in literature, so it has this sort of mushy position. But ultimately, obviously, it went to an art historian, and I think it was a couple of years later and I think—but it was—and I remember Cherríe had written a letter on my behalf, which was nice of her to do. But it was clear—and Santa Cruz would not have been a good fit. I am not as theoretically fluent and fluid in the way that HISCON and the various programs in Santa Cruz are configured. I'm—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So how long were you in San Francisco at that—and was your PhD done before you started that?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: My—no.

JOSH T. FRANCO: No?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: My PhD—I am slow.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I am very slow. Writing is painful for me. Rewriting is a breeze. I love to rewrite, and I'm great with things like endnotes and bibliography. I am the queen, probably because I was a librarian. I can do *Chicago Manual of Style* in my head. One of the reasons—there are many reasons why *Give Me Life*, the book with Tim Drescher, took 12 years. Part of it was, I am slow. [00:10:07]

So I actually—I left the Mexican Museum. I had been there—I started in a January, I was through another January, and I left that spring. Marie had guaranteed me that I could have time off if I needed it, not with pay, to complete my dissertation. And when push came to shove, she wouldn't honor that. But I think that was more because I think she just didn't want me there anymore, and I wasn't being that successful, so that could be the excuse. That could be the gracious way of giving me an out.

By then, Marcos had been hired as the executive director of MACLA [Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana] in San José. And so we moved down to San José. While I helped him with certain kinds of grant writing and stuff, my parents were very lovely, and they gave me a certain amount of money for the whole year, on a monthly basis, so that I wouldn't have to work. So I finished the dissertation in San José. And I filed it, and I applied for the job at UNM that February.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And what year is this?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: That would have been—well, it would've—in '92, I applied. [00:12:07] UNM never goes to College Art to interview, and I was brought in as one of three people in February. It was after CAA—which was in Seattle, I remember—and Marcos was actually giving a talk at CAA, in a panel there. I had this terrible cough, and by the time I got to UNM for my job interview, I had walking pneumonia. Do you know what fun it is to give a job talk when you have walking pneumonia? [They laugh.] I didn't know at the time that's what it was, I just couldn't stop coughing . One of the women on the search committee was very gracious and said, "Here is my home number"—I was staying at a hotel downtown—"and if you need to go to the hospital in the middle of the night, you call me."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it gave—I was just so doped up on cough medicine, whatever it was that I was taking, that it kind of made a little, *whee*, you know? [They laugh.]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it was very interesting. And I remember, because I gave my talk, which was based on my dissertation looking at the modern uses of pre-Columbian art, so I was really looking at US institutions, paying attention to—I talked about the 1940s MoMA exhibition, so there was modern art in there. That's [laughs] how I kind of finessed that part of it. And one person from the audience at the end—and there was a huge crowd for this—and this woman raised her hand and said, "How come there is so much bad Latin American art?" [00:14:05]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And I said, "Well, you know there's bad art everywhere. It's sort of like Muzak in elevators. There's really bad art everywhere, so I don't think we"—because the reality is, I learned Latin American art because I was hired to teach it and then I added Chicano art and then I added Latino art. In terms of modern, I—and this department, we can talk about that more later, but it was a wonderful department. It covered the Americas soup to nuts, the pre-Columbian world to contemporary art and everything in between, hemispherically, Spanish colonial, modern Latin American.

And Craven came in—David Craven—at the same time, and he was teaching post-'45 American, he was teaching European, and he was teaching—he was teaching essentially the art of revolution, so it was Cuba, Mexico, and Nicaragua. So we kind of formed a team. And then you had—several years later, they brought in Kirsten Buick, post-'45 and African American. We've had several iterations of Spanish colonial faculty, Joyce Szabo in Native American, and I'm sure I'm forgetting something. Ah, printmaking, there was someone. Because we have the Tamarind, so printmaking, and we have a fabulous printmaking department. So it was—you know, it was magnificent. When I added Chicano and Latino, it was a department to be proud of in terms of how we focused on the Americas, and their wiping out that line is shameful. [00:16:01]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Let's get right on the verge of UNM before we leave *CARA* behind entirely. Can you say a little more about the different regional receptions? You mentioned, like, Washington was difficult.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, yeah, it almost didn't go to Washington.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And we have the *CARA* insert here in front of us.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, the—how we configured it. And the—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, the exhibition configuration? If you want to talk about that first—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, first. Yeah. The exhibition designer at UCLA was really magnificent. I mean, he's the one who designed the Betye and Alison Saar show. He really was an artist himself. And the spaces—the Wight Art Gallery was really a cool space. We had an introductory area that dealt with themes, and we had an entrance. And then the first section was "*La Causa*," focused on the civil rights movement itself, and that's where we had the vitrines that focused on the UFW and the Teatro Campesino.

So that was the—and it also brought in the Raza Unida Party, the Crusade for Justice, and the Poor People's March in Denver with Corky Gonzalez, and the land grant movement here in New Mexico, and the student movement. So we were trying to—with MEChA and everything, we were trying to bring all of that in, and this is what drove the curatorial staff at—because this is an art museum, this isn't a history museum! And we said—you know?

And then we had "Cultural Icons," and so that's where you have Zapata and you have Frida. [00:18:08] And then the next section is "Civil Liberties" and "Urban Images," the next two sections. And we had three, what we

called, *casitas* because we wanted to focus on the groups—the *grupos* and the *centros* and the *galerías* and the *teatros* were all really important to understanding what the movement was about. So they built these structures, these *casitas*, and the RCAF one was really a hoot. We opened three hours late because the RCAF couldn't finish it, the installation in time, and so they put police tape around it, so the first day you couldn't walk into it, so you could just look at it.

We also had Asco, which at that point, we called the Death of Asco. I mean, we didn't call that publicly that way, because this was the point in which they were disintegrating as a functioning group. It was very poignant to watch that, and it's probably inevitable. They had been together for very long, and all of them were going in many different directions. And then Los Four. And that was magnificent because all the time they met, Magu was keeping notes. So he had stacks and stacks, and the notes were on manila envelopes, and he was making drawings, and his script when he was writing the notes was like graffiti writing. And I mean—and hearing the back and forth and everything they were talking—and they recreated the pyramid that they had for their 1972 exhibition at LA County Museum. It was really fun. [00:20:18] Of course, Carlos was dead by then. He died in '88.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. The pyramid was in the Magu show for *PST*, I think.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, excellent. I did not see that.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I think it was.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I was heartbroken I didn't get to those—

JOSH T. FRANCO: It was great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —*PST* shows. And then we had a backlit projection of the murals, because we didn't know how else to include them. We selected about 30 murals from around the country, and that was an interesting—Marcos and me did that. And what happened is, these divisions—I remember one weekend sitting down, and Marcos sort of sketched it all out, and I went in and said, "Well, what about this? What about that? What about that?" He did the first iteration. And then we brought it to the meeting, and that's what these were. I mean, there were further conversations about it, but—essentially.

So this area here, which had Asco and Los Four *casitas* was "Regional Expressions." We were trying to be as expansive—it was so hard because California, Southern California where we were located, and Northern California, and Texas, are the juggernauts of the movement. So how do you make sure Arizona and Colorado and the Pacific Northwest don't get disappeared? And the Midwest, which is its own stuff, doesn't get disappeared. And the East Coast was barely a blip. We did have an artist who represented the East Coast for the *taller* or the atelier with Self Help Graphics, the print atelier, but she really was an Angelino who had moved to New York. [00:22:14]

At that point, the Chicano presence in the East Coast was harder to track down. It was not so visible. And in the Midwest, it was Chicago, Minneapolis, and Michigan kind of. And my first experience—this is a segue—with Mexican Americans: As a kid, I was living in East Lansing where my father was teaching at Michigan State, and we had farmworker kids come into the schools. I was in junior high, it was seventh or eighth grade. And they came into the schools, and the only thing I remember about them, aside from the fact they seemed a lot cooler and more self-assured than any of the rest of us, a lot older even though they were our age, because they had world experiences that we didn't have—they could dance! [They laugh.] It was—you know, you have junior high dances, and we're all kind of klutzes, and they knew how to move. And this is such a stereotype, but this is a junior-high little girl looking at these people. And they weren't all Mexican American. There were Anglo farmworkers also, farmworker kids.

But that was my first experience understanding that there was this mobile labor force, and I was looking at it from a kid's perspective. That's why I think stories—*And the Earth Did Not Swallow Him,* you know—some of the classic early stories in Chicano literature, or even *To Kill A Mockingbird,* bringing it from a child's perspective is really important because a child's perspective is foundational. [00:24:19] *Bless Me, Ultima.* It's foundational for how we see the world.

JOSH T. FRANCO: *House on Mango Street*.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, exactly, exactly. So, sorry, I got sidetracked.

JOSH T. FRANCO: No, that's a great tangent.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And then you wander here, and this was reclaiming the past and I'm kind of blanking on what—this was images—this is where Amalia's *Ofrenda for Dolores del Rio* was, and they created this corner here, so it was on an angle, and it stuck out. So it was things that was referencing sculptural depictions of

funeral services and would—there may have been things—I would have to look through the catalogue—referencing the pre-Columbian past, those kinds of things, sort of elegiac.

And then this was "Feminist Visions" in here, and that's where Yolanda Lopez's trilogy was. That's where several of Ester's pieces were. And Juana Alicia's wonderful pastel of a farmworker giving birth. And Isabel Castro's work on *Women Under Fire.* [00:26:01] I'm trying to—and then—and *Se Abre el Mundo*, Delilah's work, I don't know where that was. It was somewhere in this area.

And then here is "Redefining American Art." And on this wall was Rupert's painting called *La Virgen y Yo* , which was him hanging upside down next to the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and it was addressing his ambivalence towards everything *La Virgen* represents. And this is where John Valadez's painting of the bride and the mother-in-law, where the mother-in-law is sitting on the train of the bride's dress. And this may have been where Ester's piece of *Sun Mad* might have been in here. Avalos's *Donkey Cart Altar* was here. And this is—right at the end is where they had insert the video where it was that panel of the five artists that was filmed the next day after the opening and put there.

But the entryway—I don't know if you've seen the installations. Willie Herrón designed everything. His design firm did this. And the eyes—

JOSH T. FRANCO: On the cover?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: On the cover. That is a compilation. He has a twin sister, and those are bringing together his and his sister's eyes. The idea of chain link is really important. [00:28:11] The colors are not classic Mexican colors, and he was trying to get away from that. But you know, we titled this as a group, with Jesús Treviño coming up with the title *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation.* And so we were talking about Chicano art, resistance, and affirmation, and Chicano art and resistance.

And one day Marcos and I and Elizabeth Shepherd, we were all sitting there having a meeting, and Elizabeth was writing, and she was a great at abbreviating, and she had the word *CARA* there. And Marcos said, "Why do you have the Spanish word for 'face' in your notes?" And she said, "Well, I'm abbreviating the exhibition." That was when we realized that the exhibition's acronym was the Spanish word for "face." We were into it for a year, a year and a half, after we had the title, and it took us that long to realize. And then when we brought Willie and his design partner Patrice Roberts, that focused everything.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Right, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I mean, geez louise, you know. It was totally serendipitous.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, it was wonderful.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I didn't know there was such a story behind that.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, it was hysterical. It was like, you know, "Really? Really?" And then coming up with our statement about what Chicano was, what Chicano art was—which is in the catalog and which is here—we worked on that. When you have 30 people who are involved, you know, you have little groups and subgroups, and I don't remember anymore who crafted it. [00:30:08] But it was—it could have been Teresa McKenna and Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano and I don't know if Tomás was involved in it, but the people who were—and Treviño might have been involved, and then everybody else looked at it. I don't know that you want me to read it outside for the oral history. I don't know that that's necessary, but—

JOSH T. FRANCO: I don't—yeah, it's—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I don't think it is.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Can you talk about traveling the exhibition outside of LA? Because that was such a big part of every—we haven't gotten to that.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, and what's interesting is, the only—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —other venues that Marcos and I actually went to, saw—the only other venue was San Francisco. We were not invited by anyone, by the Wight Art Gallery people or by the venues, to come to the venues. I was at the Mexican Museum and then at UNM, and I didn't—it came to Albuquerque before I got here. This was one of the more contentious spots. And it didn't go to Chicago, and that's a story. So we saw it in San

Francisco, and that was really cool.

And just a personal note, my parents came and visited and went to it, and they didn't quite know what to make of it except that, "Oh, my God, our daughter actually doing something."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: "And all that money for her education and all those times when she was hanging out in the mountains outside of Boulder and hanging out with Ginsberg and those people—she's okay, we can reclaim her." And my son, who was a teenager at that time, came to visit, because he was living with his dad right then. He came and he said, "Wow, you actually can do something." [They laugh.] You know, leave it to your kids. But then he became a photographer.

But, you know, we, through the Mexican Museum, did a lot of stuff, and we actually had a lot of input as to what the installation would look like and what the signage would look like. They wanted to focus on—because they wanted to bring in the arts of San Francisco, and what they wanted to do was to bring in children's art. [00:02:05] We weren't real happy with that because it seemed to infantilize the seriousness of what this was, and sort of diminish its potency, kind of water it down if that's what's going to be on the banners that are hanging around the city and what's going to be in front of the museum. There were a lot of issues.

But San Francisco, for the most part, was very successful. We had lots of presentations, and that panel where I burst into tears when I was introducing Marcos, and where Cherríe talked about it very eloquently and was just a little sad there wasn't more women's art there. And José did his "*Aquí estamos*" little thing about being in France. So that was good. It went to Denver, it was very successful in Denver. And the programming with it. As far as I remember, there weren't any hitches. In Chicago, it was stopped cold. There was an arts organization in Chicago that was based in the Pilsen that—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Was the Mexican Museum there yet?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, it was there. And it was the founder of the Mexican Museum that lobbied with every institution in Chicago to prevent it from coming. Because they wanted to move out—it wasn't MARS [Movimiento Artistico Del Rio Salado]. That's the one in—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Arizona?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —Arizona. But it was the old-time *movimiento*, early activists still had their arts organization, and they were the ones who were representing Chicago. [00:04:12] Although Victor Sorell was also there, from Chicago State University, and he had been an activist and scholar.

This guy came in, and he's much honored in Chicago, and he's done wonderful, good things, but at the time, he really—because they wanted to take over and be the representative for the Chicago Midwestern region. And when we said, "No, we've already committed to this group," they went literally and lobbied every institution and said, "This exhibition cannot be in Chicago. We are not part of it, and it does not represent the Midwestern perspective." I've had a hard time interacting with him ever since, even though I have to acknowledge he has done wonderful things with the Mexican Museum in its various iterations and growths and changes in name over the years. But he was ruthless. And that was very sad. It should have been in Chicago.

Washington—oh, here, when it came to New Mexico, there was a woman who was very active in the *hispano* community, who was on the board of the Albuquerque Museum, who said, "Well, I'm not sure about this exhibition. It's Chicano, it's not *hispano*. You have to take the name Chicano out of the title."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] Sure.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And we didn't hear this. [00:06:01] It came to the people who were in charge at the Wight Art Gallery. We were the project coordinators, we were hired guns, and graduate students. You have some legitimacy, and a lot that you don't have, and so no institution is going to approach us. They're going to approach Edith Tonelli and Elizabeth Shepherd. And Elizabeth goes, "What do we do about this?" And of course, Marcos gets on the computer and goes like this.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it was very simple. The movement itself, the civil rights movement is self-named—is self-named!—the Chicano movement, and this is what the young people and the not-so-young people began calling themselves as they moved towards different definitions of what civil rights is—although we weren't getting that complicated—towards the efforts to get civil rights. The art that was created in the beginning entirely in support of that movement, the art movement itself was called Chicano, and the artists called

themselves Chicano. There is no way to be historically accurate and take out that word. So we just did it on a factual basis after we all had our temper tantrums and got hysterical—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Also, even if the title was changed, the art is—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —the same. It is Chicano art. And we did not have people like Luis Tapia, who we should have. We kind of didn't understand New Mexico—

JOSH T. FRANCO: The *santeros*.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —at all in terms of the *hispano*-Chicano complexities. And you have artists who, as human beings, they are Chicano activists; as artists, they are traditional *santeros*. [00:08:01] Tapia is not a traditional *santero* but you had—and there was a *santero* who was in the Hispanic exhibition. I actually had his son and daughter in my Chicano art classes when I came here, which was really cool. But Felix—Felix? Anyway.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Felix López?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, and his kids. So that's what happened, but it stayed "Chicano art." And I do believe it was here that Alicia Gaspar De Alba saw it while she was a graduate student in American Studies. And Chon, as a graduate student at Stanford, had sort of overseen—Tomás brought him in, or recommended that we work with Chon—this is how I met Chon—to organize the film series. There was a student, a grad student in filmmaking at UCLA, that was the on-the-ground person who helped us. Carlos. And I actually found a thank-you letter from him. And Chon sort of oversaw Carlos from a distance. He was over at Stanford, still working and—I got sidetracked, I've lost my train of thought.

JOSH T. FRANCO: We were in Albuquerque—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, and so by the time he was working with Alicia, Chon was here. This was his first teaching job in American Studies. That's where that was.

So it didn't go to Chicago. [00:10:00] It went to the Bronx Museum, and I have a subsequent story about an arts panel in UT-Austin about Alicia Gaspar De Alba, the *CARA* exhibition, and Luis Camnitzer. That's an interesting anecdote, and he's—he actually never—he didn't see it when it was at the Bronx Museum, but he never—he is a Latin Americanist. I think Liliana Porter would've enjoyed—she may have seen the *CARA* exhibition, but I don't think the work that comes out of the Chicano experience for the most part would be of interest to Camnitzer.

So they were very good with the Bronx Museum. They did a good job, although when the *New Yorker* magazine did—you know how they do the little blurbettes of what exhibitions are at what museums, they had one of their little graphics, and the graphic was of two young men—you see them from the back—in gang clothes in handcuffs. That's how they defined Chicano art for the New York crowd.

JOSH T. FRANCO: But the *New York Times* review of the Bronx show of *CARA* was super favorable, and it even compared it favorably to the '93 Whitney Biennial, because they were up at the same time.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. Oh, and that was a blowup, the '93 Biennial. Yeah. I have two volumes of press stuff on the *CARA* exhibition that the Wight Art Gallery compiled, which was really nice of them, and they sent it to us.

But then Washington, DC, at the—it wasn't called SAAM at the time. [00:12:01] It was called National Museum of American Art. And the woman who—did she just retire as director?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, Betsy.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: She was in charge, and she had some very grave reservations. And I don't remember anymore the actuality of what her reservations were. I would have to go back in and look at correspondence. I do remember our response. And I do remember what we thought she was saying. I think she wasn't actually saying that, but it was the subtext of what she was actually saying. She wasn't certain, I think, that this exhibition has sufficient heft.

And I think also she was voicing a concern that Lynne Cheney, as head of the NEH when she turned us down three times for funding after we got the initial planning grant—and everybody all the way up to Lynne Cheney said, "Fund this," and she said, "No." And we sent our big guns out there to meet with her, including Victor Sorell, who had worked for the NEA or the NEH as a program officer. And her complaint was, "It's not going to be objective, there are too many Chicanos involved in it." So that it's—and I think that was part of the concern that Elizabeth Broun had. [00:14:02]

JOSH T. FRANCO: That goes back to the Peter Sellars, like, if white people are in charge, it's objective and

authoritative even if it's not their cultural experience.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. Well, that's the standard—I mean, think of anthropology.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Sure.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it's interesting. I remember seeing *The Caine Mutiny*—this is a relevant segue—the movie *The Caine Mutiny*. And then years later I read the book. And in the opening sequences, the protagonist is walking down the street in New York, and he comes from a very elite family. He walks by something where the doors open, and he's hearing this wonderful, young, female voice singing opera, and he was so excited and he went inside and he saw there was a piano player and this young woman, and she was Italian. So he dismissed her talent because she was just an Italian girl from New York City singing opera, which was an Italian opera and she was singing it in Italian but it wasn't—you know, it wasn't someone who was acceptable. I thought, Wow, even this person who wrote *The Caine Mutiny* got that. That contradiction of who has the authority, who has the voice, who can speak for themselves and for other people.

So what we did with whatever the director said—actually, what we heard was—because we had already dealt with Lynne Cheney, and Lynne Cheney—if you think Dick Cheney is scary, Lynne Cheney is seriously scary and very smart. [00:16:06]

JOSH T. FRANCO: So Betsy, then, how did she make the decision?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, what happened is, we went to our congresspeople. In all the regions that we had identified—the Midwest, the East Coast, the Pacific Northwest, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and North and Southern California—California had two regions—all of those regions, we went to our congress people, we went to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and we said, "This is what's happening. They are not going to take our exhibition."

So, the woman who was the congresswoman from Colorado, [Pat Schroeder –HBS] for some reason, took the lead on this. And everybody else followed her and then we got—of course, and all the artists started writing, particularly José Montoya. He really took on himself to write. And she wrote back and she said, "You misunderstand me. It wasn't that I wasn't wanting to take it. I was having questions about X, Y, Z."

So it went to Washington, and that's how I got to know Andrew Connors because Andrew was working in the education department. Andrew photocopied the entire book of comments and sent it to us and said, "I am so sorry we haven't met," and it was just this beautiful letter. "I'm so sorry you weren't here for the opening, we should have invited you." [00:18:01] We were only graduate students, we were only project coordinators, we weren't project directors. The Wight Art Gallery knew exactly who we were. None of the other institutions understood who we were and what we did.

And the Wight Art Gallery, I think [laughs] particularly Edith, weren't—they were tired of us. Because Marcos—Marcos was difficult. I remember Edith talking to Cecelia Klein and Cecelia Klein came and talked to us and said, "Edith is wondering why you aren't more grateful that you have this job. And why you are"—you know, we actually—well, I had to go into mediation because Marcos and Edith had to go into mediation, and Marcos and I were a team. I wasn't causing the problems, but I was supporting Marcos's various indignations.

Because I—always through that process, I felt I was more a student—and not a student at UCLA but a student of this material—and I didn't have the voice or the authority to speak. I certainly feel I have the voice and the authority and that developed over time—*CARA* gave me confidence—but I've always made it clear, "I'm not speaking for anyone, I'm just drawing attention to the fact that you're getting it all wrong or whatever it is, or you might want to consider this, or you might want to talk to one of the artists." [00:20:02] And I always had artists when I was teaching here come in and speak, so they could hear it out of the horse's mouth. Miguel Gandert came a lot, and Tey would come a lot. And actually, Tey was my first PhD student.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Right. But you met Andrew through the—and Andrew recognized your work.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. And so, when Andrew came here, that was very exciting. That's how I met—I mean, physically met Andrew—is when he came here for NHCC. But it was the sweetest thing. No other institution did that. No one took it on themselves to pull us in, to acknowledge our role, and he—Andrew acknowledged our role in a way that no one else did, and that was pretty wonderful.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did *CARA* have anything to do with the acquisition of *Vaquero* by Luis Jiménez, which is still prominently out in front?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I'm certain it—well, that is a question I can't truly answer. I can only hypothesize, and I've learned over time to be careful about hypothesizing with no facts.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: When we were at the slide library at UCLA working, we would create whole scenarios based on no facts at all, and we convinced ourselves everything was true. You get bitten in the ass when you do that. So as I've gotten older, I've become very leery of that. So I honestly do not know, but it certainly makes sense. And several of the pieces from the *CARA* exhibition are at SAAM.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, Manuel's *Altar* is there.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: The *Altar* is there, the *Ofrenda for Dolores del Rio*. And Amalia is both pleased and saddened. [00:22:02] She said, "It is now fixed in time, and *ofrendas, altares*, are never fixed in time." When you put up an *Ofrenda for Dolores* or to whomever—but to Dolores, every one that she did, and she did several over time—they were all phenomenologically different, with an essence that was the same. But she spoke to different aspects of who that woman was and why she is important still and why we honor her. I remember Tomás talking about when he met her and how extraordinary that was, and how important someone like Dolores del Río is. And now she said, "It's dead. It's an artifact."

I remember I had a professor at UCLA [Arnold Rubin –HBS] who I—I never took his courses. He taught African art. And this is important because—it's for any art that comes from societies where the objects we venerate as art were objects that may have been venerated for ritual purposes or they may have been utilitarian pre-Columbian art. But it was African art he was looking at, and he said, "When they move into art museums and art galleries, they are elevated to uselessness." And so much of Chicano art has a use element to it. The art is useful, the art—I mean, it's not going to be a pot that you put corn in necessarily, but it is something that is activating the people in the community. [00:24:05] This art is alive, it's living. It is—as George Lipsitz says, "There is community-based art-making," and we have that. It is also art-based community-making, which is even more important.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Is there any more—I mean, I'm sure there's a lot more, but before we move on to UNM, is there anything more about *CARA* that—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, we have to go to the Mexican Museum before we go to UNM.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Alright, that's good.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Just briefly, there are a couple of things—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, the San Francisco Mexican Museum.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, because—actually we talked about that, we talked about it within the context of my being Anglo. I do have something I would like to include and talk about, even though it's a little weird. But anyway, so I need to take a break.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Sure.

[Tape stops, restarts.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So, where we were we? I'm kind of—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Well, you wanted to say more about the selection of the works for *CARA*.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah but we had stopped right—we were doing something.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I asked you if you wanted to say more about *CARA* before, and you had said we need to talk about the Mexican Museum

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, yeah. There is one thing that happened just very recently. But we did not want to have a single curator. That was the whole purpose of bringing everyone in together. And I'm trying to—Shifra was always involved. She was on the publications committee, but she was really kind of pushed to the side, and I think she pulled herself to the side. [00:26:01] Because she went to the Wight Art Gallery, as I said yesterday, with the idea that this really would be an exhibition she would curate. And, you know, that didn't happen. So she pulled away from it.

It made things kind of difficult and awkward, because she certainly was involved in everything else—in the community, I mean—and she was doing her teaching. And I even—I and another graduate student, Stacie Widdifield, who teaches 19th-century Mexican, we actually taught for her down at Rancho Santiago Community College because she was in a car crash and she couldn't teach. And so we came in and taught for her. So there was all this interaction while this was all going on.

So we decided there had to be a national selection committee, and we also decided that we had these regional task forces. Because no one had the knowledge, not even Shifra, of all the local artists we could think about. We all came up—all, including Shifra, tasked with creating a list of 50 artists who should be—or 20 artists who should be—50 artists who should be in this exhibition. It was interesting because I think—I mean, there were some people you didn't ask to do that. You wouldn't ask Luis Valdez to do that because he didn't know the visual artists but—or even Jesús Treviño or Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano. [00:28:09] It was the people who knew the visual artists who were asked to come up with these lists.

So we had all these lists, and we put them out on a table, and whoever was in all of the lists was in the exhibition. So Rupert was in the exhibition, Asco was in the exhibition. Leo—no, Leo Tanguma not necessarily. But, you know, there were certain—Santa Barraza was in the exhibition, Amalia was in the exhibition. You never say no to Judy. You shouldn't say no to Judy. I mean, she was absolutely important. You know, so there were these 10 or 15 artists who were in the exhibition. César Martínez, John Valadez, they were—and it was mostly the guys. We really had to push to get the women in. The big boys were all there. And then we tasked the regional committees with going out and finding the artists and shipping those 20 slide sheets to us.

We had hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of slides that we had to go through. And so we were going to do a selection committee. Well, it had to be people who were local who could come in easily, or at least semi-locally. René Yañez, we pulled in immediately even though he was San Francisco, because he was a very significant person in terms of not only understanding who was an artist we should look at and include, but because he—and he was an artist himself, his work was in the show. [00:30:20]

But because of his work in the Bay Area to create multiple venues like the *Rooms for the Dead* at the Mission Cultural Center. Certainly, the Galería de la Raza was at that point unparalleled in terms of what they were doing and how they were doing it. He was kind of an impresario, if you will. And he—you know, René—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —was really, really important. He wasn't always easy to follow, what he was saying. So he was there, and Edith wasn't not going to be the committee, the head of the museum. So it was Edith and Judith Baca and Marcos and me. And this was, "Wow!" You know, kids in candy shops, "We get to look at all of this art! We get to"—and it took a lot of pushing to get some of the regions to submit.

We actually had to go down to San Diego, and David Avalos pulled back. He didn't do it anymore. He just wasn't—he was interested in doing other things. He just didn't want to do the scut work, the legwork. Victor Ochoa did, and Victor was wonderful, and he pulled all the San Diego and the border artists and got them up there. Amalia was Northern California, so that was a dream. But Texas was tough, and it wasn't that Pedro wasn't wanting to do it. He was having a hard time getting people to submit things to him. And the Pacific Northwest, we did okay. But the East Coast, that was *pleh*. The Midwest, it was Victor Sorell and Jesús, José Gonzalez, and basically Victor got fed up and just said, "Okay, these are the artists whose slides I'm going to gather, and I'm going to send them." Because he just couldn't get people to do it.

And that—because it was Chicago, because it was the Midwest, we had a lot of artists who essentially started out as Mexican artists and had come to the States and had become Chicano in the process of living in the United States. [00:02:17] So there was a conversation about that. "They're originally Mexican, now they're"—you know? But Marcos was originally Mexican and then he was Mexican American and then he was Chicano, so it's part of—and then what do we do with Mario Torero in San Diego? Because he's Peruvian, but he was part of the Chicano movement and want [ph] his mural—

JOSH T. FRANCO: In San Diego Park, he—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, and so he was in the murals. We didn't have any paintings by him but we—he had murals. But those were the conversations, "Are we pure? Are we not pure?" And, "Well, gosh, we're not pure, so why are we"—but those conversational lines were happening. So we would spend hours and hours looking at these slides and then we would come together. We probably had—we didn't have a lot of bringing René down, but once he was here, he was here for several days, in Los Angeles. So we would meet for several days.

As you know, this is exhausting, and it's just like doing an oral history. At some point, your brain goes tilt, and you can't do it anymore, and your eyes go bad because we were looking at them. We eliminated a lot of them in the slide sleeves and then would look at a hundred at a time through the projector because it was really easy. [00:04:01] It was easier to kick things out. That was a fairly easy process, and it was a process—if one of us thought this should be included, the rest of them had to consider it. And we basically had to agree, all of us. If one of us said, "That shouldn't be in," it wasn't in, as far as I remember. So it had to be a consensus.

So that was the selection process, and it took us forever. It took us a long time to gather. It took over a year to gather this stuff. There were all sorts of conversations because there were the Coors exhibitions, there were the

Canadian Club exhibitions, which you write about in your essay in the Archives'—

JOSH T. FRANCO: The journal.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —journal, which I thought was really interesting. I have one of the Canadian Club. "And what do we do with the artists who were willing to be in those shows? Do we want them in this show?" That was a conversation. We said, "Well, that' s getting a little Jesuitical." Also, we wrote up a list because of Canadian Club and Coors. Coors wanted to underwrite everything. They would have funded the entire thing. This cost well over a million dollars, easily well over a million dollars to produce over the years it took us to put this together. The funding is another story, in terms of how UCLA contributed.

But the committee, these people wrote up a list. We said, "Okay, who can we not take money from?" [00:06:06] And in the archive someplace, wherever all these archives are, is the list. At the top was Coors. Ford was in there, Coca-Cola. Any of the liquor companies, we just didn't want to associate. What was interesting—that ultimately one of the liquor companies were willing to fund all our educational packets, and they accepted our proviso that they couldn't put their name anywhere on it because these are going into the public schools. And we worked with teachers in K through 12 to put these school packets together, and they were wonderful. I have one you can look at. Someone else funded the various—the music series that—but eventually, the Ford Foundation made some really serious changes. We wouldn't go with Ford the company because that's their marketing money, but we would go with the foundation, and they funded certain things.

So there were changes. No Bank of America. And that was right about the time that Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork was put on the checks at Bank of America. And Peter Rodriguez of the Mexican Museum took umbrage with that and said that she was a sellout. Chon Noriega was starting to feel his chops, and at some point—I don't think it was when this was happening. [00:08:01] But later, he has said—with good reasoning, because Chon is really good at that—that one could argue that Carmen Lomas Garza's work is the most subversive of all Chicano art because it can slip in to the American consciousness through things like checks. And it seems benign and it seems folkish almost, but what is this about? What is her work about? What is she talking about? She's talking about whole communities of people who, for certain parts of this country, are profoundly problematic, and they're buying her checks for their Bank of America. The growers in the San Fernando Valley—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —had her checks. Think about it. So all of that—we were living through all those dynamics, and it fed into our consciousness as part of that. Anyway.

JOSH T. FRANCO: So we talked about the selection process and the committee.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. I think—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So that leaves LA, and you go to San Francisco.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I go to—yeah. The show, we were there till the end of September of 1990, and I didn't start till January of '91 in San Francisco. And as I told you, we worked so much and had so much overtime available, which—when they finally realized how much they owed us, they completely reconstructed how they worked with their contract people so that would never happen again. But we did not have to work from the end of September till the beginning of January, and that was really interesting. [00:10:05]

So I went to the Mexican Museum. There were a couple of really interesting exhibitions we worked on. One was already in process before I got there, and that was Leonora Carrington, the English artist who was part of the Surrealist movement and who felt very strongly she wasn't a Surrealist. She was really—her work really focused on magic and on Celtic myths. She was Max Ernst's companion for many years.

And I had a great experience with her, because one of the board members of the Mexican Museum, and I went to Chicago to meet with Leonora Carrington. She was splitting her time between Mexico and Chicago because she had a son in both countries at that point. And we had to borrow works from her son, the doctor in Chicago, and so we spent time with Leonora Carrington, which was a surreal experience. She wasn't supposed to drink. She had a very tiny, tiny studio apartment, and we ordered pizza, and she got us out shot glasses, and we were having pizza with shots of gin. And then we went to her son's house, and then we took a ride to Evanston. For some reason, I insisted on going to Evanston because I wanted to go there because that was one of my childhood locations. And this guy who was on the board—and I don't know why I took it upon myself to bring Leonora Carrington to my childhood home. Jesus Christ! But she said, "Sure." [00:12:02]

So we took this road trip, and right as we got to one of the—some kind of train overpass, we see an elephant, we see some other animals, we see cages with lions and tigers right out in the middle of this open area. Well, it was a circus had come to town, and they hadn't set up yet. So here in the middle of Chicago were all these animals

that you don't usually see in Chicago except in the zoo. So we really enjoyed that. And then over lunch, at this place I used to have lunch when I was in grammar school, we started talking about the Naropa Institute. Are you familiar with them?

JOSH T. FRANCO: No.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It started in Boulder, Colorado in the years I was living there, and it's part of a Tibetan Buddhist thing. The reason this is important, at least for my world, is they brought in Ginsberg and Orlovsky and William Burroughs, the crew of who was left, and they started the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at the Naropa Institute, and I spent my summers hanging out with these folks. It was really amazing.

Well, the reason I bring it up in this context is that Leonora Carrington was a Buddhist of this order, but she went with a group in Vermont. So we shared a lot of gossip, and there was an extraordinary amount of gossip about the Naropa Institute. And so we had this—so, here I am working with this really amazing artist. [00:14:02] She refused—she's gone now—to talk about her work, so you had to talk about other stuff. I never asked her about Max Ernst because everybody asked her about Max Ernst. And, you know, that was six years of her life, and she had 70 other years of her life, and so. So I got poetry books of hers, and essays. And so we came back and we did this really interesting exhibition. I didn't even know who she was when I came to the Mexican Museum. And so, you know, this enormous education.

And then we got this exhibition from Mexico called *Pasión por Frida*, which came out of the Museo Estudio Diego Rivera, and we called it Fridamania. [Laughs.] It came in these Plexiglas, tall boxes, and you were just supposed to put it up. It was a packaged exhibition. So we took photographs of it all and then we opened up the boxes and moved everything around. This was my one, I think, curatorial success. We went to the Museum of Modern Art and borrowed their Frida Kahlo, which is the wedding portrait of her and Diego. We went to the hospital and borrowed the portrait of Dr. so-and-so, who was her doctor when she was there. When the art museum lent us that painting, they actually came and installed it and put their own alarm system in. I mean, it was by then—her work was the first to sell at auction, first Latin American artist whose work sold at auction for more than a million dollars. And that was to fund the Women Studies program at the University of Iowa. [00:16:05]

We borrowed a lot of work by local artists who were inspired by Frida, including Rupert. I went to Texas to borrow the drawing from the Ransom Center, the only nude drawing that Rivera did of Frida, and I was—you know, the only time I was—no, I was a courier for one of Leonora Carrington's. That's fun, being a courier, because you get to take this big thing on board the plane, and you're not checking it and you have all these permissions and you can go *nyah nyah nyah nyah, na na* [they laugh] because, you know, planes aren't very nice to people. And so I brought that back, and that was very successful.

Marie brought in René to create a lot of stuff that happened around it, including a Frida look-alike fashion show and things like that. It was at that point that it was very clear that Marie wasn't particularly interested in having me stay there any longer, and I left before that exhibition closed. And she really wanted to bring in René. Well, if you're going to compare curators, Holly Barnet-Sánchez to René Yañez, there's no contest, no contest at all. He had more bona fides, and he was more accomplished, and he was more creative, and he was a powerhouse name not only in Northern California but in the country. He helped start Culture Clash. [00:18:02] He really was extraordinary. And he was a guy, and she was more comfortable with men. There are a lot of women who are very male-identified and more comfortable in a work environment with men than with other women, and I think that was also the case. But that was the most minor. That was just sort of the cherry on top.

But I had a very interesting experience recently at the Latino Art Now! conference in Houston. It was the last day, Saturday, and I had gotten up early because I went to the Latinx Art Forum business meeting at 7 a.m. or [they laugh] whenever that was, my God, but I'm so glad I went. It was a wonderful meeting. And Roberto was bringing us all coffee. I mean, he was so fabulous. But I was standing around, I was talking to someone, and I remember different people being around, and this woman who had been following me around the whole conference, she—or not following me around, but she would walk by me and she kind of looked at me, and I thought, "Who is this person?" She finally came up to me and she introduced herself, and she said, "I have to talk to you," and I said, "Okay." I look—her nametag was turned around, so I turned it around, which was kind of invading her space, but she was kind of in my space. And she said, "40 years ago, when you were at the Mexican Museum"—and I don't think I was there 40 years ago, that was—well, it was 1991 to '92—yeah, the beginning '91 through part of '92—"you didn't hire me as your assistant and you really—I was really hurt by that." And I said, "I'm sorry, I don't remember you." [00:20:32]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Do you remember hiring an assistant?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I did. I hired this wonderful young woman, and I know exactly why I hired her. Because I was comfortable with her, because she was an undergraduate at UC Santa Cruz working with one of

the Saldívar brothers, whichever one is at Santa Cruz. She was working, and she was an academic and a creative writer, and she was someone I could relate to who came within—and she was really an extraordinary young woman. And this other person, she said, "But I had such passion! And you didn't hire me!" And she was like this. I'm pointing my finger at you. "You didn't' hire me because I was a threat to you."

JOSH T. FRANCO: This is earlier this year, right? 2019?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: This was in April—

JOSH T. FRANCO: So she's held this—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —of this year.

JOSH T. FRANCO: —grudge since the early '90s. Okay.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes. And she said, "I thought I could learn so much from you, and you were just like every other Anglo gatekeeper. You kept me out because I was a threat to your position." And I thought, Whoa. [00:22:06]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Whoa.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I said, "I honestly don't remember you. I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings. I do remember why I hired the person I did." And she said, "Yes, I know who she was. She was nothing, and she was no threat to you." And I said, "Well"—and she said, "I have my own"—she went back to Colorado. She left California because she couldn't get a toehold. She has her own arts organization in Colorado. She gave me her card, and she said, "I just wanted you to know that despite you, I am doing well, and I recovered." And I went—

JOSH T. FRANCO: From just simply not being hired for a job?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes.And I thought about this, and, you know, it was very jarring for me. I actually thought about it for quite a while. And I was getting sick at that point. I was getting a cold, and I was exhausted, and the conference had really—I had gotten so much positive feedback by younger generations, by people—when I came up afterwards and introduced myself and thanked them for their presentation, instead of shaking my hand, they hugged me, "You're Holly Barnet-Sánchez!" That happened to me over and over again, it was way more than I could handle. And that young undergraduate from [Stanford –HBS] said, "[Gasps.] Holly Barnet-Sánchez, I have to talk to you! I want to know what it was like in *CARA*! Oh, my goodness!" It was like—well, it was like I'm a person who bore witness to a lot of what happened at a certain point in time. [00:24:02]

And it was—and Delilah, when she was talking onstage with Santa and Celia Alvarez and Roberto was doing the moderating, and he was talking about what was it like as a woman coming into this movement. And Delilah said, "You know, I come from a matriarchy. [Laughs.] The issue of feminism was never an issue in our family. The issue of having a place in the world was never an issue for me." And she said, "My mother"—and then she looks at me in the audience, "Holly knows my mother, she's a phenomenon"—or whatever Delilah said. And she said—and then she said, "Holly made my career," and [cries] it was so much more than I could handle that I was just going—I was shutting down. When David came—we were supposed to Astros baseball games—I went to bed. I was sick as a dog. When we got home and Cecelia Klein was here, I couldn't see her. I was just sick. I mean, I had a cold, I had a bad cough, but it was also partly psychosomatic. I wasn't prepared to get that kind of input. And then the last day, I have this person come.

So I tracked her down again. I walked away for about 20 minutes, and I don't like leaving things unfinished and unsaid, so I said, "Would you be willing to talk to me?" So she said, "Yes, we can," and I said, "I think you have no idea who I was. [00:26:00] In 1991, I was this young person coming out of graduate school who had been involved in this extraordinary experience. I had no idea what the fuck I was doing at the Mexican Museum. I hired this other person because I could relate to her because she was an academic. And I still don't remember you, but you wouldn't have learned anything from me. You were thinking I was someone else who I wasn't. I was no fucking gatekeeper. I didn't know what the gate was." I said, "You have created something that helped you do whatever you've been doing since 1991, but from my perspective, you just got it all wrong. But you need to know that, and I'm very sorry that you were so hurt by this, but really, you just weren't hired for a job."

But it bothered me for a long time. And actually what I'm saying I said to her at the time may not have been what I actually said to her at the time except for the fact that, "You had no idea who I was, I wasn't that experienced, you wouldn't have learned that much from me. And I wasn't finding you as a threat; I wasn't finding you at all. I found this other person, and anybody else was irrelevant." But she was mollified that I came back and talked to her and took her concern seriously enough. But it was, "Whoa, this person carried a burden for a very long time." And it was because—well, it was because of who she was, but it was a Mexican American institution. It was not a Chicano institution. [00:28:01] It was Mexican American institution that—the person who

didn't hire her was white. And I seem to hold the keys to the kingdom because of *CARA*. And the other young woman who I hired is a Chicano also.

So, anyway, I wanted to bring that in because there are these situations that carry—we have no idea how we're going to impact people. And then I came to UNM. And as I said, I was hired to teach modern Latin American and —

JOSH T. FRANCO: How did you feel about moving to New Mexico?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, I was very excited. When Marcos and Edith Tonelli did the studio visit in New Mexico, they came to Albuquerque and then they went to Hondo to meet Luis Jiménez. And Adan was probably in diapers at that point if he was even alive. And Marcos's response—because you know, Marcos is from Mexico. Marcos would love to live in Mexico. Except Marcos is a profoundly fastidious person. And the way in which Mexico and many other countries negotiate kitchens and plumbing and keeping food fresh—because he was a chef—it was very difficult for him, and it was very difficult when they would visit family in Mexico. [00:30:12] His father's family lived in a little community outside of Pueblo that you got to, when you could, through a dry riverbed outside of Pueblo. His father's family were shepherds, and his mother was a city girl from Mexico City. And when we would visit, it was very hard for Marcos. He wouldn't stay with family; we would stay in a hotel.

So he came back from New Mexico, he said, "Holly, we have to figure out how to live there. It's like Mexico, but it has plumbing."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And he was just—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —ecstatic about that. And I had spent a summer between when I was 13 going on 14, right before high school, where I was going away. My parents had always sent me to summer camps because I was an only child and they were trying [laughs] to socialize me. I think that's one reason they sent me to boarding school also is, I would be around my peers, which was very good for me and kind of hard on my roommates. And it tended to be theater camps because I was this theater person. One summer, I—two years, I went to Girl Scouts camp. I went to a theater camp in Vermont, outside of Burlington.

And then it was Brush Ranch here in New Mexico, which was horseback riding, which was another thing—you know, as a little kid, I was interested in horses. That was the end of my interest in horses, but it was a theater camp, and it's on the Pecos River outside of Santa Fe. I was there for four, six weeks, and doing a lot of barrel racing on horses and learning about saddles and doing all sorts of different kinds of plays. And we were right on the river, and I mean, it was—it was heaven. I mean, it's heaven! And my mother had lived in the two little rooms on either side of the chapel at Bishop's Lodge during the war years. I talked about that. When we came, we stayed at Bishop's Lodge. She brought me to the camp, and all the people who had owned Bishop's Lodge in the '40s were still there, so it was like a reunion for her. And so I had the myth of New Mexico, and it was part of my childhood. So coming to New Mexico was a cool thing. [00:02:00]

When I moved my parents here, which was that summer, they—I wanted to take my mother up to Bishop's Lodge, but she was disintegrating—well, physically, definitely, but it was more. She had some form of senile dementia at that point. She was in her late 80s, and she lived to be 94, so I could never get her up there. And my father's problems with lungs, he—bringing them from sea level in Hawaii here. But anyway, coming to New Mexico was a great thing.

It was also—it helped contribute to the end of our marriage. I think for a couple of reasons. One, we were done with *CARA,* and we had worked together at the Mexican Museum when we were—when Marcus was guest curator for *The Chicano Codices*. And that was an outgrowth. We had wanted to do an art book exhibition at the art library at UCLA in conjunction with *CARA*, and it—there was just too much, so he still—and it was for 1992, so it was sort of recuperating. It was replenishing the codices that were destroyed during the conquest. And he asked people to name the codices because the extant codices are named for the collectors, like the Boturini and all of those.

So we weren't working together anymore, and one of the things that I discovered is that—well, this is all too personal. It's not necessary for this oral history. But anyway, it wasn't healthy for our marriage. And Marcos was trying to find himself, and I was dealing with bringing my parents. [00:04:12]

My first year here, I was creating a new curriculum in material I knew nothing about. I was teaching the Intro to Art History, and because I came into art history so late as a field, I didn't—we've had that conversation when you asked how I learned to do analysis and stuff like that. I've spent my whole career catching up being an art

historian. I should not have taught that course. That was a disaster. Using, you know, the big survey books, whichever big survey book it was at the time, and having five GAs working with me. It was not a pretty moment. And I was having to create—I had funds to create a slide collection so I could actually teach Latin American art, and I was creating the syllabi. They gave me the first semester to do all this, and I started in August.

I moved my parents here in August, right before school started. I knew my mother was not healthy, and I did not know how unhealthy my father was. That first semester was going back and forth between whatever I thought I was supposed to be doing at the university, and moving my parents around to different living facilities. By Thanksgiving, I had both of them in a new nursing home that had a nursing facility for people who didn't have Alzheimer's or other senile dementia, to two units for Alzheimer's patients who weren't going to hurt anyone or themselves, and a lockdown for people who were dangerous to themselves and others. [00:06:28] My mother moved in there first and then I moved my father in there, and then he just started to disintegrate, and he died that December. And I had—I talked to you about that, about how Delilah was there for me. I had to take the ashes back, or I felt I had to take the ashes back, to their church in Hawaii where they had these little niches in their church for their ashes. Mom's ashes didn't go back for 15 years. I could have waited on my dad's, but I was just like this.

I called—my daughter was in Thailand, and my son came out from wherever he was, Texas or Wisconsin. And we went to Hawaii, we had the memorial service. My father was a very famous man in Hawaii, and so it was a big thing. I was sort of out-of-body functioning. I was not functioning. And this was also right at the time, to put it in context, when the O. J. Simpson thing exploded. I remember we were supposed to go a party, and we were watching the freeway thing with O. J. in his car on the freeway. [00:08:05] We were just—we had just come from LA, this is—it was like—anyway, it was a very weird time.

So my first year was probably one of the very worst years of my life. Because I hadn't lived anywhere near my parents since I was 14, and I was an only child, and Dad had just—and we all had just lost Jane. My Auntie Mame person had died in June before I started here. And Roberto Trujillo at Stanford, at the archive, was wonderful because he was dealing with his father dying up in Mora [New Mexico], and all the stuff he had to deal with, with his two sisters and his mother. So he was very supportive of me, even though I wasn't in California anymore. And people here to a point were—Joyce Szabo was magnificent. Other people—it was just very difficult.

So that was '93–94. And then '94-'95, I kind of got my legs down, and I was creating these courses. I created two two-semester courses on 19th- and 20th-century Latin American Art and 19th- and 20th-century Mexican Art. And then I started doing—I did a seminar on Surrealist Art in Latin American. And we actually did a field trip. [00:10:06] I did lots of field trips, I took my students. And I learned after the first one, you make sure everyone's over 21.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Over 18 is not good enough, and so I only—after the first trip, I only took graduate students, no undergraduates. And so we went to—

JOSH T. FRANCO: What were the—what happened with the 18-year-olds?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: They would do stuff that in some states were legal, other states weren't, and they didn't have any governors on them, and they were going, *Whoo!* And they also weren't as committed to the academic project. But we went to them, and David Craven went on this trip to Houston. We went to the Museum of Fine Arts, we went to the Contemporary Art Museum and then we went to the Menil Collection, and we went to the Rothko Chapel. So not all of it was Latin American Surrealism, but you can't be there and not to do that.

But it was amazing when—because Matta and Wifredo Lam are a big presence in the Menil Collection, and it was just—this was the perfect thing, this seminar. It was 18 students: nine art studio, nine art history. Florencia Bazzano was there—I don't think she went on the trip though. An artist who was Chilean, he actually wrote his paper in Spanish for me. You can do that at UNM. We're a Hispanic-serving institution. And Craven went, Marcos went, this amazing young man who's getting his MFA in art studio—Will Wilson, who is Navajo and who's a photographer. And he was magnificent. [00:12:08] It was an adventure. And while we were there—we didn't see this, David Craven had the experience—a Chevy, 1950 Chevy drives up to the front of the museum—David was just sitting outside—and a chauffeur gets out and goes around and opens the door, and Dominique de Menil gets out.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And Dominique—David went up, and David was very courtly. He was from the South, he had impeccable manners. And he just said how much he appreciated her collection and what she was doing for the arts and, you know, it was—and we found this fabulous Mexican restaurant. You know, you had to try finding the perfect margarita.

And then I took students to Los Angeles, and that was amazing because this is when I started teaching Chicano Art. They met with Harry Gamboa, and we went to Self Help Graphics, and we went—I don't remember all the different places we went, but it was really fun. I took—I rented—there must have been about six of us, I rented an SUV, and I said, "I'm going to take you on a ride, and it's going to show you the parameters of LA." So we started at Sunset at the Pacific Coast Highway, and we took Sunset till it turned into Cesar Chavez—actually, it was Brooklyn Avenue at that time—and all the way to East LA College. Then we came back and drove down into South Central. [00:14:11] So we traversed Sunset, and then a T down into South Central. And you could see the changing demographics from the West Side—the elite, elite, posh, posh West Side—into really interesting West Hollywood, into Downtown through the areas called Japantown and Chinatown and Koreatown, into Boyle Heights and into South Central. And this was—you know, we had already lived through the Rodney King riots, and it was bombed out. It was before it started being rebuilt. And the student said, "Why aren't there more riots?"

JOSH T. FRANCO: Why aren't there more—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —more riots.

JOSH T. FRANCO: —riots?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, because they just looked at the—East LA was very lively. You know, LA was very lively at that point, even if you're going through working-class neighborhoods. But you got into South Central, and it was so grim back then. And it's—I mean, there are challenges throughout Los Angeles, but it—they just wondered what was happening. And all you saw were liquor stores and advertisements for Crown Royal and cigarettes or whatever, I don't know that cigarettes could still be advertised at this point. But it was very sobering, the economics of the LA Basin.

And then I took another group to San Francisco, and there we looked at all the Rivera murals. [00:16:06] And then we went—I took a group to Phoenix because there was this really cool exhibition of women Latin American artists, all the way from early 20th century—so Frida was there, Maria Izquierdo was there—to contemporary artists. And then I also took them to MARS art space, and other spaces in the Phoenix area. They met with Larry Yáñez, I think it was at that point, and his wife at the time: Lenee Eller, who was an artist in her own right. And I think she still is the curator for the art collection at the Phoenix Airport, so she talked about the dynamics of art that isn't necessarily public art, but in a public space like that. So those were fun things to be doing.

We got a lot of support. The Latin American Institute, which is now the Latin American & Iberian Institute—I could, in the early years—it changed. In the early years, I could walk into the director's office and say, "I'm taking eight people some place. Do you have money?" And he would give me money for airfare and hotels. They had to—you know, it was like going to summer camp, you had to—there were three or four people to a room, but we got them there, and it was fabulous. And people would have to pay for their own food. But I didn't even have to fill out paperwork. I didn't have to—[00:18:01]

JOSH T. FRANCO: It's a very different world, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —get Social Security numbers or their student numbers. You know, it was really cool.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That sounds nice.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. [They laugh.] It was nice.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I've never had that, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And, you know, I created a lot of different seminars over the years. And the last two I taught, one was on *Pacific Standard Time*, which I called "The Juggernaut." "The Getty Juggernaut." And it was the first one, and I went and saw a lot of those exhibitions. I couldn't make it to the second one, which is the one I should have gone to.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.] It would have been a lot for you to take in, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But I didn't. But the first one had the Asco exhibition at LACMA. And I have to say that I think they did a very good job, but it's hard to do an exhibition of a performance collective. It's almost impossible because it's like trying to understand Ana Mendieta with all that's left of her, the photographs of her installations, the documents.

That's fine. My favorite part of that, aside from I loved seeing their outfits that they put out there, but my favorite part were the video interviews that they did. And the *No Movies,* those photographs because they were specifically designed for what they were. They were documents, and they were staged, and it was fun to see

them again. But hearing them talk—I mean, I came into that world in 1982, so they had been doing this for almost a decade by the time I knew anything about them. [00:20:07] But we would see them, we would watch the interaction, we would have them over for dinner and watch the dynamics. They were all so different from each other. How the blankety-blank did they ever get along?

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But it was wonderful. They were fabulous. And Gronk was sort of like a combination of that early 20th-century Russian ballet dancer [Nijinsky –HBS] and Peter Pan. I mean, he's so graceful. He moves like a dancer. And he was a perfect foil for Harry, in Harry's words. And Willie was this sort of silent, brooding presence that when you got him in front of his musical group or in a performance—and his group was Los Illegals, and we would see them perform. He was—and his music was fabulous and it was—and then there's Patsy! And it was like, there's no way you can convey how extraordinary they are [cries] and were in an exhibition. So they did a really good job of something that was impossible to do. And the book—

JOSH T. FRANCO: The book's great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: The book is fabulous, and the book that Chon put together of Harry's writings is wonderful. [00:22:07] But what is so amazing—because you have all this wonderful writing and Harry's wonderful writing, but when you watch Harry in action, and he's just talking in front of you, in front of a podium, and he's not using stuff to read from, it's just coming out of his mouth. Or you're sitting at that wonderful restaurant downtown, whatever that one—I can't remember the name of it, where they always used to hang out, and a lot of the photographs are from that place. I think it's where they invented the—well, whatever.

One of the things that is so wonderful in having something to do with a living movement and living artists is that they're there, they're alive, they talk back to you, you see them perform. And Chicano artists—and this is true of a lot of artists, but Chicano artists in particular—since they have so long had to defend what they were doing and tell people what their art meant, that they are so good at talking about what they do, because they had to. Leonora Carrington didn't have to say anything about her work. Max Ernst didn't have to say anything. And the Surrealists talked a lot, but did they talk about their work? [00:24:01] Not necessarily very much, but they started as a literary verbal movement. Jasper Johns doesn't have to say jack shit about his work. And no one expected Jackson Pollock to say very much about his work. But you look at Santa Barraza, you look at Barbara Carrasco, you look at Judy Baca, you look at Rupert García, you look at the Streetscapers, and they have had to explain their work to somebody every step of the way. And so they are eloquent. They are eloquent. So it's really a gift.

But as I have said when I've talked about *Give Me Life*, the book with Tim Drescher, and the advantage of working with works of art by living artists is you can talk to them. The disadvantage is they can talk back.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And so one of the things that I really appreciate about Willie, and other artists as well—but Willie comes to mind because the conversations were so intense and ongoing when we were talking about his murals. Tim and I were in East LA a lot. I mean, once this project started. And we spent a lot of time with Willie, we spent a lot of time with Botello and Healy, and we never got them together. But Judithe Hernández—and it was really wonderful. [00:26:08]

Willie doesn't care how you interpret his work. He accepts all interpretations as valid because he feels—I think a lot of art historians and critics feel this way—that a work of art can carry the weight of many different interpretations. Because part of what makes a work of art a work of art is the interaction between the viewer and the work of art. The art—as one of my former students said, "The work of art actually happens between the object and the viewer, or the object and the maker." For her—she is a phenomenologist—that's when things happen. And spending time in the studios, and spending time at Self Help, and watching the process, I would say to the Chicano artists, "I want to do an exhibition where I would hang the artist on the wall with a work. Maybe not literally, but I want them there so that the viewers to the exhibitions could talk to the artist, could have that interaction with the artist as well."

To hear Carmen talk about her work is just amazing. To hear all of them. To hear Patsy. And Patsy has been, in my experience—I know she's always been very vocal, but around me she was quite reserved for many years. It's only been in the last few years that she's—and I think it's not related to me so much, she's just—or it might be—but we talk more and I haven't gone away, I'm still here. When I see he, which isn't all that often—but she has very wonderful ways of talking about her work and making sense of her work. [00:28:12]

One the most articulate is Judithe Hernández. She is extraordinary. And she'll say—if she disagrees with you, you know, she's very forthright about the disagreement. But all she wants really—and I think this was the most important thing, and hopefully, we did it in *Give Me Life* as best we could—is that you get the facts straight. In

terms of what the title actually is. Her *La Mujer* in Ramona Gardens has had about 12 different bad titles, and so she finally gave us the title that she actually gave to the mural. And the dates when things actually were done. And the mediums, and who she was working with, and how the dynamic was between her and Carlos working on those, and what it was like at Ramona Gardens. She wants those things portrayed factually. And what we say about the mural, she would—she wanted people to know what she felt about the mural, and then we could say what we wanted about the mural. And if it was contradicting what she said, she wasn't so happy about that.

If we were contradicting what Willie said, he would go, you know, "Okay." And what we tried to do in the book is say, "This is what we thought about this mural by Willie. This is what Willie thought about the mural, this is what he was trying to convey." With other authors who've written about the murals, we would say—if they wrote about it differently than Tim and I did, we would say, "For a different interpretation, please see so-and-so and so-and-so." [00:30:07] Because we were trying to get across the fullness of the experience of the murals, and we certainly included a lot of quotes from the muralists and from people in the community, in the projects, as best we could. At Ramona Gardens, nobody was really interested in talking, but Estrada Courts they were.

So that started in 2005, the book. And then toward the end, in 2005—actually it started in 2000. In 2005, I became an associate—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —dean at the College of Fine Arts.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Holly, do you think—I don't want to get—

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JOSH T. FRANCO: On the record so that it's there for the listener too. This is Josh Franco with Holly Barnet-Sánchez in her home in Albuquerque, session two of day two. And so Holly, we had left off—we're in New Mexico, you described your first couple of years, the first year was rough, the second year you got your footing. And this is the mid-'90s. And then, maybe, if you can speak a little to the time between that and kicking off the *Give Me Life* project with Tim, and then we can talk about *Give Me Life*.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay. Well, there is another project also that I would like to talk about that a lot of us did. And that's the way I like doing things. In 2004, Tim and I started to conceptualize *Give Me Life*. I mean, it wasn't called *Give Me Life* till very late in the project, but the book on the Murals, and it started as a book about the murals of Estrada Courts. And then we realized we can't do Estrada Courts without doing Ramona Gardens, and you can't do Estrada Courts and Ramona Gardens without doing the murals of East LA that are on the streets.

So, over a period of years, we did several chapters on Estrada Courts. We divided it up into sections for convenience sake. The "Guardian Figures," which are on the corners of the projects, and "The Olympic Façade," and "For Residents' Eyes Only," the interior of the courts, and then we invited Marcos Sánchez-Tranquilino to contribute to the chapter on Nature Row, which I had always called Nature Alley, but I was the only one. [00:02:06] Nature Row. Because that's where he made some of his most interesting discoveries.

And then what we did, we did one—and we had divided things out into categories based on the categories we had found in the murals, of history, of idealism, of politics, of gangs, of community. And we did the same at Ramona Gardens. Of course, there are only 27 murals at Ramona. And we talked about every single mural in both of the projects. And then, okay, we did this humongous, long chapter that was a dump, that was everything else, and it was a mess. We sent it out to six people to read—three muralists who are also writers, and three scholars—and we heard back from all the muralists. I can't remember the names of all of them, but John Pitman Weber from Chicago was one of them, and he's an old pal of Tim's. And we got really good feedback from the muralists. Rafael Pérez-Torres from UCLA and George Lipsitz were two of the scholars, and we got some really good input from them. And then Gil Cárdenas just said, "Oh, publish it."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And they all said, "You have to do something with that last chapter, it's a disaster." [00:04:04] So that was about 2011, 2012. 2012. And so it was my task to take the first stab at breaking up the chapter. And poor Tim, [laughs] he thought it would be something quick and dirty, and it would be really easy.

I basically quadrupled what we had done. I went on to Google Maps, and I went through every street that was important: Whittier Boulevard was really important. First Street was really important. Cesar Chavez was really important—and we actually started Cesar Chavez back in Downtown—and then Soto Street and Olympic Boulevard. And I went on Google Maps, and I checked out—because they always have the dates stamps when the photos were taken, so I could see when buildings were gone, and at least by date X, that mural wasn't there

anymore. I documented all the murals, and I wrote it as, you know, a happy journey down Whittier Boulevard. Or—you know.

And I had the best time. It took me forever. I added all these different chapters, and I sent it to Tim and he went, "What the fuck." [They laugh.] He was just flabbergasted. And of course, I didn't do any editing. I just wrote it and sent it to him because it had taken me a long time, and he was just horrified by the quality of the writing because this was the first thing out of my head. [00:06:09] I hadn't done proofing, I hadn't done anything, so it was very rough. And I didn't even let him know it was rough. But he should have known better. But anyway, we had a lot of tap dancing around that.

And then we realized, Oh, we need to do chapters on the Streetscrapers and chapters on—a chapter on Willie Herrón, because their work was so remarkable and instrumental and *blah blah blah blah*. And then we realized we need an epilogue, and then it became another chapter because we brought it up to date to 2013. And that was a sobering chapter to work on. What was fun was finding out how they were existing in the digital world, their afterlife in the digital world, and how young high school kids were being encouraged to use these murals to create plays based on the imagery of these murals. Like *Ghosts of the Barrio* by Wayne Healy at Ramona Gardens. So there were these really interesting things. And then we talked about various conservation efforts and the law that was passed that prevented murals from being painted.

So it was a very long process, and keeping Marcos in the process was a tough one. Because he had become a psychologist, and he was a Jungian, he started writing things in a very different way. So we had to get his permission to do some serious edit, so it would be within the framework of the rest of the book. We got his permission to do that, but that took a long time as well. And then getting permissions for illustrations, all of that, and we spent years going back and talking to various people. [00:08:04]

And the dean, the two deans [laughs] I was working with were great. They gave me time off in the summer. Tim would come out, the slide library would be—we would take over all the slide library light tables. We would use my office, and we had all the slides that Marcos had taken, all the slides that Tim had taken. He was the slide executor of Eva Cockcroft; Eva Cockcroft's son had given him all her slides. We had Robert Sommer, who was a sociologist at Davis, I think, and who had gone around and done very early photography. The only photographs that exist of the *Del Rey Mural* at the Teatro Campesino Cultural Center, of the two processions, Robert Sommer took those. And so he sent them all.

It was amazing all the images that we had to work with. And they were all originals from the '70s, when these were painted, and the '80s. And David Botello had gone down around and photographed everything, so we had his. And then when they had the first *Pacific Standard Time*, and that was the *Mural Remix* in LACMA, that small show Sandra de la Loza did, and they had found that video of the painting at Estrada Courts, which I had never seen before. We went into the Chicano archive at UCLA because of—the archive of Chicano murals there, and we got some of the slides there that we knew about the murals, but we didn't have the images ourselves. [00:10:05] And I had to get permission from Shifra's son to use her stuff. And from—oh, Carlos Almaraz's widow.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Elsa?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Elsa Flores. And she was wonderful. And Harry. And, you know, we just went—and there were a few people that were a little obstreperous. There are two murals in there, or two groups or works by artists, that are not illustrated. One, we couldn't get permission, and the other we knew we it would be a problem. So we talk about this person's murals, but we don't illustrate them.

But it was an amazing process working on it, and developing a back and forth where most of the time he was up there, most of the time I was down here. He was retired from San Francisco State by then. I was teaching and being an associate dean, so most of our work was during the summer or other breaks. A couple of times, I went up there, and we would just go over the manuscript together.

But it was a very satisfying process. In some cases, very painful. When we saw that raw video of the first mural that was going upright outside of Ramona Gardens and Joe [Rodriguez]—whose last name we'll find—who was with Mechicano, who kind of took over the project. [00:12:01] And he said, "We thought this could essentially save lives, and it couldn't." And it was the realization: There is a limit to what art can do. When the systemic society is as problematic as it is, this—it will make a difference; it's not going to make the difference.

And, you know, the youth gangs in East LA were youth gangs until such—and the sociologists who studied the LA youth gangs have made this realization that, starting in the '80s, the economics of getting a decent job, whether it's the post office, the fire department, police department, the forestry service, Sears—that, where they grew up and out of the gang experience, it was a youth experience. Even though it in some cases it was very violent, they could walk away. And if they didn't have a record, they could become a police officer, or a fireman. There weren't firewomen then. But those jobs dried up, so people were staying in the gangs, particularly at Ramona Gardens, into their 40s and beyond.

So the world that we studied—that Marcos studied and I went along for the ride, for his master's thesis—and the world that we were focusing on, of the '60s and '70s in our book, was a different world than the world we were living in when we were working on the book. [00:14:17] And it was a much tougher world.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Now?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Now.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Recently?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. I mean, the '70s—the gangs in the '70s were seriously problematic. Boyle Heights and Lincoln Heights, those were dangerous places because the gang activity was pretty intense. So Boyle Heights is probably easier to live in now for most people. But for the gang people world, it's a much tougher world, just because there are fewer opportunities.

But one of the things that happened while I was working on this and while I was being an associate dean—that around 2009 or '10, a couple of guys came from the East Coast to talk to us about doing something to honor Rudy Anaya. And one of them—and these are names I'm going to have to fill in because these are important names—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, we can do that.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —was one of the cocreators, not necessarily the cofounders, but one of the cocreators and one of the important figures in the Nuyorican Poets Café [Miguel Agarín –HBS]. He ended up teaching at Rutgers in English, and he taught a lot of Shakespeare, and his name is really well known. So Rutgers was going to get involved, and the guy who he was with had somehow approached the administration at Rutgers. [00:16:18] And we approached the administration at UNM. And we had this very open provost here, who was a woman, [Suzanne Ortega –HBS] and the woman working at Rutgers who was associate VP for whatever [Isabel Nazario, Associate V.P. for Academic and Public Partnerships –HBS]—and she was remarkable—they gave us each, Rutgers, UNM, $50,000. So we had a $100,000 kitty to start with.

And we were going to honor the Nuyorican Poets Café and Rudy Anaya. And how are we going to do that? We were working with various entities at Rutgers and various entities here, and Jim Linnell, who was dean at that point said, "Holly, this sounds like something you ought to be directing." So what it meant, until we did this in April of 2011—and if we can pause that for a second? I want to—

[Audio break.]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Should I start?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yes, it was *The Latino Literary Imagination*. The first weekend was a symposium at Rutgers with lots of panels, with performances, with readings, Guillermo Gómez-Peña got involved, and it was really fabulous. [00:18:09]

The following weekend or two weekends later, it was at UNM, and we had several panels. And I was on a panel with Tey and Goldie Garcia on the visual arts. But in the meantime, what we did is, I went nuts. I got the Tamarind to put on an exhibition. I worked with students who curated an exhibition at that small gallery at NHCC. And Tey was wonderful, she worked with us. I curated an exhibition at 516 Arts, and that was magnificent. It was on the ground floor, an installation. It was the fourth chapter in Amalia's *Venus Envy* series. And in the backroom, it was Pepón Osorio ["Drowned in a Glass of Water," 2010, mixed media commissioned by Williams College –HBS] and, *whoo!* And then upstairs were all these other wonderful artists, including that young *papel picado* artist [Kari Margridou-Ramírez de Arellano –HBS]. Yreina Cervantez had some works there, and Viva Paredes, the glass artist from the Bay Area, she had a series of things. That's how I got to know Viva. Tere Romo suggested her. [00:20:00]

Amalia and Pepón were here for a week installing it, and all my graduate students were working with them. They were just falling in love with these people. We had a dinner with faculty and Amalia and Pepón. And then we had a panel on children's literature because there are a lot of people who write children's literature, including Rudy. And then we had an evening of poetry readings and, oh, my God, it was—it was mindboggling. That was at NHCC. And then we had the event that honored Rudy, which was overwhelming. And Denise Chávez, she was on many of the panels, but she also essentially emceed the evening.

And Diana Rebolledo and I—I was running it, and Diana was helping me because she had to corral all the literary types that were working from the department of Spanish—well, it's Modern Languages. And Brian Herrera from theater, who's now at Princeton, was helping a lot. I corralled our development person in the college—or she—it was sort of a development person. Anyway, I hijacked her as my assistant. And we met every week. I probably

have hundreds and hundreds of emails that I was sending out, and these were pages-long emails. "Okay this is what we're doing this week: *blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.* And this is what you have to do: *blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.*" And then I was doing this with the Rutgers people—*blah, blah, blah, blah, blah*—and who was going to produce the program and the poster? And who was doing the graphics? [00:22:06] And it was just fabulous. I so enjoyed it.

Jim, the dean was—I mean, I really wasn't doing my dean-ly work at all. I had gotten permission to not teach that last semester because this was all I was doing. Except I had this seminar with the graduate students who were doing the exhibition. And then on Sunday, Pepón and Amalia did a conversation at the Albuquerque Museum. And, you know, it was just a wonderful, wonderful collaboration between Rutgers and us and NHCC and 516 Arts, bringing together people who don't generally work together. I just—it was magnificent. That's another reason this took 12 years, the book, *Give Me Life*.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Can you say more about—because I'm realizing for myself that I haven't—it's about place and audience. I've seen Amalia speak and been in conversations with her in, like, New York or LA. And Pepón I don't think I've ever seen publicly speak myself. But depending on the city and the place, the audience has different concerns and questions. So what—yeah, just, if you could recall any highlights or the conversations among your grad students and Pepón and Amalia or the audiences of 516 or whoever was there for these events with them. And how did they respond to the New Mexican context? Because neither of them are—they're both coastal people. [00:24:05]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: They are coastal people. Well, when they were doing the installation at 516, they were doing it in January and February, and the exhibition didn't open for a couple of months. We were having the worst cold snap that we had had in 50 or 60 years. They shut down UNM, they shut down the state government to minimize the use of fuels. People's pipes were freezing. It wasn't like being in Alaska. It was 11 degrees, it was five degrees below zero, but, you know, it was a very trying moment physically.

We had people driving Amalia and Pepón from where they were staying. And so when they were doing the installation, they were meeting with people like faculty and technical people and grad students who were helping them—the fact that they could help do an installation. So in terms of place, we were—at that moment, it was an aberration. And I think they all noted, "Wait a minute, this is New Mexico, this is supposed to be warm, this is supposed"—you know, we didn't have any snow, but because we're the desert, we don't get snow. So people were so absorbed with the cold that that kind of vitiated the sense of place here. [00:26:04]

That being said, once everything happened in April, the—I'm trying to think of what—I think in terms of the artists themselves, they had—Amalia had been here before, when *CARA* came here. She went wherever the exhibition went. She installed the *Ofrenda* every time. She also had done two exhibitions up in Santa Fe, *Ceremony of Spirit* and *Ceremony of Memory.* So she had a sense of place and space here. Because she was looking at things from a metaphysical perspective and a spiritual perspective, what she was seeing was a different set of expressions, what with the *santeros* and the *santos* and *bulto* carvers. But it resonated across, because *Ceremony of Spirit* and *Ceremony of Memory,* she dealt with a lot of Caribbean-based artists. Things looked so different in part because of the geographical differences, the stringency of the *santos*, the desert, and the lushness of the Caribbean installations that spoke to the environments without necessarily referring to them. [00:28:00] She was looking at it through that prism.

And Pepón, because he—as far as I know, he hadn't been to New Mexico. I think he did make comments on, you know, "This is different than New York City."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: "This is different than San Juan. This is"—you know, the urban or even the rural experience of Puerto Rico is very different than the rural experience here. But he's traveled all over the world. And issues of disaffected people and incarcerated fathers and young sons, that wonderful installation he did that just is so powerful of the prison cell and the teenage boy's room—that those experiences, while they may look different because the markers are different, the things—but teenage kids now because of the Internet and because of movies and because of TV, there is a universal teenage language, visual and verbal vocabulary.

So he was making comments, but the audiences—the audiences here are not provincial audiences that—they welcome the difference. What they, I think, were trying to negotiate is the *hispano* and the Latino. Not necessarily East Coast environment and New Mexico desert, but: What are the similarities and differences of *hispano* or Hispanic? [00:30:11] People do use the word Hispanic here, but I prefer using *hispano* because the experience isn't an anglicized experience in that sense. And I like Miguel Gandert's work where he talked about the Indo-Hispanic or *indo-hispano* because that's really what's going on here, even though we have these distinct groups and even within the *hispano* population, a lot of distinctions.

So I think there were conversations about—more about how the kinds of things that Pepón was addressing and

the kinds of—

[END OF TRACK barnet19_2of2_sd_track07_r.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —things that Amalia were addressing, how they differed and how there were resonances. They both deal with an aesthetic that could be called *rasquache*. There are other words in the Latino experience that I can't pull up right now, but—

JOSH T. FRANCO: In the Puerto Rican context, there's *embellecedora*.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Exactly. So it looks different because the materials are different and the excesses might be different. Amalia doesn't have excess in the same way that Pepón has excess. [Laughs.] But he can be very, very minimalist in his own way. He did the exhibition that was up at Williams first, where it was the two rooms, the woman in that crinoline dress. So it wasn't strictly a Latino expression. But I'm trying to remember, because this was about the Latino experience, and it was focusing on how the visual experience amplifies or parallels the literary. So it was those particular contexts. But those are really good questions that you're asking.

At the end of it, we had a closing dinner after the event honoring Rudy. And Rudy, of course, is a much older person now, and he's fairly frail. I mean, frail implies something a little more—and this was 2011, so he was still pretty high—lately, I've seen images of him in public where he's in a wheelchair. And I think that's more because of energy rather than disability. [00:02:14] But he was still—you know, he had a strong voice, but he didn't have a lot of energy. But we were dealing with Jimmy Santiago Baca, who lives around the corner from me here. And Jimmy is a challenge to work with.

JOSH T. FRANCO: He's a poet.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: He is a poet, and he's a very impressive poet. He spent a lot of time as a teenager in jail. He learned how to read in jail. He was part of the poetry series at UCLA for *CARA*, and I was very anxious about dealing with Jimmy, but it was important. And Jimmy as part of the group back in New Jersey also, he came. And he's very impressive, but he was a challenge because he would corral the people who came in from New York, and they would disappear.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And I would have to track them down, and I knew where they were. And Jimmy did say, "Well, the bartender keeps feeding us drinks." So that part was—well, anyway—but it was magnificent. It was just a wonderful project.

And then they did a rerun a couple of years later, but it was entirely poetry and fiction writing, and I had pulled back from it, and it was the Spanish and Portuguese folks. Diana, I think, was retired by then, Rebolledo.

And in the midst of it all, actually pretty early on, there was a young faculty in Spanish and Portuguese who had written a book on Chicano scholars, and he and his girlfriend were murdered. [00:04:17] And we had to deal with that. And that was—that was a—it was a big hole in any number of different ways. I mean, you could fill the gap in terms of the professional stuff, but the human stuff, we just didn't know how to deal with that. And it was the ex-husband.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, no.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And so there was this human tragedy. Part of the thing I was dealing with as an associate dean was, Virginia Tech happened and Northern Illinois University happened. And so when kids started getting cranky and on Facebook or what other social media was available at the time, and they would say, "Would somebody please kill that professor?" because they were venting, we had to get involved. Because you never knew whether this was a kid who was venting or this was a going to be a problem.

And I had to remove someone from campus who had made threats to me, who was a licensed gun dealer as well as a staff member. I was called into the dean's office one day, and there was the police and Christopher Mead, and there was this voodoo painting that was aimed at me that was found in the University art museum. [00:06:04] And so I was dealing with—and David was always out of town.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So they would send police around the neighborhood to watch me for a while. So I was dealing with that stuff at the time, and fortunately, we have been—we have been very [knocks on table] fortunate here at UNM.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Were other faculty getting these kinds of threats? Was this—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Not that were brought to my attention. I think if they were and they got it to the dean's office, I would've known about it. It wasn't my portfolio. I wasn't responsible the way I was for the students, and for students threatening faculty or threatening other students. But that is part of the narrative now, and so that's—

JOSH T. FRANCO: But that brings up—it brings up an interesting question. Because you've had a long teaching career, how has the classroom changed? Any general observations? Or how has teaching Latino art changed, if you want to talk about that?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, since no one is teaching it here—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —I don't know how it's changed here. I will see when Ray Hernández-Durán is teaching a course on Latinx art in the fall, and he's asked me to come and talk on Chicano art, and I'm happy to do that. And I'm very grateful for him to do that. I'm hoping—you know, maybe I'll start lobbying our interim dean to—well, I have to lobby the department first to see if they care, and to see if it's possible. Even a joint appointment with Chicano Studies, something like that. Because I think it's really silly for UNM, a Hispanic-serving institution in New Mexico, to not be doing this. [00:08:09] And it would be really—

JOSH T. FRANCO: What about Josh? [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. Oh, that would be fabulous. Ah, that would be fabulous! It would be so much fun to have you here. That—you know, it's shameful.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. What about just classroom environment generally, since—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay, what I see, and the way I know the classroom environment now, is my stepdaughter Ashely Foster, who teaches English lit and digital humanities at Cal State Fresno. She was pulled in to start a Digital Humanities program. And her area of expertise is really British lit and Virginia Woolf. She did this seminar on—and she does peace studies and feminist studies. She looked at the Spanish Civil War and the British response to it in terms of journalism and literature, and she was looking at activist pacifism. Virginia Woolf was that, and Roger Frye was actually a Quaker, and Virginia Woolf's aunt was a Quaker, and she looked at Paul Robeson. And I gave her that really good book by T. J. Clark on *Picasso and Truth,* and I'm getting her involved in art history.

She's doing this thing on utopias, and they were working on an archive that is there of a utopian community in Mexico started by Americans in the 19th century called Topolobampo in northern—I don't know that it was in—I'm trying to remember where it was. [Sinaloa –HBS][00:10:04] They were going to build a railroad from Kansas City to where Topolobampo was, and they were going to create a much better access to the water. They were trying to bypass San Francisco and Los Angeles as ports, to start shipping things to the Orient, but it was this very bizarre utopian community where it embodied all the usual utopian ideals with an industrialization project. It was very contradictory.

And I said, "Well, you really ought to invite one of my former students who teaches at Michigan State who did his dissertation on the concept of Aztlán as a utopic space." And, you know, I don't—one thing led to another, and she said, "Well, maybe you should talk about it." And I said, "Well, this isn't my idea, and I don't necessarily subscribe to it." She said, "But would you come and do that in my class?" And I said, "Okay." It was Dylan Miner, who's now at Michigan State and who identifies as indigenous Métis. He's from Michigan, the Detroit area, mixed race, indigenous and Anglo. Anyway. So I said, "Okay, I will come and do that." First of all, she doesn't have to pay me anything. She doesn't have to pay me to get there. But it was, "Wow, I can work with my stepmother." And it was a compliment.

And so I prepared something, and I included a couple of essays, one by the woman who we were just talking about, who wrote on the *CARA* exhibition who—[00:12:08]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Alicia?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Alicia Gaspar De Alba. She talked about Aztlán as utopia also, with a very different take than Dylan. So I could present different imagery. I presented, I started with D's [Delilah Montoya] image of the road to Aztlán, that long panoramic photograph, which we have downstairs.

And Ashley called me and said, "Could we borrow that for the exhibition?" I said, "Hell, no." [They laugh.] So—you know. But she and Delilah worked it out. And this is a very long way around. I had lots of conversations in preparation with Ashley about her student body and about the kids and the—and we had—she had had a three-year postdoc at Haverford College, which is this very prestigious, small liberal arts school on the mainline. And it

happens to be where her dad went, so David was really excited when she got that postdoc. But she was teaching writing to incoming freshmen. And this is—when she was teaching at Haverford, and then now teaching at Cal State Fresno, entirely different student body. And she's much happier at Cal State than she was at Haverford, although they had many more resources at Haverford. But she is very entrepreneurial, and she's getting the resources that she needs.

This is when I first heard about triggers, when I first heard about safe spaces. And I had started to deal with helicopter parents as an associate dean, parents who would start their complaints about how their children were being mistreated by going to the governor's office. [00:14:17] And then the governor's office would call the head of the board of regents, the head of the board of regents would call the president's office, the assistant to the president would call me, and I said, "Well, did they talk to the professor?" "Well, no." And what is interesting, because of the FERPA laws, these are the laws that protect students from their parents basically [laughs] because students for the most part are 18. They are emancipated, even if their parents are paying their bills. We have to have written permission from the students to let their parents know anything. But the generations of students coming along are much more closely tied to their parents than when my generation—we went to college to get away from our parents. We didn't tell our parents anything. Did we consult with our parents? Hell, no.

[Audio break.]

That we never would've dreamed to ask our parents to intervene on anything, and we were demonstrating against our parents' generation. It's a very different world.

So I started to see the beginnings of that, where parents were much more involved in their children's work, and children were comfortable with that. They were children, and it seemed to be very difficult for the parents to let their children grow up and leave home. [00:16:09] And for all the conversations about kids graduating college and moving back into their parents' homes, and parents rolling their eyes and wishing their kids were on their own, there's a good percentage of those parents who really like the fact that their kids are still at home. Somehow, they are not letting their kids grow up.

And now, it's the generation—what are they calling it now? The snowplow generation or something like, and that term came out when this whole disaster of buying their way into prestigious colleges, and it's famous people in the entertainment industry and elsewhere, where they want to remove all obstacles from their children's experience. These kids are not learning how to cope. They're not learning how to be adults. They are not learning how to fail, and failure is far more important than success. Falling on your face helps you learn how to get up and keep going. Getting a trophy because you showed up for a baseball game, as opposed for winning the tournament, that has caused a problem and a sense of entitlement and a sense of—

You are going to college to be uncomfortable. You are going to college to be challenged. You are going to go to college in some cases to be frightened. Not in terrible ways, not be attacked physically or psychologically or emotionally. [00:18:01] I'm not talking about that kind of frightened. I'm talking about, you are addressing issues. You are looking at the Holocaust. You are looking at Pol Pot. You are seeing tubes of human skulls, which is how they memorialized the Cambodian genocide. You are going [cries] to those museums, like the one that just opened that is memorializing all the lynchings, that I believe is in Alabama. You go to [cries] the Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, and you see the horrors and the wonders of the black experience in the United States, and you walk through those, and the people who work there see it every day. You see the chattels.

You don't protect people from that. You don't protect people from murals on walls that are patronizing to different groups. You don't censor murals in San Francisco, in Washington High School, because you see a dead Indian. You don't do that. You teach from those. You don't go to Hiroshima and not see what we did to them. You don't ignore the internment camps here. You don't ignore the detention camps now around this country where kids are being separated from their parents. [00:20:09] That's why things like that can happen. Because we don't pay attention to what has happened before.

And so I think the way we protect students now is horrific. I'm glad I'm not teaching now. I couldn't do that. I would be fired, I would be censored. I think we are doing a disservice to our young people and to our elderly who are depending upon those young people. And there's no magical thinking going on here. This is real world stuff. We do horrible things to each other. And we do it against people we can other, who don't look like us, who don't worship like us, and we can do it to people who are just like us, like they did in Cambodia, like they did in China. So you can have the Hitlers of the world, you can have the Maos and the Pol Pots of the world.

We can have the lesser indecencies of patronizing murals, but we—or, we deal with it the way they're trying to in the Museum of Natural History in New York where they take those full-size dioramas and create whole things around them. "What is wrong with this picture?" They don't change the picture. They change the way they are

presenting the picture. And that's what you do. I'm horrified by the coddling and the protection. [00:22:00] I'm so glad I'm not teaching now.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, I hear you. I think this is an interesting line to get your perspective on some broad things, based on your long career. So that was about teaching. What about American art and art history as a field?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Well, you know, if I were going to do it all over again, I would—I'm very glad I studied Asian art, I'm very glad I studied European art. In fact, we should study the art of the world. And I have very little exposure to African art except within the context of the discourse of primitivism as I was trying to understand what primitivism and colonialism and post-coloniality [ph] are about. So that's a big hole for me. But what I would have done is focused as much as I could on the arts of the Americas, so I would understand US art—and that's what we talk about when we talk about American art—in a way I only am at the edges.

Because to understand Chicano and Latino art, we need to understand American art, we need to understand African American art, we need to understand the American experience. We need to understand the regionalists, which—you know, I'm a Midwesterner primarily, with this sort of East Coast tap dance that comes from part of my father's side of the family. But the Midwest is this amazingly complex world that people like to ignore, not just because they fly over it but because they don't eat *chile* or other kinds of spices. [00:24:06] Everybody is saying, "Well, Midwestern food is really good." Well, it's not very spicy, and it doesn't have the same—Midwestern fried chicken is not the same as Southern fried chicken, and apple pie from the Midwest is not apple pie from Boston. It certainly isn't Georgian peach pie. We have a friend from Georgia, and she makes really great peach and pecan pie—oh, my goodness.

So, the regions of the country, and the various debates. And the fact that—what is American about American art? Well, we are a country that is unique, or was until very recently. European countries were pretty homogenous. Latin American countries were diverse but not as diverse as the United States, for a lot of different reasons.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And more segregated, I feel like.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But we have—well, it's interesting because in Latin America during the Spanish colonial era, the miscegenation between indigenous peoples and Spaniards was much greater than what happened in the United States, if I understand it correctly. When the northern Europeans came into the United States, in the northern part of the United States, they really weren't interested in having much to do with the indigenous populations in a positive sort of way. And they didn't have these big city-states to contend with, so they could not understand what they were looking at as viable political, sociocultural entities. Because they didn't have anything they could compare to what was happening in Europe. [00:26:12]

We're a nation of immigrants, so this whole kalam [noise –HBS] right now is so bizarre to me because it's counter to everything, everything, everything we are. All of us, except for a very few people, are immigrants somewhere down the road. All of us. You know, our President's family didn't come all that long ago from Europe. And however we have mythologized the immigrant experience, it's been a pretty brutal experience. You know, it's tough. It's tough to lose your country and to come to another country.

But the way American art has been taught historically—I love what Francis Pohl is doing with her big books that she does on American art. She's expanding. And it's not expanding the canon. The debate in Chicano art was, "Well, do we want American art? Do we want the canon to be expanded? Or do we want to blow up the canon?" The concept of the canon itself is a very complex and problematic one.

I love the way Kirsten Buick teaches art and she teaches American art. She'll teach things—she said, "Some of the stuff I'm going to teach you in terms of what we think of as art, it's profoundly mediocre, but it's really important. [00:28:04] Because it gives us a sense of what was happening and who we are and who we were then. And if art history isn't really about who we were and who we are, what is it about?" I think that kind of expansion—I think looking at the great man or the great woman, but it's really usually the great man model—and there was a magnificent exhibition recently at the Whitney—okay, Holly's senior moment—

JOSH T. FRANCO: *Pacha, Llaqta, Wasichay*?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: No, no. From earlier. *American Gothic*, that guy.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah. Grant Wood.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Grant Wood. It was a wonderful exhibition. I went, I spent hours in there. I mean—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yeah, I saw it. It was great.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And, you know, this is—it's Midwestern, but it's got a tweak to it. It's not—

JOSH T. FRANCO: It's queer.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It is queer and it is elegiac. It's not about his time period. He was from Iowa. Irma Koen [also Kohn –HBS], my relative who was from Rock Island, Illinois, as an artist, one of the many people who like everybody else studied at the Art Institute, they were friends. Not close friends. Maybe I should say artistic acquaintances. Her art looks nothing like his art at all. But all I'm saying is there is a world out there. When you bring a whole body of work by someone together, it is a magnificent experience to see that. [00:30:00]

I could go through other exhibitions I've seen that are extraordinary. I love going to the Whitney because they—and particularly the new building—because the city itself is part of the work of art, with those end walls that are glass. So the Hudson and the Meatpacking District are always part of whatever exhibition is going on. I'm entranced by that.

I don't know how American art is taught, but what I can say is they are working to expand what American art means. And other people are working to expand what it means or to bring it together. The exhibition that Coco Fusco did at the International Center of Photography several years ago, Delilah's—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —big piece of the *Guadalupano* was in it—and can you pause for a minute?

[Tape stops, restarts.]

Those kinds of shows.

JOSH T. FRANCO: So, *Only Skin Deep?*

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, *Only*—Coco Fusco's show. And Ashley, my stepdaughter, went with me to that, and that's where she saw Delilah's piece. And so when she finished and got her PhD, I gave her Delilah's print that she did at Self Help Graphics as part of a woman's atelier, of the *Guadalupano*, as her graduation—

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's a great gift.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —gift. I think the opening up, geographically and chronologically and—in terms of the breadth and depth of our population in America, it's like, American art is almost as young as a discipline as Chicano art. That's not true—

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's true.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —but it's almost true.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Almost true, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: We have very few—I mean, Wanda Corn was a pioneer, and she wasn't that long ago.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Right, she's still doing it.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah, and others. And so, it's a young discipline, and that makes it very exciting. If I had to do it over again, I would end up I think focusing on the richness of the United States, so that I would understand what Chicano art really is. I would still do Chicano art all over again if I had it, but I would want to have a better, broader American art context. Someone like Rupert García knows American art or European art or Latin American art better than most of us. [00:02:02] He is—you know, he is one of our scholars without portfolio, so to speak. And a lot of the artists have a wide-ranging scope of what American art is. And Warhol—I mean, that image I showed you of *Orale Raza,* it is also Andy Warhol if you think about it—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, right, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —the repetition and the screen-print sensibility.

We went to Cuba in January. I had never been to Cuba before. We were there for a jazz festival, and it was really remarkable. But going into the art museum, we didn't get into—there are two buildings, one that is just Cuban art—and we were almost entirely in Havana. One that's Cuban art, and one is what they call universal art, so it's European art primarily. And I think the Spanish colonial art was in that area.

But in the years I've been teaching Latin American art, and thanks to a lot of different exposures—and particularly David Craven and his friendship with Gerardo Mosquera, who I had already met when I was at the Mexican Museum during one of the biennales. It must have been the 1990 Biennale, they had a symposium, they invited everyone from the Americas to participate. That's where I had known Juan—actually, I already knew Juan Sánchez, but it's where I met Mari Carmen, or knew who she was, where I saw Gerardo Mosquera for the first time, artists from Canada, it was from all over. [00:04:09] David Craven put together a volume that was a translation of Gerardo's, all of his writings to that point, and he could never find a publisher for it, and he had done a lot of the translation himself. And we brought Gerardo to campus, and he spoke.

But going to that museum in Havana and seeing all that art that I had seen only in reproduction, and seeing it in the flesh, and seeing how they were curating it. They had one room of art that had essentially been banished during the certain periods when Fidel—Fidel would get into a big censorship mode and then he would back away. And then he would do that, he would go back and forth and back and forth. And so there were a lot of artists who really didn't exhibit and certainly weren't in the art museum. And then towards the end of his life, they decided to put all this artwork, that particular group of art, together in one gallery. And they invited Fidel to come and see it and he gave—he said, "Yes, this is good." And now, of course, they're having problems with potential censorship down there again.

But it was so wonderful to see how they positioned people like Wifredo Lam. And what they—it's really interesting because you see all this magnificent art from the '20s and the '30s—teens, '20s, and '30s, the Cuban art, really exciting. [00:06:08] The revolution happens. She said, "None of that art matters anymore. It's there, we honor it, we celebrate it, but it doesn't matter. We have a new Cuba."

And one of the things that I realized, being in Havana, is: What Cubans want more than anything is to be Cuba. And not be a colony, whether it's an actual colony as they were of Spain or France or England, or sort of colonized by the US, or a subject state of the Soviet Union. They want to—of course, they want to have relations with the US—real, normal relations with the US—but they really want to be their own nation. They don't want to be this tiny little add-on that's—and the conversations about what it was like to be there during the Cuban Missile Crisis, where they felt they didn't exist. And they were going to be blown off—literally, physically blown off the planet because you have stupid Soviet Union and stupid United States coming to blows over this one tiny little island. So it was so much more than US, United States, or the problematics with the Soviet Union, or the good parts with the Soviet Union, or the good parts with the United States. But that's a part of the greater American experience. [00:08:03]

I like the idea of America being the hemisphere. And clearly the US is something profoundly other than the South American experience or the Caribbean experience or the Central American experience. And I love celebrating the difference, and I love celebrating where there are conjunctions and similarities, but historically the differences are really great. And the conversation that was sort of introduced at the LAN! conference by Mari Carmen Ramirez when she gave her keynote talk, and she talked about their exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston where they brought together Latin American and Latino arts to see what the parallels are, what the connections might be, what similar things are, resonances. And she addressed, of course, the art market where Latin America is in a very different position than the Latino experience. That's a very, very recent, very, very recent experience. That's since the '80s? The '90s?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And Latin American art has taken off, and Latino art in terms of the market has not taken off like that. And there are any number of different reasons that I don't want to get into or I don't even know enough about. But the point is, the conversation about Latin American and Latino art is a very complicated conversation. [00:10:10] I think the Latino experience and Latino artists and the Latino art worlds don't want to be colonized by the Latin American art worlds.

And I saw—there was a conference in 2001, Day of the Dead in Oaxaca, right after 9/11. It had been planned for a long time, and it was all women artists, and it was Chicanas and *mexicanas*. It was put on by who was a collector and who has lots of money. She's a doctor and her husband's a doctor. Connie Cortez got involved in it, in the organizing of it. And I spoke, and I spoke too long, and I was kind of rude. But I had also just had an accident where I had gone off the handle bars of a moped. I had a black eye, and I actually—the doctors were wondering is this domestic violence—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, no.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —and I was just embarrassed as hell. You don't put me on a two-wheel thing that has a motor in it—you just [laugh] don't do that. Oh, anyway. But it was also after 9/11, and so it was a very weird time, and so I didn't behave as graciously as I should. I talked mostly about Ester. But Ester got up and spoke. I mean, it was—it was a powerful coming together of two very different sets of people. [00:12:00] Part of it was

taking the measure of, "Is it worse to be a Mexican woman artist in a misogynistic Mexico or in the belly of the beast in the United States?" In terms of the challenges they face. And Ester got up and spoke and said, "You know, I wasn't that young when I first went to Mexico"—and I think I'm remembering this correctly. Ester should correct this if I've got it wrong. But she said—she spoke in Spanish, and I think she spoke about her work, and afterwards, a man came up and asked her, "You know, your very interesting talk"—

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JOSH T. FRANCO: Okay, so Ester's quote.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay. She was talking at this conference, and she was telling the story, and this gentleman came up after her talk, and she said, "Well, my mother is Yaqui, and I'm from California"—and I don't quite know what else she said now. But his response was, "*Ah*, *entiendo. Eres la basura de México*."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Groans.] It's because of Paz.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, and the idea of the *pocho* as not an affectionate term but as a derogatory term. I'm part of a group here, or have been part of a group here, and I won't say anything more than that. But there is a woman who is part of this group who comes from a very elite Mexican family. We were thinking about the title of the group, and one of the iterations of the title would've been in both English and Spanish. And she said, "No. That is *pocho*. That is, *eh!*" And it—I actually—I'm not working with the group anymore.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. What was Ester's response to that man?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I honestly cannot remember. That would be a very good question for Ester. [00:02:02] I think, sort of, the world stopped for a few minutes for all of us when we heard that. It was so shocking. *Eres la basura de México*.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Did he have—did he know? Was he being malicious or was he—did he have some idea that this was okay to say?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: This is all stuff that really needs to go to Ester, because there was so much going on. We didn't last in the moments.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And what year was this again?

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: This was would have been—well, it was 9/11. It was the same—shortly after 9/11. Yeah, it was—it was a rather shocking thing.

I would like to go back for just a minute to that story I told about the woman who came up to me at LAN! conference and just went after me because I hadn't hired her. I hadn't even fired her, I just didn't hire her. I think it resonated with me because—and it bothered me, I guess. Resonate isn't the right word because I think of that as a positive thing. It bothered me because in my life as an academic, as a teacher, while you are not functioning as a gatekeeper per se, you are functioning in a way that is saying, "You have succeeded and you have failed." [00:04:00] I have kicked people out of my classes, I have failed people. It isn't the end of the world, at least from my perspective. But anyone who is having to essentially function in a role where you have to make an evaluation, it's how you make the evaluation.

And, of course, I think it also sort of vibrated with me because—and you want to do it fairly, you want to do it correctly. You want to do it because it's the right thing to do, because the person did not do what they should have done in terms of their assignments or whatever it was they was responsible for doing. I stopped someone in the middle of their PhD program, I stopped someone in the middle of their master's program, and those are horrible things to have to do. But the idea—and, of course, I was very young then, relative to how old I am now. It's the first time someone flat out said to me, to my face, that they put me in a category of trying to keep people out of something that they have a right to be there. They have a right to be in an exhibition. They—

David Avalos used the phrase a lot, of gatekeepers, in terms of arts institutions and educational institutions. And so that word—and I think with the generations of Chicanos in the *movimiento* that I have been involved with and exposed to, the idea of gatekeeper particularly in the '80s was a big, big term. [00:06:15] So to be thought of and positioned as that, which is a horrible thing to say to someone or for someone to be, it's—first of all, it pisses you off, but second of all, it goes, "Was I? Am I guilty of what she accused me of?"

And since I have no memory of her, and—and there's a difference between motivation and function. I think, functionally, I didn't give her the job. Motivationally, she didn't really register in an important way on my radar because I was so focused on this other young woman. So it did—I don't want to go to the stereotype, which I'm

going to say out loud, of Jewish guilt. And I'm only half Jewish, on the wrong side. But there's always a residual sense of guilt that we—or that I, maybe my generation—I don't know about your generation, how you travel with guilt. There's a wonderful Canadian comedian who was a lot on Johnny Carson in the '70s named David Steinberg, who was Jewish obviously. And it was a great line in the '70s, and it still resonates. He said, "My wife and I have the perfect marriage. [00:08:01] She is Italian Catholic, I am Jewish; I taught her guilt, she taught me shame."

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And I just love that. Let's encapsulate all the stereotypes of bad emotional responses to things. Are we on the record or off the record right now?

JOSH T. FRANCO: We are on right now.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Let's go off the record for a minute.

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JOSH T. FRANCO: Oh, okay. So Holly, I think maybe a good way of winding down is two questions: One I like to ask in these, you know: Who else is in the room with us, sort of spiritually, or has been over these two days, that is most important to you? And then, just to think about where you are now.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: [Cries.] What happened to my Kleenex? [They laugh.] Cecelia, Marcos, all the Chicano artists, especially Ester and Amalia and Judy. When I was a young woman, the three women I wanted to be like—and you're going to see how schizophrenic I am—was Katharine Hepburn, Audrey Hepburn, and Sophia Loren.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So just think about that for a minute. For me, Amalia and Ester and Judy represent something comparable. Not the same. I'm not pairing them with those three women. But there are many other Chicana artists whose work I admire enormously and who I think are powerful people. Tere Romo would be here also, one of my favorite people on the planet. Guillermo would be here. Probably Rupert, although we've had our moments, but Rupert has been one of the most engaging. [00:02:03] He takes people very seriously.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yes.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And it's always an honor to be taken seriously by someone you take seriously.

JOSH T. FRANCO: And he's given me that feeling many times, yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I admire him. Eva Cockcroft would be here. Tim, my coauthor.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Can you say more about Eva Cockcroft? We haven't talked about her.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay. I met her when she moved into LA, and of course, she had been in the mural world as an artist and writer. I knew her work 10 years before I met her because she wrote in the *Journal of Marxism in Art* with her former husband. I think it was James Cockcroft. She was so easygoing that it belied the intensity of her commitment as an artist and a writer and an activist. She was so gentle, she was so embracing, she was so nonjudgmental. She was very creative. She was embracing. In the world of hippies, she was the earth mother, if you wanted to go that way. She was the fullness of an earth mother. Because she wasn't just accepting and embracing. She was a person of agency herself, and she went out there, and she was adventurous, and she fought for things. [00:04:01]

She had so many different lives, and at her memorial service—it was really interesting—her brother spoke, who is a psychiatrist. Her father was a psychiatrist. They left Austria. I don't know whether the brother was born yet, but Eva was very, very young and a baby. And the father was still alive after Eva had died from breast cancer, and the memorial service was at SPARC. And the father was 100 years old, and the only thing he could say was, "A parent is not supposed to outlive their child." And of course, the child was in her 50s, but still that's young.

And if I understand it correctly, they left Austria because of the Nazis and Hitler. I've heard the story, and I don't know if it's true, I've never tried to confirm it—it's a great story—that Eva's father worked with Freud in Vienna. When we were in Vienna, and we were staying right near the Freud Museum, which is where his practice was and where he lived. You didn't see where he lived. You just saw here his consultation room was and his office and his waiting room. And you go into these three small rooms, and you go, "This is one of the places on the planet where the world changed." Whether you agree with Freud or you think he was full of whatever, he made a just an extraordinary impact. [00:06:02]

So she came out of that tradition, but she took a very different path of political and artistic engagement and inclusivity. And she was a treat to work with. She was one of my mentors also. And if you want to shut that off for a minute—

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HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: If there's anyone else who's in the room. Oh, gosh. I think my family members are in the room with me too, even the ones who aren't talking to me, or the one who isn't talking to me. And David, in particular, my husband. He knew nothing about all of this when we were first together. We were putting the finishing touches on *Just Another Poster?*, and so he came with me to the symposium in Santa Barbara because he was at work in Woodland Hills. And so we drove up. Because I was on a panel, and it was Tere and José Montoya and Carol Wells from the—her print—oh, I can't remember her organization, the name of it [Center for the Study of Political Graphics –HBS]—and George Lipsitz. And I spoke, and the woman who was the director of the Art Museum there, who's now at the Fowler, the director there was—she was finishing up her PhD at UCLA when I first started there. She's an Africanist by training. [Marla Berna –HBS]

And, you know, this was David's [laughs] introduction, so he listened to someone like George Lipsitz who's—no one speaks better than George, except maybe Amalia. [00:02:11] And then he heard José tell the story of that *pachuco* poster for *Pachuco Art: A Historical Update.* And, you know, [laughs] there's no one like him. There are so many people in the *movimiento* who are unique. And for me the word "unique" means unique. You're not sort of unique, you're not partially unique, you're not—unique has no modifiers.

And there are so many people who are so extraordinary. It is not unique to the Chicano movement or the Chicano art movement, but this is the world that has become my world and so this is the world I know. What's so wonderful about that is that there are so many worlds that we could co-inhabit or inhabit that are as wonderful as this, as problematic as this, as fraught as this is, as argumentative as this is, and as accomplished as this is. It really is—it's been a gift. [00:04:00]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And I've [cries] been able to bear witness to some of the best. And that's pretty special, so I'm fortunate. And it's a gift that whatever I've been able to contribute, I made some—some difference?

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yes, you have. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I think one of the best experiences I've had was the last time I taught Chicano art. It was my penultimate semester, so it was fall of 2014. And I had been on sabbatical—no, no, I was back for a year from sabbatical, where I was working madly on *Give Me Life*. [Laughs.] Again, still. And this class, as always, was interesting because it was a mix of young people. They were all young. There were studio people, there were art historians, there were people outside the department. They were all between the ages of 21 and 28 maybe. I taught only upper division and graduate courses. I wasn't going to be very good with freshman and sophomores. I didn't have the patience for it. There was someone from the music department. [00:06:00]

As I always did, because we're talking here about Chicano art, and it comes out of a community, it comes from a self-definition, it comes from a movement, so I always—in my Latin American and Mexican classes, I don't do this, but in the Latino and Chicano I do: "How do you define yourself? What do you call yourself? If you do at all? If you don't, that's not an issue." So we go around the room. I talk, "What do I call myself?" A New Mexican? A Chicana? And particularly, the kids from California, [laughs] they were Chicanos. And, Mexican American? "Well, I don't know if I'm a Chicano. My parents are Chicano, but I don't know if I'm a Chicano." "Well, my ancestry is German and English. I don't know, I'm an American." So it was this kind of conversation.

There were two young women that I remember—I mean, the entire class was like this, but these are the ones that have stuck with me, because I continued—I ended up on an honors committee with one of them. She's a young woman whose mother is Anglo, whose father is New Mexican-Mexican who defines himself as Chicano. Her parents divorced when she was very young. She had her mother's name. She was working on something very interesting for her honors thesis. By the end of the semester, she had taken her father's name, she had transformed her honors project into learning how to make adobe, and she had started building things on her father's family property in the South Valley. And she had claimed who she was from that side of her family. [00:08:20]

And the other young woman, who was a music major, had gone home and spoken and very gifted, young. She did a lot of community theater, and she was Marian the Librarian when they did *The Music Man*. She's an elementary school teacher, and everyone would want her as a schoolteacher. She and other kids in the class who were local brought all this stuff home to their parents and their grandparents, and they started hearing stories that their grandparents and parents [cries] had never told them about their involvement in the

movement. And so they started to learn who their parents were because they took this class. And they understood that they were part of this larger, larger community. And it was so wonderful.

JOSH T. FRANCO: That's great. Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So that made me very happy. That was really wonderful. And this can be deleted, but it's a—it was—it's really funny, and it's great. When the artists were starting to come in as we were installing the works for *CARA,* and almost all the artists came for the opening, there was a rustle among the guys, "Santa is here. [00:10:16] Have you seen Santa yet?" Every man in that crowd of artists for *CARA* was in love with Santa Barraza.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Wow.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: It was amazing. I never met her before. I didn't know what I was in for. And Santa—Santa is another one of those powerful women.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I know, I just did this performance piece with her in Marfa the last month.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, she is wonderful. I saw her when I was on that fellowship in Austin, and she came to Austin. I've had great conversations with her over the years. You are so fortunate to be working with her.

JOSH T. FRANCO: It's amazing.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: But to watch these guys—you know, they first knew Santa when she was in her 20s, and now she was in her 40s. You know, she was every—she—but I never saw guys drooling quite the way they did [they laugh] over this woman. And it wasn't just because she was beautiful—because yes, yes, of course, she's beautiful. There are a lot of other beautiful women and men. But there was something about her beauty. She was one of those people who glowed, and she also didn't take any shit from anybody. She's a *tejana*.

JOSH T. FRANCO: She's a Valley *tejana*.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah.

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Or Carmen. Oh, my God, Carmen!

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yes, Carmen is a Valley *tejana*. [Laughs.]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Oh, you know, it's really an experience to be around *tejanas*, even more than *tejanos*, *tejanas*—

JOSH T. FRANCO: Yes. [00:12:07]

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Yeah. But I just loved that. This ripple: "Santa is here, have you seen Santa?" It was such a great moment.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I like this, yeah. So, Holly, this is really—we can wind it up however you want, but one way—maybe chronologically, "Where are you now?" would be the way, but any other kind of bow you want to put on this.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: Okay. Well—

JOSH T. FRANCO: It's up to you.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: I'm in a place in my life where—when I stepped down in 2015, when I retired, I kept going because Tim and I had to finish this book, *Give Me Life*. But I was exhausted. And I was exhausted physically, mentally, spiritually. Those last years, particularly with Jim's accident, Jim Linnell's, and David Craven's death, that was so tough that I just wanted to walk away from everything. I wanted to get back to knitting. I've been knitting since the second grade. I used to make all my own clothes. I wanted to get back—I started learning how to weave that year I was in Austin, and then I got cats, and the only thing I could think of was a *New Yorker* cartoon with cats and a loom, [they laugh] so I've never done that. And I thought, "Well, I could do that." I kind of was mentally exhausted, and a lot of stuff that has happened, I have been out of the loop. I walked away. [00:14:00]

And I'm here in New Mexico, and the New Mexico Chicano-*hispano* experience is magnificent, but because I came of age in terms of Chicano art being based in California, that resonates with me the most. New Mexico is

unique. There are resonances with Texas, Colorado, Arizona, California, Pacific Northwest, the Midwest, that don't resonate with New Mexico, which is really fascinating. And it's like what I said early on: the head, the heart, and the gut. And I closed my memorial statement about Luis Jiménez with—I've told my students, you have to find something that hits your head, your heart, and your gut.

And the *nuevo mexicano* experience, Chicano experience is more cerebral for me, I totally appreciate it. The Chicano experience that is everything else resonates with me more deeply, and so it's kind of interesting being here, and I enjoy it. I love going to NHCC. I love what Andrew is doing with stuff, and he's brought in Gronk, but Gronk is California. [00:16:02]

So I look at all these books that are sitting here who are my friends, and I have all these books downstairs, and I think about, "Well, do I just want to read mystery novels now because the world is so god-awful with what's going on? Do I really want to listen to the presidential debates? Do I want to know what's happening now with the younger generation?"

And I have to say, going to the LAN! conference in Houston meant more to me than the other LAN! conferences, partly because I didn't have to speak and I didn't have to have that anxiety, so I could be more fully present. Because I do get stage fright, because I can't always control my emotions when I'm speaking publicly, and that makes it very difficult for me. And so not being a speaker was very liberating, and I could be fully engaged.

What I was seeing at this LAN! conference more than any other, even though Sonja Gandert and you and others of your generations and slightly younger and slightly older have been at some of the other LAN! conferences—and I've known Sonja for a long while now—that I was seeing the transition. It isn't just Tomás's generation and my generation, which is the next one. And we sort of overlap generations, Tomás and me. It is, you know, Adriana's generation. It is your generation. It is Max's generation. I've known his dad forever because of SPARC. [00:18:02] And it gave me so much hope.

JOSH T. FRANCO: I love being part of the lineage.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: And it made me—even though I don't have the desire, the energy, to be a full participant any longer—I sure as hell don't want to organize another conference in my life. And when I say I would do the *CARA* exhibition over again—yeah, if I was 35 not at 72. Would I work with Judy Baca again at this age? Yes, I would. Would I work with Amalia and Ester and Judy if I had that opportunity to do that exhibition and not be the person in charge? I would do that in a heartbeat. Do I want to know what the younger generation is doing more than getting the sense of energy from them? Yes, I do want to know what they're doing. Do I want to be part of the Latinx Art Forum? Yes, I do. I'm very glad I am on that endless list of the editorial board of that new Latin American, Latino art— [*Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture* –HBS]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Charlene's—

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —Charlene's—

JOSH T. FRANCO: [Cross talk.] Yeah.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: —that's coming out of University of California Press. Yes, I'm very excited because the entire world is there. Cecelia is there, Adriana is there. You know, it's this wonderful group of people generationally. So this, that, and you caring—you collectively caring enough to do an oral history of me and what I've borne witness to, and what I participated in, and what I have contributed, it reenergizes me. [00:20:12]

JOSH T. FRANCO: Good.

HOLLY BARNET-SANCHEZ: So thank you.

JOSH T. FRANCO: Thank you.

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