Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Hildegard Bachert, 2009 July 29 - Aug. 3

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with [Narrator] on [Date]. The interview took place in [Place], and was conducted by [Interviewer] for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the [Project].

Hildegard Bachert reviewed the transcript in February 2019 and made corrections and emendations. 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

JAMES McELHINNEY: This is James McElhinney speaking with Hildegard Bachert in the offices of the Archives of American Art, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, New York City, on Wednesday, the 29th of July. Thank you for coming.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: You're welcome. It's a pleasure.

JAMES McELHINNEY: You had an interview, 26 no, 16 years ago.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So perhaps the best thing to do would be to try to construct the narrative in retrograde. In other words, start from, you know, the present, and work our way back to 1993. Or would you prefer to sort of recall the early '90s and what's happened in your life and in your work from that point forward.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I see. I wasn't expecting to start that late. But that's fine.

JAMES McELHINNEY: We can. Perhaps the best thing would be to reprise a few of the ideas that you spoke about in your prior interview.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: Let me start with a question I like to use as an opener, which is at what point were you cognizant of being first in the presence of a work of art? What's your earliest memory of knowing that you were in the presence of a work of art?—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Hmmm. I really have to think about it. [McElhinney laughs.] I think most works of art that I loved as an adolescent were reproductions. I collected postcards of Romanesque sculpture, you know, from cathedrals and churches in Germany. Very early on I became aware of the art of Käthe Kollwitz. And having always in my whole life been a left-winger, her work appealed to me immediately. Original works of art I did not see, of any value. We had works of art in my home, but they were conventional landscapes that my parents bought when they got married, and they were okay and they were nice. But notable works of art, I think, originals, I did not see until I came to this country in 1936, at which time I went for the first time to a museum. I grew up in Germany.

Being a Jew I wasn't allowed into museums. There were signs that Jews were not allowed or were unwanted: you did not seem [inaudible—in German]. Or *verboten*. And my parents had an idea that children shouldn't be exposed too much, too stimulated. So as a child, I wasn't taken to museums. And then at 12 the Nazis came to power, and then that was the end of museums. So my visits to the Metropolitan Museum as a 15-year-old and 16-year-old were totally mind-boggling. I was thrilled out of my mind to see some of the originals: the Rembrandts that I had little postcards of and had seen in books. I had certainly looked at art in books and as reproductions a lot as a very young adolescent.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So as a child, was it a religious household? Were they very strict in that sense?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No, not at all.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So but were you also allowed access to things, stimulis like music, like poetry, like literature?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: All of which could potentially inflame a young mind with ideas.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. I was very much exposed to that. Definitely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But not the visual as much.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Not only in books and in reproductions.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So what was the museum you came to once you were here? Was it the Metropolitan?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Probably the first one must have been the Metropolitan, the Frick. I went to all of them. And I went to the Museum of Modern Art. I don't remember when the building on 53rd Street was completed. But I have a dim recollection of seeing a MoMA show not in that location.

JAMES McELHINNEY: In the townhouse.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And then the one that I remember as totally riveting was the Van Gogh show at the Museum of Modern Art. And I can't remember the location, whether it was at the 53rd Street already or at the old location. But that sold me on Van Gogh to this day. I go to see every single Van Gogh show that I can find anywhere. There was one in Basel just now.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And every time I'm bowled over.

JAMES McELHINNEY: He is a miracle.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So what was your education like?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Alright. I –was-went to public schools, both in Germany and in this country. And in Germany my education was fairly decent in the very beginning. And then when the Nazis came to power, it diminished. It was really, really bad. And I hated it. I hated German schools because of the regimentation, because they wouldn't explain things, they would just say that's how it is. And I couldn't take that, and I wasn't a good student at all. Then I came to this country. Went to high school, George Washington High School. And was kind of tested. And they just put me in some grade, and I excelled right away because I was motivated. And then I graduated from high school. I'll just do that very quickly. And always went to the art galleries and to the museums. And in 1939 I graduated in January, which is an unusual time to graduate.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It is.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But there were a lot of graduates even then, you see. A huge school. And in March I started my first job in a gallery, which was the Nierendorf Gallery, for a year and a half. And then in 1940 I started at the Galerie St. Etienne. And that's where I am the co-director since Otto Kallir passed away in 1978, together with Jane Kallir, Kallir's granddaughter. Now to—just summarize the scene when I started working: At that time you knew every gallery and every gallery owner—not well, especially when they were not in my field, in our field; the American art dealers I didn't know very well, like Edith Halpert. I knew her because she had folk art, and the Galerie St. Etienne, Otto Kallir was very interested in folk art. But many of the others we didn't know.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

But the Europeans, who like Otto Kallir came from abroad, I knew them all. And all the galleries were clustered around 57th Street, 58th, 56th, around Fifth Avenue, west and east. And as time went on, of course, the galleries went up Madison Avenue. Times improved. Many more galleries sprung up. By the time—if we're now jumping to the '90s—there were hundreds of galleries in New York. And the contemporary galleries, since our artists by that time had died and we didn't replenish our stable, we didn't know the contemporary gallery owners very well. So now at this point there are many galleries that I never heard of in New York and elsewhere. And the scene has completely changed.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How would you say? [Laughs.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: In the early days a gallery owner, even the most greedy one, was a scholar. He knew his stuff. There were newcomers like Mr. Weintraub, for instance, who had a frame shop. He came from I think Czechoslovakia—I forget his first name; it'll come to me. The, and then he started in the art business. But even he knew his work. He knew his stuff. He read what he needed to know. He was not a scholar by any means. But he was knowledgeable just the same. And he learned as he went along. Most of the other dealers—he's an example of a newcomer, of someone who sort of lifted himself out of a frame shop owner into a gallery owner. But most of the others were scholars and were collectors. Like Otto Kallir, he was an art dealer only because he

wanted to collect art. And when he saw something that he liked a lot, he kept it; he wouldn't sell it. Of course that happens today also. But there are so many dealers now who are just in for the money, for the speculation. And it is a different—it's a totally different scene. It's also that now art is considered so much as an investment, which is something that when our customers ask me whether art is a good investment, I say no.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Good for you!

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes. Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Good for you.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes. It's not. Yes. If you keep something for 20 or 30 years, chances are it will have improved in value.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But not even then necessarily. In the '50s we had—we discovered some artists that we liked and whose works we liked, contemporaries. And were hoping that they would develop and become, you know, better artists as they went along. They were young at the time and to our disappointment, they didn't develop. And we have quite a stock of some of their work. And once in a while somebody comes and says, "I bought this at your gallery in 1958, and how much would you give me now?" And I would say, "Just about the same as you bought it for and maybe less at this point." Because they just never made it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, the other thing, too, I guess, is with all of the art schools springing up everywhere in America—that's the other thing that's changed since World War II—is that every university and college, it seems, many, have now got a BFA program; they've got MFA programs.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And so there are thousands of people graduating yearly who have expectations that they're going to go find a gallery.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Sell art. Make a career. Find a teaching job maybe. Or have another income stream in hard times—or to carry them over hard times. But that's flooded the market with a lot of talent. And that, I think, with the emphasis that you're speaking about on money taking over everyone's attention as opposed to I think what you meant was connoisseurship and a refinement of taste.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely. Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's part of what's creating the current problem in the art world—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY:—with a lot of galleries. What's interesting is 1993, that would have been just about the time when, or just at the end of, the big—[pause]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Boom.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —dying off of all of the galleries in the early '90s—

MS. BACHERT: Mm-hmm [affirmative.] Oh yes, yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: Because of the stock market crash in '88. And then by '91 a lot of—SoHo was over. A lot of galleries had closed. And that was prior to the Chelsea experience that's hanging on now so but it's interesting that we're having conversations at these times. We're having conversations with you. [Laughs.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Around that time, yes. And this one is going to be worse than the one before.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And everybody says this.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I'm not sure whether it will be. I thought so until—In fact in January, if we want to just talk about present time for a moment, things were pretty bad in our case, and all our colleagues were hurting. Then we went to Basel with medium expectations, and we did extremely well, and we're still doing well. And we are beginning to think that it's not going to be that bad. One thing is there's always money out there.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And another is that stable, good quality works of art always maintain their value unless it's blown up into the stratosphere or and that people will finally recognize that. What I should also say is what is so important—and you mentioned it—is the quality of the art, and the connoisseurship to recognize mediocre and bad works of art, which especially in our—we have these two fields: folk art

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And outsider art on the one hand and German and Austrian Expressionism on the other. And especially in the field of folk art there is so much junk, so much bad stuff. And to recognize and to understand the difference between good and bad is not that easy and, but, when it's good, it's really, really good.

And I can only reiterate our long history with the artist Grandma Moses, whom we launched in 1940 with a show with the modest title of "What a Farm Wife Painted," because nobody had ever heard of her. And in the '50s and '60s people told us: "It's just a fad. I can't understand that you're still hanging on to this artist's work who is passé and it's no good." And no museum would be caught dead—no museum of any standing like the Museum of Modern Art, they wouldn't be caught dead with a Moses. Not even today. But things have changed.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We are so surprised and not surprised really. But so pleased that things have never let up because this woman knew what she was doing, and she was very, very good. And there are others of course that were recognized and then went into limbo and are coming back up like John Kane and Horace Pippin and—several others. And of course there are newcomers, too, like Henry Darger.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I mean newcomers, new discoveries; he was at the same time.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And Martin Ramirez.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, absolutely. Absolutely. But then there are others who are upfront who are not going to make it. Like Finster; he's not going to make it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: [William] Traylor.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He was not bad, but he's being hyped; it's crazy. It's crazy.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So perhaps the only way that things might be worse in '09, '10 than they were in the early '90s is that maybe more of the galleries will fail and more artists' careers will be interrupted because there are too many

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: And not enough of adequate quality to survive.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's one reason. And another is that there's too much money involved, too much speculation.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The prices are inflated. The population of artists and galleries is inflated.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right. And too much borrowing, too much speculation, too much manipulation of money and all kinds of—financial complicated deals that just won't work in this business.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Shares. Ownership in shares. This kind of thing.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely. Yes, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It seems also that art has forever been an instrument of social mobility. That a person who wants to, who perhaps earns a fortune in any way and who wants entre to some kind of higher, what they perceive as a higher, society than the one from which they came, can achieve that by making themselves into art collectors.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. And they're really not collectors. And within ten years or less they're going to sell what they bought.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Have you ever seen anyone with that ambition and that profile actually educate themselves

and evolve into collectors?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, absolutely. Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So that happens also.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And that's very, very wonderful. And it happens usually with also with art that is worthwhile collecting, there are some passionate Kollwitz collectors who will never sell anything, and who will, you know, build up a collection over a lifetime. And that's the kind of collector you really want to cultivate, and who is just wonderful to work with.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And we do have many of those. And I have to say the people that have—that have come in and buy ten pictures for millions of dollars, they're not coming to our gallery. And they never did. It's very interesting. Mr. Hirshhorn, remember, Hirshhorn Museum, he bought by the dozen. And one day—this is a story that I don't know if it's in my previous interview—but he came one time when Otto Kallir was around, and arrived around six o'clock in the afternoon which is closing time. And he walked in and he said, "How fast can you sell me ten—how quickly can you sell me ten paintings?" And Kallir said "None." And he left and never came back. [Laughs.] And that's the kind of gallery we are, I guess. But you see we do many other things. We're not rich. We will never be rich. We are living okay, but we try to pay our staff as well as we possibly can. But basically both Jane Kallir and I are interested in promoting the art that we really believe in, an art decades and decades ago nobody even had heard about.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Like Egon Schiele.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. And like Gustav Klimt, both of whom we introduced.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And Lovis Corinth.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Corinth was a little bit introduced before.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He is still not well enough known in this country.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Wonderful painter.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Great draftsman.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. But we it's very difficult to promote his art because people just don't understand it enough. And there are no Corinth collectors in this country except some Germans who brought over Corinth collections, and who buy and buy and sell it. So I don't know a single collector who does a big job. I mean people have one or two, and that's wonderful. And some museums have Corinths.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But collectors like Schiele collectors, or Klimt collectors, or especially Kollwitz, people who will have ten, 12, 20, 40, 100,

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That doesn't happen with Corinth. Anyway it's a matter of taste. Maybe he was too German. It's hard. He has a phase and part of his art is very difficult to understand. And some of it I don't even like.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Are you speaking about the work—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: The allegorical stuff.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The allegorical stuff like where the armored men and *Salome*, that strange painting of her—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, that's wonderful—.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —pushing her index figure on his—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: In her finger onto that bowl. Oh, it's terrible yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's really—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's an amazing painting.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It is.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: [Inaudible] rising or one version of it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: In Harvard.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And there's some other one in the German collection. And there are drawings for it. That's a marvelous thing. No, I mean more the Frederick the Great and these—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Oh, these historical—yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: The German history. That will never, never come through in this country. That's too strange.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Ironically, people were very interested in Anselm Kiefer when he hit the radar in the 1980's here.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: And that was very much the exploring—I won't say celebrating—you know Neanderthal and the origins of Teutonic history.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. But it was in a more modern need—

JAMES McELHINNEY: The language was, yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: The language was different. I understand that language personally. I don't like it either because of that, having come from and being allergic to Nazi and macho German and dictatorial things. And Corinth certainly was a German patriot. And that doesn't go well with me at all because of my background. Or maybe my temperament, too.

JAMES McELHINNEY: When you came here in 1936, it was about that time that that other people—many artists, many writers and scientists—were deciding to remove themselves from the influence of National Socialism.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And that must have really been a very interesting time. I think people, many people, when they have a look at New York during the forties, want to leap immediately ahead to sort of the beginnings of Abstract Expressionism. You know the postwar period. But correct me if I'm wrong, but there were many, many people here from Mondrian, Beckman, most of the surrealists were up in Connecticut.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And Luger and others were all here. Some of them were teaching.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: Others—Albers and Mies and Walter Gropius had ensconced themselves in schools and universities, were influencing art instruction.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Shaping the next wave of American artists. Again, you know, the debt of American art to German education, art education. But what was New York like then? I'm just curious.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: It was full of refugees, both of the ones you mentioned who are well known and who were more of the advanced type; but there were others like, you know, the expressionists like Josef Schulz who never—and others, Austrians like Franz Lerch. You probably never heard of them—him, and Joseph Floch, Eugen Spiro. These were the conventional or more the—Shcarl was not a conventional artist. But Spiro was quite conventional, Floch. They were the mediocre German and Austrian artists, and they never made it. Now, however, in their native country, they—they're in. Not here. I mean a Joseph Floch comes up for auction at Plaza or one of the second-rate auction houses; brings hardly anything. But in Europe they do bring because they're

recognized as having been, you know, lost and come back. Lerch, for instance, works as a designer for a fabric house. I don't know how Floch managed. Spero managed, for instance, by selling mostly to other refugees. And he held himself above water, and his wife worked. That's the scene that I was familiar with, the media, the average person. And of course people came to Kallir and to Nierendorf, not only in the art business or art field, but in the music field. I remember the conductor Otto Klemperer being a friend of Nierendorf's—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He was destitute. Writers like Fritz von Unruh; I don't know if you've heard of him.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Other—many writers were in terrible shape. Most of them went back after the war was over. Thomas Mann, having been well known, he did okay. He also went back after the war. But it was terrible. It was a very, very sad scene. It was very interesting. And all these people eeked out a living. Some went to, some of the scientists and some of the teachers, went to the New School for Social Research. That was, you know, and they did all right. But it was not—Now it all looks interesting. But it was tough, very tough, because nobody came over with any money. We weren't allowed to bring any. We had I think in my time it was still $50 dollars that you could bring. And then later on it was $10 dollars that you could take out of Austria and Germany. They wanted to keep all the money.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: They confiscated your property and everything else. I mean your money. What my parents did, we sold—they sold what they couldn't bring over. And lucky, they managed still to pack what was called *Liftvan* in those days, which is a container now. And the furniture that I still live with is from Germany—a lot of it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Where did you grow up in Germany?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: In Mannheim.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Okay.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Which is on the Rhine in southwestern Germany.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: So the war and the Depression here was extremely bad for all these newcomers who had a lot of intellectual goods and property, but no money and nothing hardly any capital to start anything with. Kallir was very, very intelligent, and he saw what was coming, and managed to sell a collection of aeronautical art before he came to this country.

JAMES McELHINNEY: He collected aeronautical art?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He was a collector of everything that was of historical importance. Not just anything. But he was very much interested since he was a boy in aeronautics. And he had this collection, sold it in Switzerland, and kept the money in Switzerland. And that was the money that he could start his gallery with.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That was his startup capital.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right. But it was tough going, very, very tough for everyone.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Who were the buyers then? Who were the buyers? Who were your customers?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: A lot of refugees who were a little bit better off than the ones who sold what we sold.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That says a lot. People arrive here, strange shores. A different language than they're used to speaking. With the equivalent of maybe a thousand dollars in their pocket of our dollars now. You said that originally you were allowed to leave with $50 dollars, which would be I think—I don't know exactly the calculation—but I think by today's standards that might be almost $1,000 dollars, which is not a lot of money.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Could be.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Not a lot of money. Not a lot of money. And yet people who are clearly in a difficult situation, are not wealthy, are still buying art.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, the ones with $50 dollars, they were the sellers. They were—some of them managed to bring over, like my parents except they didn't have any art worth selling, but for instance my parents bought Leicas in Germany, Leica cameras, and sold them here. So that was something that we knew ahead of time that you could sell here. So other people who had works of art to sell came to people like Otto Kallir or Klaus Perls, whose another, and many other art dealers, and they sold their art. The people who bought them were refugees or Germans or Austrians who had come earlier.

JAMES McELHINNEY: I see.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And who had some money anyway. I remember we knew an Austrian expatriate who had lived in this country for many years before, who wasn't necessarily a refugee. I don't know why he came over. Or, for instance, one of our customers for Kollwitz was Eric Cohn, who was the owner of Goodman Noodles, which no longer exists. But he was German, had come to this country I think in the '20s or even earlier—I think maybe before, I don't remember. But he had that tradition of the German art, and he was interested in Corinth and Kollwitz and the art that we had. And so he was a customer. But he had the background that was needed to buy our art. And the same was true of Egon Schieles. Nobody had ever heard of Schiele, and only people who had come from a different place were able to understand what this was about. And for $100 dollars got some of the most wonderful works of art.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Amazing. It's interesting because—I haven't heard it explained exactly in that way. But I would imagine that foreign nationals living in, you know, the U.S. or here in New York, who by virtue of their ethnicity or their politics would be unable to return to their primary patria, would become de facto refugees, in spite of the fact of them not having left under those circumstances.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right. That's right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So these are the people who are your buyers.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Basically.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's funny because it almost seems like that economy, that these collectors are almost contributing to what amounts to a relief organization.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: [Laughs.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: In other words, people come from Europe, sell their things, their artwork, to people who are here already.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: With whom they have ethnicity, language, religion in common. And it functions as a kind of a relief organization.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely. And you know that happened—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Interesting. Yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: —in every field. We employed a refugee photographer, a refugee printer. We, you know when you come as a foreigner, you tend to look for compatriots with whom you can talk your own language, who've been here in this country a little bit longer, who know their way around and a little better. And that's who you deal with. If you deal—I remember, you know, people would say this person is an American. [Laughs.] You know, and Americans were difficult to deal with: language-wise, custom-wise. And so very gradually only you would infiltrate the American scene. Of course we had "American" customers, too, especially when we branched out into the folk art. You see the first—Kallir was always looking for intrinsic American art. And he wasn't interested in the derivative kind like Gropper and these people. Besides they were—

JAMES McELHINNEY: The so-called regionalist painters of the '30s.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Or the Ash Can School. That didn't appeal to him at all. Also they were taken by other galleries; that wasn't interesting. He was looking for real American art like African American Indian art. We had a wonderful Navajo exhibition at one point in the gallery very early on. And then Moses.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: This man came, showed Kallir the art, which he had shown to other people and they didn't want it, other gallery owners. And Kallir with his good eye said, "That interests me." So that brought in American—a whole American thing. Also not only with regard to the customers, but the press came. And we had

very soon lots of publicity which we'd never had before. It was very interesting how very quickly the gallery then infiltrated, so to speak, the American scene.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So it attracted to attention.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Attracted to attention gradually. It didn't happen overnight, either of course.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, this timeframe you're speaking about, which spans from the '30s up until, you know, the death of Otto Kallir in the late 1970's, is also a time when you had people like Bernard Leach, right, and others who were trying to promote pottery, like the Native American—I think that was his name, Leach? Maria—Martinez.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Martinez, yes. I knew her. Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Was it Bernard Leach? I must be—anyway.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I don't know.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But there were a number of people who were advocating a deeper appreciation of this artwork as something not merely ethnocentric.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: Not merely anthropological, which it had been.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, in the '30s and '40s, there was a lot of interest in that. In fact the Museum of Modern Art did several American folk art shows

MR. McELHINNEY: Oh, yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But finally when they had a Hirshfield exhibition, Morris Hirshfield, that was completely booed about. And Alfred Bard lost his directorship over it you know. The papers were up in arms against this. It was a terrible situation. He stayed on at the museum as a curator. But it was—that's when, in the '30s and '40s—there was this rejuvenation of American art. And Kallir just came in at the tail end of that.

JAMES McELHINNEY: I see.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But then, with the rise of the Abstract Expressionism, all that art went into limbo until very recently.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right. The '80s again, you see it coming back.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. But of course there was always a faction of collectors who didn't go with this. And so we always were—we have a wonderful collection of 19th century folk art, too, which we bought, and some of it we sold during the time. And now this is also not—this kind of art is not particularly in demand. But there is a steady—this is solid art.

JAMES McELHINNEY: There's a steady interest in it.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Interest in it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: There's a dedicated collector base.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

MS. BACHERT: And, you see, one of the things that's so important is not to go with the fads. And there are always fads, and there are always ups and downs in the market.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The market.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And when there is a down, a lot of stuff is being eliminated that shouldn't be around anyway.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, people are probably—yes, as you were explaining earlier, the hope is that all of the mediocre stuff is going to go away.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

JAMES McELHINNEY: As another interviewee told me, he said, "We're hoping that with, you know, the death of the art market, we can see you know the return of the art world."

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That somehow, you know, the market has smothered the art world, which I think, like what you were saying, is a world of appreciation, of connoisseurship, of study,

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Of a kind of refinement of taste and an appreciation of things in that way. Not merely in terms of speculation and profit.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right. And that's what we were hoping for in the '90s. But it didn't happen.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Why not?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Why not? That is a good question. People then concentrated on the few high artworks, the solid ones. And that made the prices, the market, you know and they didn't change the system. And that's what's happening in the financial market, I'm afraid, also. They are so greedy in all areas that they're unwilling to give up the lucrative part. And so when things are down, they are what is called—what is this called?—your profit-taking you know, then they buy cheap only in order to—

JAMES McELHINNEY: To sell.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: —for the market to go back up and to sell. And they're not learning the lesson that we hoped they would.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What would that lesson be if you could—frame in it a few sentences? What do you think would be a good paradigm for people to embrace, a good model, a good idea, concept, a durable concept?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, to chill out. [They laugh.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: It seems like the minute there's a crisis, people are flailing around trying to find the next quick fix.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Instead of looking—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Settling down.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes. Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right. And stop borrowing money. Stop looking for another financial scheme, another financial loophole. You heard about Goldman Sachs, what they're doing.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Of course.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: With the help of computers, the fastest computers in the world. That is not healthy. That's bound to boomerang in the end. You make a fast buck, you get ahead of the next person, and it's the same thing with the art. That is an unhealthy market. And we hope always that it'll settle down and will go. But then again, nothing goes back to where it was before. And before it also wasn't that great. It's always a glitch somewhere. It was much more difficult. Art wasn't worth that much, so you couldn't get rich fast. And people want to get rich fast, most of them. Not all of them. And there are, thank goodness, some that are solid collectors. There's always a solid base somewhere, and that's what we have to build on. And keep trying to do and curate good exhibitions and show what's good and keep plugging along that way.

[END OF DISC 1.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: Something you said earlier about chilling out, made me think about this idea that I hear frequently among people who are advocating for what has now become termed "analog media-like" painting and drawing and sculpture in three dimension using bronze, clay, stone, or wood as sort of slow arts. That they're not time-based like film or video—or even music, you know. They don't exist within a temporal framework where you have to commit yourself to stay in your seat long enough to hear the end of the symphony or, you know, the curtain fall at the end of a play. You can have a look at a painting for an hour or for a minute, but it's a medium that slows the viewer down. And there, I think, is maybe where one could argue for the value of appreciation,

connoisseurship, study, you know, the refinement of one's taste because that gives back more from that experience. The more you know about how to meet this object or this painting, the more you're going to be able to get back from it. So this idea of sort of slowing people down, I was just wondering, when you were saying chill out, whether you were just speaking about in terms of wheeling, dealing, or just even taking a moment to look?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Absolutely. Yes. That was definitely also in my mind.

JAMES McELHINNEY: In your long career, refining your taste and studying the art you love, how would you describe to someone—let's say I'm a newly minted multi-millionaire, and I kind of like art,—and I kind of have come to your gallery because I like the Austrians, I like Klimt and Schiele. I think they're kind of sexy, and it's kind of naughty. But it's beautiful, too. And I don't really get it. But I know that I have a feeling about it. I need some kind of a method. I need some kind of an approach to reading a work of art so that I can kind of get more out of it. What would you tell me to do? How would you tell me to sort of begin to refine my taste and to sort of increase my understanding of these objects?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, if the person had enough time to spend with me, I would start with historical background. I would try to explain to him where these people came from and possibly explore what he already knows, you know, to try and mention you know the life history. It's not important to state all the scandals or whatever—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Just the context.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: —[inaudible], but the context, the historical context is very important. So that this person can carry this into his presence. Because everything is created in a certain atmosphere and in a certain place. And that is important to understand where something comes from. Otherwise you really—you have to have a background. And so I would explore first and see whether he knows enough about this background.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And then explain a little bit, how let's talk about Schiele, how his personality. And also of course then explain a little bit about how he learned how to draw and paint and how he was a genius from the time he was born practically. You know he was drawing when he was a kid. And he that was really his passion; like, it was like an addiction. And then I would gradually lead him to follow the line and to show him what—I would try to show him an earlier work and a later work. Show him the development of this artist's work. And try to show him in books because we don't have everything.

JAMES McELHINNEY: No.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And then encourage him to read up on the period and on the artist's life. And then see where he is. For instance, many people come to us and say, when they see a Schiele landscape, "That's not characteristic. I'm not interested in that. I want a semi-clad female nude. That's what Schiele did, and that's all he ever did."

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's all they like to think he ever did.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And I have to say, you know, that is not right. So, you know, I try to explain the artist's scope, and to say he was not a painter of female nudes. He painted everything: still-lifes, landscapes. There is the percentage of landscapes in his work is amazing, especially in his early work. But all through his life he painted landscapes. And when you analyze them, you can see how the same—figural genre is in his landscapes. It's the drawing is of houses and trees. But they are alive the same way as his figures.

JAMES McELHINNEY: He animates them with the same kind of mark, and the same kind of graphic intelligence.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And also the landscapes are never really pretty pretty. They're beautiful. But they're—the trees are barren very often. When there is blooming, some blooming flower or a blooming tree, it is lean, it is very slender, it isn't, it's gorgeous. But it isn't, you know—And of course that's not a description; that doesn't help anybody when you say it's gorgeous because the next person might not think so. But it has the same characteristic as the figural works. And so basically a landscape is also a portrait.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So they should know the historical context of the artist's work.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Where they were, how they were trained, how they developed their lives, what their home life was like.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How they conducted themselves, what the times around them were like.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. And another thing is very often you hear people say: I don't like the way this hand is done. Or the way—and they want to change it. [Laughs.] So to speak. And I say, That's the statement that the artist made.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And you better believe it. It is right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Live with it, get over it, that's the way it is.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. And it's very difficult sometimes because people feel that they know much better how it should have been done than the artist himself. Which when it's a bad work of art, okay. But when it's not—and you see these are the subtle things which you basically cannot explain. And I always say, You bring to a work of art something from yourself. And you have to complete it. You have to do the work. I cannot do it for you. And the artist cannot do it for you. And if you don't do the work, or if it doesn't do it for you, if you can't do the work, then this work of art is not for you.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And no matter how much or how little money you have, that's where the main—that is where it is. When you view a work of art, you've got to do the work.

JAMES McELHINNEY: There's an old aphorism that a work of art is a thing the artist begins and the viewer completes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's exactly one—that's better said than what I said.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Not at all.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's exactly right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But then the other point that you made was that no one should assume that they know everything about an artist's work because for all we know somebody may not know Egon Schiele's landscapes as was the example you gave. But, for example, also somebody might find in an attic a trove of sketches of horses or something that we're unaware of that he did. And we have to be open to, you know, the possibility of that everything we know about an artist is not in all of the books, is not in all of the galleries.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely. That happens—that happens. Yes. But it's true, you know, that you have to know the background, you have to do your homework. You can't just say, I know what I like. I don't know anything about art, but I know what I like, that adage is really not—it only goes so far. You have to know something, too.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The authority of taste without brains.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

JAMES McELHINNEY: In other words, I like it because—I don't know why I like it. I just like it.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And I'm me, and here I am. So that's all I can do is say that I like it. But I don't know why.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. It's okay. It's pretty nice. But it's not—

JAMES McELHINNEY: But that doesn't quite qualify as taste. I think when we use the word taste, it's like I teach drawing. It's like telling a student who says I see it, but I don't know how to draw it, I say, "No, you don't see it. You're looking at it, but you don't see it." Taste is like that. I think you have to know something in order to have taste.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But of course it's also something that you either have or don't have. You know I don't know how much you can teach taste. Or what they call a good eye. Some people have it, and some don't. Possibly that is a little bit prejudicial. But I find that, you know, even very well educated people have, in my book, not the taste that I would like them—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.]

MS. BACHERT: Or that I would think. And I know people who have better taste and better judgment than I. Sometimes I would rely on them because I know they're excellent at what they judge. So there is something also intrinsic there. Just like, you know, you tend to like certain things, and others have a totally different approach. And that you have to allow for. Am I making myself clear?

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes. Absolutely.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And I think that's very important, that you let a person go the way that feels right for them in their tastes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So you would encourage a collector to trust—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: His individual—

JAMES McELHINNEY: —their individual preference.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: —leanings and preferences. And that could be—that's a matter of temperament, you know. Some people love crazy horrific colors, and others like it nice and subdued. And, you know, you have to allow for that.

JAMES McELHINNEY: One of the hallmarks of your gallery is that it has a large emphasis, a very strong emphasis on graphic art, people like Kollwitz and Schiele and Klimt and others, a lot of prints, a lot of drawings, which a number of other interviewees have said—expressed the opinion—that people who are interested in works on paper, if we want to use that phrase, but the graphic arts, drawing especially, is it a little more demanding. It requires a different kind of eye than something that's a painting, an oil painting on canvas with lots of color. And everybody knows that a painting on canvas is sort of the acme of artistic achievement, two dimensions. And a drawing is often seen as something that's preliminary or—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: True.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —or a reconnaissance. Not really a great statement. But there are collectors for these things. And a lot of them do see themselves, I think, in a kind of more——how shall I put it?—more rarefied sense of taste or more scholarly, more esoteric perhaps.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: There's another reason why we are so concentrated on works on paper. The artists like especially Schiele, Klimt, Kokoschka, Kirchner, Nolde, the paintings are number one much rarer. And number two especially, much more expensive.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Of course. Yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And so to get a collection of ten paintings by Nolde or by Schiele is almost impossible.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We used to have paintings by these artists. Kallir came over with 11 or 12 Kokoschka paintings, oils. Who has that now? That is an economic reason.

JAMES McELHINNEY: These are early pictures. Not the later urban landscapes that he did.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He brought—Well, he came in '39.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And the paintings he brought, I think the latest one was probably from the late '20s. So, yes, there were landscapes. The London Bridge is now at the Albright-Knox Gallery; that was from Kallir that was, it's a very large painting; it came from him. So, yes, he brought landscapes from the '20s. And of course earlier ones. So that's one reason why we can't—who has any Klimt paintings now—to sell?

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, not to sell. But they're—yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: They are all in museums. Or when there is one, there is, you're talking many millions, and how many clients would you have for something like that? And it is very, very difficult. We have at the moment a very early Klimt painting which is not terribly interesting. And yet it is—it's too expensive. So that's one reason why we have concentrated on works on paper. It kind of happened that way. Kollwitz is true that she did most of her works on paper. In fact all of them except for *Sculptor*.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Is it safe to say that in a way the gallery could be said to occupy that as a niche, you know,

works on paper, Austrian and German Expressionism works of art?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Definitely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Because a lot of—I think the popular wisdom or the popular commercial wisdom is that drawings are a hard sell.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So how has, you know, the gallery endured with a hard sell as a niche for so long?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, we did. [Laughs.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, you did. But can you attribute it to any number of specific things? Is it a particular kind of collector? Or is it—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. There are collectors who will say I only buy oil paintings. In fact we have some clients like that, and we did sell them oil paintings. We do have oils, of course. And sometimes we get one that's right for a specific collector, and we do manage to sell those. But we, I guess, concentrated on the drawings, and that's why our collectors very often are those who collect drawings. You see what happened to us also happened to the collectors. They can't afford the oils either.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And so they have sort of decided, well, if I can't have an oil, I'll have a drawing by an artist that he or she likes. Also, in the case of Schiele and Kollwitz, that's their principal output. A Schiele watercolor is a complete statement, an icon, so to speak. So is a Kollwitz drawing or even an etching by Kollwitz of a specific subject would be a representative work of her entire oeuvre.

JAMES McELHINNEY: As a printmaker, though, that becomes the art.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That becomes the art. In Schiele, a watercolor, one could argue it's like a graphic painting.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But then if you take a look at a Klimt, let's say one of his erotic nudes—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's different.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's a different thing all together.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How would you describe one of those drawings? I'll have to share a story afterwards; or I can share it now it was. I overheard a conversation of a woman and her daughter in Chicago at the Rizzoli at the Water Tower Mall there if you've ever been to Chicago or to that store. And there was a book that I think the gallery had something to do with at some point, an Abrams book.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Sure. Jane wrote it. Jane Kallir wrote it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's right. That's right. That's right. Of his erotic nudes. And the mother was saying that when she went to college, she had an art appreciation class, and the teacher told them the first week that none of them would get an A. That they would just regurgitate things that he told them. They would not have any original ideas of their own. So she told her daughter that she found this great artists by name Gustav Klimt, who did all these drawings of women pleasuring themselves. And she wrote her paper about this. And he gave her an A. [Laughs.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Very nice. Very nice. Because she found something extra. Well, today that wouldn't be so original.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It wouldn't be so shocking, no.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, well, with Klimt, again, the same thing. Where do you find a Klimt painting for sale? So the Klimt people said—I mean there are many people, especially now it's better known, but often you know people had seen Klimt paintings or reproductions. They come to our gallery. They want to see a Klimt drawing. And they think they're going to see a drawing that looks like the painting. And then we have to explain there's

hardly ever such a drawing. He did some preparatory drawings—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: —that are much more reminiscent of his paintings, but very few. And when you see one of those, the price approaches one of a painting. But most Klimt paintings, as you know, are unobtainable or else available for many millions. And the drawings are preparatory works.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: So when you show a collector the finished drawing—the finished painting—and the drawing that we have to sell, and the posture and the little curlicues and everything is there, then they begin to appreciate the interesting thing. Because in a way, some of the drawings are so fluid and so alive, which the paintings are not. And so they do appreciate the value of a drawing. And you cultivate that taste, and there are lots of people who can afford a drawing and not a painting.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, you could—I suppose you could cite as a parallel example the drawings of Auguste Rodin versus his sculpture.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Where it really feels like it's a process. Like he's just there with the paper and the model's there, and he's drawing it. It ends up on the floor—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: You know. Another one is—it just flows out, you know, off the tip of the pencil, and he's not really worried about making a work of art. It's just he's with the model in the studio, doing the drawing, and it's about the process.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. Mm-hmm [affirmative.]. Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So that that—But I had a teacher. I had a class on Rembrandt at school with at Yale with Egbert Haverkamp Begemann, who was the great scholar, of course, of Dutch art. And he made a point of telling the class, which was a very small class of maybe a dozen people, of showing us examples of Rembrandt drawings where a hundred years later a collector not being happy with, you know, the drawing because it didn't look like a painting, would hire some hack to come put in shadows and to turn a Rembrandt drawing into something that looked more like the way it was supposed to look closer in appearance to his paintings.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: It's scary.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Even now after he explained all of that, I can spot these a mile away because the hand is obviously not—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Interesting. Yes, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, there is another perhaps apocryphal story about Rubens correcting a drawing by Titian or Michelangelo.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.]. Yes, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The kind of thing that seldom happens anymore. [Laughs.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: One of the things, though, about the drawing and graphic art collectors is people do get more education now. They are many of them—you can't generalize anything—but I find that more people are somewhat knowledgeable, and they don't denigrate the graphic arts the way they used to. Not only because they cost less, but because they can see the value in the drawings. More people flock to the Morgan Library to see drawings by famous artists and recognize in some cases. And the Frick [Frick Collection], they had this marvelous exhibition of Goya drawings. And they recognized the value and the spontaneity of a drawing. And they understand it. And that's helpful in this.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's the most immediate—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Sure.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —glimpse into an artist's work, you process.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely, the process is very, very important. And, you know, museums have for a long time shown process like drawing and then let's say a print in the early states, in the later states. I remember a Munch exhibition at the National Gallery in 1979. I'll never forget it with that it just blew my mind to see this. And, you know, there were lots of other people who saw that and who see all these things. And museums do a good job. And sometimes we do things like that in our exhibitions.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes, I think in the past perhaps major exhibitions would edit out what they deemed to be minor works.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: And now because of the kind of context that, you know, the presence of things like sketchbooks and other things.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: Like the Courbet show with, you know, the touch screen.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, that was fantastic. Now you can do that. In the old days you saw one page or two pages and that was it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Or Turner here, too.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, fantastic. Yes. That, of course, is—Also these methods of education have improved.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How has the computer changed the way you do your work?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, a lot. We have a website. We sell art from the website. You know we don't sell—usually what happens is people see things on our website, and then they send us an e-mail. And then we ask them questions. We don't give out much information without knowing where they are and have an address and a phone number. And you know, then we communicate directly with them, very often on the phone.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And sometimes they come in afterwards, depending on where they are. But, oh, it has changed completely. Also the way we operate. We have a database. I don't go look up file cards anymore. I go to the database to look up the descriptions, the price, the net price, everything. Yes, it's changed radically.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Is all of our inventory—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: On the computer.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —online?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. But we also keep a paper trail. We have terrible paper trails. We have files going back to 1939. It's a space problem forever.

JAMES McELHINNEY: One of the things that I've heard from a couple of people involved in the publishing industry is that while using "tiffs" and "jpegs" and other electronic formats makes things a lot easier in terms of sending images to collectors or to curators or to whomever, artists, other galleries, that a lot of people are going back to slides and transparencies as an archival measure because it's so easy to corrupt the electronic files.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

MR. McELHINNEY: So that you may have a painting or a drawing that you have a "jpeg" of and a "tiff" of or another electronic format. But you also have a slide of it. You also have a transparency of it.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, I've had terrible experiences with slides and transparencies because they disintegrate.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Of course. Everybody. Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: The best thing is to have a black-and-white printout.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's okay.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Or even a color printout. Maybe they last better now than they used to.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But a black-and-white. We have an archive of black-and-white photography that's unbelievable. But I don't know. You've put a bug in my ear.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, it's just a question.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Whether we print out all the "jpegs" so we have a paper record of each piece, I'm not sure that we do.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But I know at some point—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We have a backup.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right. You have a backup.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But I also understood that at one point in the past, one of the ways that, you know, the color images were stored—

MS. BACHERT: Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

MR. McELHINNEY: Against loss would be to make a black-and-white version of each color separation.

MS. BACHERT: Yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: So that you would have four colors, and then each one would have a black-and-white. This is very exhaustive archiving.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes [Laughs.] That's too much [Laughs.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: But I don't know what level of detail you operate at.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That I wouldn't do. But yes, I mean printouts, maybe we should think about that. But we don't even bother with transparencies anymore at all. We have digital camera that goes into—that gets scanned, and that's it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Do you own your own?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Digital camera?

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Not personally. No. But the gallery does.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes, that's what I meant.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Of course, yes. And most other people I know. But I'm an old-time photographer, and I have a wonderful Leica-like camera that has a marvelous lens. And I, you have to figure out your aperture and everything, and I love to use it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Speed, F-stop, yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, that's why it's an art, I think. It's why it's an art.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And my photos come out really reliably well that way.

JAMES McELHINNEY: This might be a good time to—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Right. It's much too long in a way.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —to interrupt. Thank you. And we'll hopefully be able to resume.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Do you want to turn this off?

JAMES McELHINNEY: Yes. Thanks.

[END OF DISC 2, TRACK 1.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: This is James McElhinney speaking with Hildegard Bachert at Galerie St. Etienne, 24 West 57th Street in New York, on Monday, the third of August. Hello.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Hello.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Why don't we talk a little bit about the operations of the gallery. I know there are a lot more interesting things to discuss on the horizon, but just I think part of the function of these interviews is to understand the manner in which the gallery and you as part of it have conducted yourselves over the last three-score years. What was the gallery like? Here we're in this space that's split up into sort of a small gallery, a more intimate room. It's not really enclosed, but there's a wall dividing it from a long gallery. It really feels like a gallery, a long space, hung with framed works on paper mainly. Interestingly, all of the papers are hung from rods; they're not hung from hooks that are invisible or hammered into the wall. It's track lighting. It's a very, you know, it's a very well-organized space that doesn't detract from you know, the work or doesn't try to compete with it. At the same time feels intimate and comfortable and I saw two offices. There's an office as you walk in the door. There's an office to the left. And then a welcoming area, a kind of counter, wrap-around counter, and a receptionist. That's Courtney, I think. And then the office in the rear which you share with two other colleagues. And then another space in the back which is all sort of caved in and has an eyebeam crashing through the wall and is in a state of flux and change. And that's not open to the public yet, right?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I have to sort of get you a little bit up to date. Okay.

MR. McELHINNEY: Let me ask you.

MS. BACHERT: You enter this gallery, and on the left you see a door, which is what we call the workroom. It's the registrar's department with a worktable where we do our framing. There are shelves along the walls which store the books that we mostly sell. Our library's in a different place. This is the place where we store the books for sale. Also the office supplies and then further back in that room is the person who does our photography and all the computer work. She takes care of our website. And then there is more storage in the back for photography. The photo filing is in the back. And then there's another room that's out storeroom. Very purposely far back. And that's where we have our art. Then you walk through the gallery which normally has three: the reception area which is hung with work. Then there are three main galleries. And off one side is what we call the alcove, which is where we are sitting right now.

And then facing the south of our space are four offices. One is really not an office but our showroom. That is the room where we take customers that want to see pictures privately. And it has normally a lot of flex files with works on paper stored there that are for sale and racks for the works that are framed, either oil paintings or framed watercolors and drawings. And that is a whole wall of storage and with a nice seating area. And then there are three offices. One is Jane Kallir's office with the library in it and a sitting area for people to come and speak with us. Then comes my office with another library, mostly the catalogue raisonné—reference library. Smaller than the one in Jane's office. And then there is a third office for our employees, for our bookkeeper. Now currently, since just June, we had to evacuate these offices in order to have the ceiling repaired. That's a construction matter. And hopefully by Labor Day they'll be out of here, and we will be able to move back in after reconstructing what had to be destroyed for repairing the ceiling and all the infrastructure of this building. So what you saw as an office—

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's a gallery.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: —is a gallery.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's how I remembered it, yes.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And it's extremely temporary and shouldn't really, I mean it's part of the history of the gallery. But it's a very temporary part of the history.

JAMES McELHINNEY: There's a mode in a number of Chelsea galleries where they've got the office in, you know, the middle of the space. You know they've got a cluster of, you know, the desks and the fax machine and the computers. And everybody's working in, you know, in this island in the middle of the gallery.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's not for us.

JAMES McELHINNEY: [Laughs.] That's not your—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We have doors to our offices.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —your new mode.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And when we want to talk on the phone, we close the door. And also when we want to talk to customers very often we take them to what we call the showroom, the private room, to talk to them. This gallery we moved into in 1960 from a space just down the street where we started in 1939. That was at 46 West 57th. In 1960 we moved in here. And in 1987 we renovated the space and got additional space. There was empty space next door, and we took that on. When we moved in and when we renovated, and if we renovate again, we will always want the space to feel comfortable.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We are not doing state-of-the-art type of white walls and black desks; that kind of thing does not appeal to us. We have carpeting on the floor on purpose to make it feel comfortable. We do plan eventually to change the lighting to make it more up to date. I mean we want to be up to date, but we don't want to be cold. We want it to be warm.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Up to date in terms of archival issues, different kinds of light, light levels.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Both, archival and also we feel that we can't light some of the art as well as it should be, especially for instance here in the alcove we can't do individual lighting, which is sometimes very important. When we hang a drawing next to an oil, the oil can have nice—a lot of light, and the drawing has to have very controlled little light. And that we should be able to do with the individual light if we can manage to do that. Right now we have dimmers that dim a whole area and not the specific work of art. So that would be nice to be able to do. And we like to update things that way. Now as far as the operation of the gallery is concerned, there was a spirit here that was introduced by Otto Kallir way back when. He was a collector and a scholar. He wanted to impart his knowledge and impart what he knew about the art. He wanted to publicize the art. He wanted to get it out there. And introduced works by artists who had never been heard of before in this country.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Like Egon Schiele.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: As I've mentioned before: Egon Schiele, Gustav Klimt, Paula Modersohn-Becker, and some who had been heard of but not enough, such as Käthe Kollwitz and Lovis Corinth and many others that over time have become indeed much better known.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: There were, of course, some that we tried to introduce and did not succeed. We weren't successful in every person—in every artist. We thought some of them were promising, and unfortunately they were living artists, and they never developed further. They never got anywhere. And in that case these things don't work. You can try to promote them, and people were interested. They thought, well, that's interesting, this new artist. And they bought a few. But then when they didn't go any further, the interest waned. So then it was finished. And that happens also.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What did the gallery look like in 1939?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: It was on the third floor at 46 West 57th Street, with a staircase leading up to this floor. Plus an elevator that accommodated at most four or five people—very, very small and rickety. And in the beginning we had an elevator man in 1939. But pretty soon this was changed. It was automated, and it didn't work very well. We moved, as I mentioned, out of there in 1960. It was a very intimate space. The gallery—we also had a private showroom there. We had basically a small reception area in which we could show just a few pictures, with a desk with a guest book there. And two galleries. We also had—actually we had a picture of the month room there, which was open to the public. And we changed it every month and sometimes we lasted longer than that month. And in there we hung this spectacular painting, plus some works on paper along the smaller—the narrow walls which didn't accommodate oils so well. Also the showroom was off the gallery, the two main galleries. And then in the back we had two offices. One at the very end was the boss's office, Otto Kallir's, and before that were two secretaries. That's all we had at that time and first it was a lady, and pretty soon I replaced her because she wanted to go back to college. And I came—the gallery was opened in October 1939, and I came in November 1940. And so that was my office.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So was the exhibition space as large as this?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No. It was much smaller—much smaller.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Would you say a third of this, a quarter of this, half?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Maybe half or less than half probably.

[END OF DISC 2, TRACK 2.]

JAMES McELHINNEY: So you were hired initially as just—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: As a secretary.

JAMES McELHINNEY: A secretary and then how did you move into the organization or into the culture of the gallery? How did you evolve from that point to your current standing?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Gradually. Kallir didn't believe in doing things very fast. I had to learn how—not only, you know, to deal with customers; that wasn't very difficult. I could do that. But I didn't know enough about the art. I had some knowledge.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But especially about the Austrian art I had no idea. And when I first saw at Klimt, I didn't like him at all.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Why not?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Not at all. It just wasn't my taste. It wasn't—I saw—we had *The Pear Tree*, we had which is now at the Busch-Reisinger, which Kallir gave the Busch-Reisinger [Museum, Harvard University]—at the time it was the Francke Museum—as a gift. We had *The Park*, which belongs to the Museum of Modern Art. That Kallir sold to the museum in 1957 or '56, I can't remember—I think '57. And it just didn't appeal to me at all. I got to Klimt via the drawings. I thought that were fantastic. I saw them right away. I thought that they were marvelous. And Kallir didn't have any figural Klimts at that time, aside from the drawings.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Even drawings?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. The drawings were all figural. And then when in 1950 I was in Vienna for the first time, and saw a whole collection of Klimt, and understood the ambience in which they were created, and knew much more about the history. You know between 1940 and 1950 there were ten years. I had learned enough of the background and understood where all this came from. Kallir also had Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller and Hans Defregger, none of whom I had ever heard. I had to learn a whole history, which was very unknown even to art historians. Art historians maybe learned about German and definitely about French art history. And did at that time especially, German art history wasn't particularly interesting to most people. Who had known anything about Max Klinger or Adolf Menzel?

MR. McELHINNEY: [Hermann von] Stuak?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Or any of the nine—Stuak, yes. But having grown up in Germany, I did know about those. Or having learned somehow other during my early art historical studies about those people. But the Austrians even in Germany were unknown. So here opened another field of art that I learned through Kallir. And so until I had a solid background, there was no way that I could ever sell any pictures or anything like that. And so Kallir—he was a good teacher. But he made you do the work yourself, you know, he gave me books or I found the books in the library, and I just went and read them.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What was his attitude towards women? Did he have a gendered sort of attitude, the traditional sort of paradigm for what women were supposed to do in the workplace and what was perhaps beyond them? Or was he more—progressive in his thinking?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He was both. He certainly was a patriarch, and autocrat. He was brought up in the Austria of the—he was born in 1894. You know pre-war and even post-war Austria was, you know, it was—

JAMES McELHINNEY: The twilight of the Hapsburgs.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely, absolutely. And he was an autocrat in some ways. He called me by my first name, but I always called him Dr. Kallir to the very end. Never by his first name. Also his wife I called her Mrs. Kallir, she called me Hildegard.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Even at a Christmas party?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative].Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Using the excuse of having a little too much champagne to call him Otto?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Never. Unthinkable.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: It wasn't done. It wasn't done. And yet he was very forthcoming and also very interested in what I had to say. He listened to what I had to say. He accepted criticism. It wasn't cut and dry like that. He certainly gave me enough leeway to function and to develop and learn. And to in the end, towards, you know, by the time we moved in here in 1960, in the '60s and '70s, we were collaborators. I collaborated with him on all his books. When he edited, for instance—now going to Grandma Moses—he suggested to Grandma Moses to write her autobiography. And she started writing it, and then she got tired of it, writing it all down and then he went up with a tape recorder, and Grandma said, "What is this!?" And you know it was a big instrument. And she didn't want to do that. And so we decided that she would dictate it to me. I had learned some kind of a quick stenography, and I spent many hours with her taking dictation from her. And then I came back with my notes. And Kallir and I edited the book which is called *My Life's History* [1952].

And it was a total collaboration. And especially because my English was a little bit better than his—or quite a lot better—although he came here knowing very little English basically. His French was flawless and wonderful. But his English wasn't great. But he had a good feeling for language. And by the 1950—this is when we did it—'50 to '52, the book was published in 1952, he understood this language of Grandma Moses very, very well and so we edited this book, you know. And in those cases, in those days, it was really cut and paste, not the way we do it on the computer now. And we still have the manuscripts which are unbelievable, you know, with scotch tape and everything.

JAMES McELHINNEY: [Laughs.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: So this was a total collaboration. And his later books on Schiele, we worked together, and he listened to what I had to say and so your question takes a long answer.

JAMES McELHINNEY: No, but it's interesting because I think today, especially a lot of the people I've interviewed have been women, there is a—there is a discussion about the changing role of women, you know, in the workplace.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

JAMES McELHINNEY: And, you know, and especially in the arts I think it's been perhaps a little more accelerated than in other industries. But the enfranchisement, you know, of women has occurred at a more rapid pace perhaps than in other fields like banking or corporate or Wall Street or whatever. So when you were hired first as a secretary, it's basically, you know, a clerical wage slave, and you evolved into being a salesperson and training your eye. At what point did you—how long did it take you to sort of achieve a function in the gallery where you were given responsibility of a substantial nature?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: You see this can't be pinpointed like that.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And I have to say I never felt constricted.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What decade was it?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Constricted in that sense. In the beginning I knew that I knew nothing. I had to be careful to inn fact sometimes when I tried to fudge something as a young person would do, I fell flat on my face. And I learned pretty quickly that you better just say, "I'm sorry I don't know this" rather than trying to fudge something that doesn't work. Because in the beginning even some of the customers knew more than I did. So I knew my place in the beginning. And then when I began to know more, it was so gradual that I really can't say at what point in time I became a more effective and more responsible person. Very often Kallir was absent, was traveling or something. And then I went into action. But very often, too, I stayed in touch with him and got instructions, and then did what he told me to do. So it's—I remember one of the first works of art that I sold, not very surprisingly, was a work by Kollwitz because I had a very solid background of her work anyway.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And it got more solid as I went along. And so I mean you think as a person, especially when you're very young, that you know everything. But of course you don't. And I never had, or very rarely had, an experience where somebody treated me like a woman, perhaps because I tried to imply that wasn't acceptable. And even today, you know, sometimes—or in the last ten, 15, 20, 30 years—people try to do that, and I sense it, and I immediately cut them off and let them know that that's not acceptable and not by saying anything.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But somehow also being older helps to establish a certain authoritative presence. And to say, you know, take me at full value, and that's what I am. And I don't have to do anything extra special to assert that authority.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So as a glamorous young lady, you didn't ever have occasion to decline a collector's invitation to champagne on a rooftop or something like that. You don't have to answer that question.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes. Oh, sure. [They laugh.] Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So it sounds like Dr. Kallir—I think I should show him the same respect that you do in his former gallery—it seems like he let you assume whatever responsibility your skills equipped you to.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And so as you acquired those skills, he just allowed you to carry a heavier load or assume a broader task.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. That's why I stayed. If I had felt that I was stuck in a place, I would probably not have stayed that long. But we developed the gallery, developed and grew together. I could see how it was growing, how it was growing from a small gallery in 46 West 57th Street to a larger gallery. We had more attendants here. We were growing. Our reputation was growing. Things were going well. I mean not always. There were always setbacks,

JAMES McELHINNEY: Of course.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: and then it got better and worse. As it does now. But even today we have grown, the gallery has grown. Many, many times I was the only employee, and sometimes we had two. That was all Kallir ever had.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Who was the other employee at the times you had two? Were there any other people who came through the gallery who ended up staying in the business, opening their own gallery or having an impact anywhere else?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: They never went very far. One person became an art historian and an art professor. Most of them stayed only a few years. One of them just became a housewife. The first one of them was really a musician.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: She worked as a secretary. They were always subordinate to me. And maybe they didn't like that possibly. You know they didn't stay very long. One of them, who's a close friend of mine, needed to make extra money, and she stayed for two or three years. And then she pursued her musician career. And years later she came back and helped out for different, at different tasks. So that was a very nice relationship. And then one of them, they moved away and, but none of them stayed in the art business that I remember. And then when Kallir died, Jane Kallir and I for some time practically closed the gallery and did inventory and had nobody. And then we hired one person. And after a while we hired an intern. And then we had two people. And now we have three full-timers—No, we have right now—we had three. Now we have two full-timers and three part-timers.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What are their jobs?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Some of them—One of them has been with us for 23 or 24 years. She started as a full-timer, then got married and had a child, and then she went on part time.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What's her job?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Her job is—she assists me in financial matters. She does a lot of financial work. She supervises the filing. She knows where everything is at this point. The other person who's been with us for 13 years is the registrar and also—both these people know everything about the gallery. They do research. And also some of the younger people do research, trying to understand, you know, what the history of a specific work of art is. They go to the library and check it out. Then we have one person who is the computer person who works at our website, and is the photography queen. And then we have a bookkeeper who comes twice a week.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So when did you add all of these?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Gradually. We had three full-timers until last December and she quit to get married. And our part-timers now work more in order to take up the slack.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, apart from the revolving—secretarial job that I imagine was occupied as you explained by a series of women during the forties, were there ever any male secretaries?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No.

JAMES McELHINNEY: All women. At what point did you have somebody else sort of more or less permanently doing a particular task like registration or accounting or anything like that? At what point—how long were you working at the gallery? Was it after you came here?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: In 1960 or it was after that?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I still did registration and framing and packing and everything—

JAMES McELHINNEY: So you did the framing?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I did the framing.

JAMES McELHINNEY: You cut the mats.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No. We never cut mats ourselves. We had a mat—we ordered the mats.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So I'm imagining you assembling, you know, the frames.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. I measured the mats and ordered them. I measured and ordered the outside and the inside. And I taught everybody how to do that. And I packed, and I framed, and the exhibitions. And Jane, is the, hangs the exhibitions. But I prepared everything for hanging. And I did that way into the '80s.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So, so all of the elements of the frames, like for instance, the frame—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But I taught people how to do that, and they helped me; they began helping me.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The frames themselves were contracted out.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We ordered the frames and the mats.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And the glass.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But we never put the art out. We never sent a work of art out.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The components arrived here, and you assembled them here.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And then, we assembled them. Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

JAMES McELHINNEY: And it's interesting; I'm having a look around. A lot of these are hung from rods from a piece of molding, which is a very traditional way to hang pictures. And it sort of lends the space a sort of—well, I don't want to say antique feeling—but a sort of early modern ambience. So what was, have you always hung the work in this way?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, we certainly did hang them that way, starting way back when. In fact in the beginning we hung them from wires, which was very unpleasant. [McElhinney laughs.] Then 1950 or '49, Kallir went back to Europe for the first time, and brought back from Paris these picture rods, which he also had in Europe.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Because they didn't exist in this country.

JAMES McELHINNEY: No.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And so he got the picture rods from Europe. That was the beginning of it. And it was a godsend because hanging them from wires was much more difficult.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And there's a hook that you adjust by friction.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Right. Right. For many years we hung them that way. Now you happen to be in an exhibition in which we reverted to hanging things on picture rods. But that is only right now our summer show,

which is a little more informal and had to be done more quickly, especially because of this horrible construction that's going on. But very, very often nowadays we do hang without these rods, which are really not very pretty. And hang on hooks directly to the wall.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Here, we've got this piece here, this map.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And you've got the Noldes also and Schiele's drawings.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And there is another work which is hung directly and sometimes we have no rods at all. So this is not usual anymore. We hang in different ways as it suits the art.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm [Affirmative]. So were you always mindful of archival practices? Were you—who trained you in knowing? Because at a certain point in history, nobody was really aware of the dangers of using certain kinds of papers that had high acid content, etc. But how—Were you in contact with some of the conservators at museums or—?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Unfortunately, in the beginning, we were clueless. And so was everybody else with regard to for instance rubber cement. You know in the prewar days, most papers were, had enough rag content anyway to be fairly archival and to be fairly safe. After the War, they invented this paper with basically only wood pulp in it.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And it was horrible. The consequences were horrible. We put our clippings into clipping books. The books were on terrible paper. We pasted them in with rubber cement because that was such a wonderful new invention. And we had no idea that everything would disintegrate and get yellow and horrible. And our clipping books are in a state of affairs that was just awful. And for a lot of money we photographed everything so that we at least could preserve what we had.

JAMES McELHINNEY: You could scan them today.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, yes. Then the same thing was true of mats, of hinging we people saw this masking tape and scotch tape. And for a certain period of time very few people—and certainly us included; most people, us included—had no idea what damage was being done. Then came a time when people said "this paper is okay." But it wasn't. So we have a lot of damaged art from the early '40s into 1945, '46, '47, into the '50s. Until we realized what was going on. Then of course we switched to archival mats. But then sometimes we were told they're archival, and we didn't know enough to know ourselves that they were not. Now we know. We can see from the edges whether they are okay. And also even some—most of the framer makers now know what is archival or what is 100 percent rag. But it was a long learning process, and we all, you know, at different times. Also these archival mats, these 100 percent rag mats were very expensive. And so we had a mat maker who told us that she had something that was just as good and wasn't as expensive. And we fell for it. We believed her. And that wasn't a good idea. So, yes, we have a lot of damaged art to contend with. But luckily a lot of it can be fixed by a good conservator, and luckily we have a good conservator. And many things can be repaired and restored back to normalcy.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Have you ever had somebody walk in a gallery and say, I bought this Egon Schiele drawing, and what is this yellow appearing on the edges of my drawing?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Oh, that has happened?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's interesting. So it's a real learning curve.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: You've flexed with the increased knowledge. Well, let's talk a little about the art itself. Since Dr. Kallir was a collector, I'm assuming a good deal of the art, its inventory, was owned by him.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But I'm sure, I'd imagine, that there must have been occasions when other collector or perhaps another dealer or perhaps another person would want to—consign works of art. How often did that

happen, and what were the percentages, let's say in the 1940s and the '50s as opposed to now, in terms of consignments versus house-owned goods?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: There's been a dramatic change. In the 1940s and '50s, when a work of art was offered to Kallir, he either bought it or he didn't. When we had exhibitions, we borrowed works of art which we still do today. And some people also consigned. In that case we had consignment, and those consignments lasted perhaps a little bit longer than the exhibition. And if we didn't sell the work, and if Kallir didn't like it well enough to buy it, it went back to the consigner, and that was the end of it. That took on even all through Kallir's lifetime—he died, as I mentioned before in 1978—we had a small percentage. I wouldn't venture to say how much of our art was on consignment.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Less than 10 percent?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Maybe 10 percent, maybe that much, on consignment. Most of the other works were for sale—that he bought—were for sale. And some that he bought he liked so much that he withdrew them from sale and said I'll keep them.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So did you and he ever have a difference of opinion about a work of art that you were crazy about and he wasn't? That you were encouraging him, you know, to buy and he was hesitant?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I suppose so. Yes, I think so. That happened. Or he liked a work of art, especially in the beginning, when he bought something that I didn't understand yet what it was all about, I thought why would he buy that? You know. And I understood later that it was an okay thing to buy. And once in a while he bought something that I liked a lot and sometimes that I wasn't that crazy about. And once in a while we examined a work together and made a mutually agreeable decision as to whether or not to buy it. Yes, there were differences of opinion. Of course.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Were there any times when you were able to talk him into a purchase that he was not really contemplating seriously? In other words, did you ever sell Dr. Kallir a picture?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Probably, yes.

MR. McELHINNEY: [Laughs.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: Whose? Whose picture?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: [Laughs.] Probably a Kollwitz.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Probably a Kollwitz.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I sold him Kollwitz, period.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Interesting. You sell, you're working in a gallery, you're working for a gallery owner who's also a collector, and you're selling him work from his own gallery.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. I mean I would say, "Why don't we buy? Why don't we do more work in Kollwitz? She was a great artist." And he agreed, and then, you know, and then of course a lot of Kollwitz art—you asked me earlier where did we get our art? A lot of works, especially after the war, came over here from people who had emigrated. And even during the war and before the war, many works just came. And people wanted desperately to sell them to us. And so when Kollwitz came, I said, Let's get them. You know this is interesting. And let's do a show, and there was enough to come and do that. And we did other shows because enough works came into us. People approached us to buy them. And so there was enough material at hand. Or Mrs. Corinth [Charlotte Berend] came and said, "I have a storage room full of Corinths. Will you do a show?" And so that's what we did. But of course those were on consignment.

McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Kallir wasn't able or willing to buy a lot of works by Corinth.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How long did she outlive Corinth? I know he died in the late '20s, right?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: 1925.

JAMES McELHINNEY: '25. He'd had a stroke about 11 or 12 years earlier.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: 1912.

JAMES McELHINNEY: 1912. And his work style changed radically at that point. But she must have been much younger than he.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: She was much, much younger. She was a student of his.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, he did all his sort of saucy paintings of her on his lap and grabbing a breast and holding a glass of wine.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Right.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And her beaming like the happy bride she was. And you knew her?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, very well.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And when was this exhibition? Was it after the War?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: During the War.

JAMES McELHINNEY: During the War. So she came here—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: She rescued—

JAMES McELHINNEY: His work.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Actually her son rescued the pictures. Her son had immigrated to America in the late '20s. He was not a refugee. But then she immigrated because she wanted to be with her son, and she was Jewish. She had to go. She had another daughter who was, you know, of mixed blood, so to speak, in Hitler's terms. She stayed in Germany because she was married to a German. Her name was—Wilhelmina Klopfer And she, after the War she came here also.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

MS. BACHERT: But during the War she was in Germany and the son gave an affidavit to his mother, and she came over here. I can't remember what year she died, but she became old lady and died—I have the feeling she died in the '50s. I can look it up if you're interested.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's not—it's not important. How did the show do?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Not very well. None of these shows were very successful. We sold a few things.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Wars don't tend to make for a robust art market. I think people are not buying a lot of art when there's a global conflict underway, I wouldn't think.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, also, it was still—French art was in, and German art was out.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It was German art was out, yes. Well, I think ever since the First World War, the Great War—what's lately been known as the First World War—when the United States entered the war, of course, all the German newspapers that were in Philadelphia, Milwaukee just—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: New York.

JAMES McELHINNEY: New York. All closed overnight—or became English language papers. And the whole sort of rise of the Hun and hatred of, you know, German—arms, I suppose, the Teutonic stereotype, which endured right up until the end of, you know, the Second World War, must have not been exactly an easy thing to sell in this country.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. Exactly. We were in this tough spot here. Very tough spot.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So you're standing up for a tough aesthetic and one that you were actually—you were actually here because of regime change in your home country.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Indeed. Right. And so was Kallir.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And so was Kallir. And so yet you were advocating for an aesthetic, although it was the degenerate aesthetic that Hitler proclaimed—That was by the way—I understood that was one of the most popular exhibitions of his Reich.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Was, you know, the degenerate art show, that crazy in Munich in that wacky building there.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So back to how you obtain works of art. Were there any artists whom you represented other than Grandma Moses who were standouts in the history of the gallery?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, we had contracts with some contemporary artists. But really none of them—only Grandma Moses really became better known gradually over time. The others—there was Martin Pajeck and Marvin Meisels with whom we had contracts. And they didn't go anywhere. Then we had a few others, you know, that just didn't materialize into much. Lately, of course, since 1989, we have a contract with Sue Coe, and that's working very well. And right now, very recently, we entered into a contract to represent the Estate of Leonard Baskin.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And for some time we had a contract, an exclusive for Henry Darger.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

MS. BACHERT: Both Baskin and Darger were dead by the time we had the contract. But Sue Coe's very much alive.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

MS. BACHERT: And that's working very well. So some things work and some don't. Nothing is ever always successful. That doesn't work, exist, you know. We try very hard to be successful in everything we start, but not everything is successful. I should say that, you know, to continue just very briefly, consignment now is about 80 percent or 75 percent, roughly, of our business. Because the prices are so high there is no way that we could possibly purchase all the things that we have on our walls.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So what has changed in terms, you know, of the volume of your inventory, in terms of let's say 1960, when you came here, how large was your inventory then versus now?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, our owned inventory at that time was probably similar to what we own now. But the volume of inventory that's here and doesn't belong to us is much, much bigger. So we need much more storage space.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right. So in other words you have much more inventory on hand than you had historically.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Much, much more. Especially because people like Sue Coe produces a lot of art, and we get these things from her or Lisa Baskin, the widow of Leonard Baskin sends us many, many works of art. They are here, and they're for sale, but we don't own them. And still we have to—it's part of the inventory, but not the owned inventory. It's the consigned inventory.

JAMES McELHINNEY: I don't think that the merchandising story of any gallery is as interesting as the culture of the gallery. But I think that people are always interested in some of this information just as a way of having a look at how business occurs in the art world and how it occurs over a period of, in your case, over half a century. But what kind of commission does the gallery take, let's say, from a living artist? Is it the same from a living artist like Sue Coe as it would be for an estate? Or is there a difference?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No, there's a difference. A living artist—it's customary that living artists give larger commissions than what we call the secondary market, the markup is much smaller.

JAMES McELHINNEY: What would it be? Can you—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, living artists normally, and I think that you will find that with other galleries, is 50 percent.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: With the secondary market it depends on the price range. The lower the price range, the higher the commission.

JAMES McELHINNEY: I see.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Because if you have a work of art on consignment that costs a thousand dollars, and 10

percent wouldn't be enough. [Laughs.] That would be impossible to operate.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And even if you had a hundred works of art, that just wouldn't work. If you have something on consignment for a million, then 10 percent is an okay thing, is an okay commission.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How about $100,000?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: A hundred thousand is probably in between, 10 and—you know we have to—you have to understand that we are not alone in this business.

JAMES McELHINNEY: No.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Auction houses are currently, and since the 1990s, our main competitors. They act like art dealers even though they don't know half of what a responsible art dealer knows.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

MS. BACHERT: And the art goes through like, you know, like auctions. It comes, and it gets sold, and it's out of there.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's merchandise essentially.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: It's merchandise.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: However, our buyers tell us what they can do, and our sellers tell us what they can do in the auction market. And so we have to adjust to that kind of thing. And therefore we adjust our commissions to the auction houses, and very often take a little bit less. And certainly take much less in the way of incidentals.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So, in other words, if you have to produce a catalog, or if you decide you're going to produce a catalog, you're not going to charge—[pause].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Photography.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —the estate.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right, like an auction house would.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. No, we don't. So, you know, to be very specific, the commissions range from 10 percent to about 30 percent. I don't think there's anything more than 30 percent in the secondary market.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And that's reflected by similar practices in other galleries.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's sort of pretty much standard.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: You know we are—there is a competitive market there.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Like in every other business. And even though we try to be curators—or we are curators, not quite. Jane Kallir is certainly a writer. We are all scholars; even our new employees do research and things other than secretarial and boring stuff so but, you know, we have to generate enough money to pay the rent and the employees and the insurance and the shipping charges and all those things. And we have no backers. And we do not borrow money.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, that is very interesting information in this day and age.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

JAMES McELHINNEY: So you don't have someone in Hollywood who's a silent partner.

MS.BACHERT: No.

MR. McELHINNEY: Or some mysterious syndicated of CEO's who are—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Telling us what to do?

JAMES McELHINNEY: —writing checks and who they like. Yes. No.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: No.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, it must be that which allows you to continue the culture of the gallery. And it sounds like you're carrying on in the way that Dr. Kallir did in allowing your employees today to sort of assume whatever tasks their skills and training—allow them to.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Mm-hmm [Affirmative]

JAMES McELHINNEY: This is another question: You were talking about something else a while ago, and I had this leap into my mind a question about how did Dr. Kallir create this kind of environment, this feeling of a place that was empowering to somebody like you and others who've joined you since? That he was, as you said, autocratic. But at the same time—He was old school, old world. But at the same time he was able to create this—atmosphere where you could grow. How'd he do that? How do you do that?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I don't know. [Laughs.] He just, you know, he was a very unique—like everybody else, he was, he had a certain personality. And he made me feel comfortable. He made other people not feel comfortable, depending on how the chemistry worked almost.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And he was judgmental, as many Europeans are. He sized up people pretty quickly, made up his mind whether he liked them or not. When he had employees, he was extremely generous. But when he noticed that they were taking advantage of his generosity, he got furious; that didn't work, you know. He expected you not to count the hours, not to go home at the stroke of five or six or whatever it was. To be generous, too. So it had to work. And he had very good friends, friendships that lasted his entire life. He was a very loyal person. And he had also enemies; he antagonized people.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Anybody of any quality always does, don't you think?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I guess so. [They laugh.] He often criticized me because I was much more accommodating. You know when I was not particularly enchanted with someone, I didn't let them know. And he was very outspoken about his likes and dislikes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, then he was generous. Because if you didn't have a high enough opinion of them to tell them to get lost, then you were, very, well, you know. I guess I'm just trying to be clever here. Just to think that he was actually being honest with somebody whom other people might not feel to whom honesty was owed.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly. And he had very good relationships with people who were a little crazy. He understood that quite well. For instance, the person who discovered Grandma Moses, he was a real nut case. And Kallir got along with him perfectly somehow. He understood. He let him be who he was.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So he liked eccentric people.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He did as long as they were decent. When people tried to cheat him, he was very, very nasty to them.

JAMES McELHINNEY: The matter of character.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.]. Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, what are your plans for the gallery in the next ten years—

MS. BACHERT: [Laughs.]

MR. McELHINNEY: Five years, looking forward?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: You should ask Jane that question.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Oh, no, really!

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I don't know whether we should say it, but I'm 88 years old. [Laughs.] And I don't think I can plan except I plan for the gallery to continue to thrive and exist and thrive. And grow not necessarily in size. I don't think we should grow much more as far as the reach of our—of the employees. There is a limit to how far you can go without losing contact with everybody that works here. We are very personal with everybody. We care for their well-being. And when there are too many more of us then it gets diluted.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, this model—You've occupied this space since 1960. You're a year away from half a century in this—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Just in this space.

JAMES McELHINNEY: In this space alone.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And it's 70 years that we've been around here.

JAMES McELHINNEY: All together. So it seems like it's a good model; it works. Why change it?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Exactly.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Is the old expression: If it ain't broke, why fix it?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. Mm-hmm [affirmative.].

JAMES McELHINNEY: Seems to apply. But 88 years old—they're saying that a hundred is the new 80 now. And I just interviewed Will Barnet—you know Will Barnet.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I know him well.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And he's a wonderful guy.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He had an exhibition here.

JAMES McELHINNEY: His wife's Austrian, isn't she?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I don't know.

JAMES McELHINNEY: I think so. But he had an exhibition here.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: But he's 98. So he's got no plans at quitting anytime soon either.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, yes. He's a very nice man.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Very—a lovely guy. Yes, really a lovely guy. And loved by everybody.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And he's really earning a lot of kudos and being thrown a lot of laurels these days.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, of course.

JAMES McELHINNEY: All of them well earned.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: How would you like a person in another hundred years to remember the work you've done?—

If you could have a motto, if there was a portrait of you up in a Cartesian wall of a museum with a motto around it, what would that be motto have been? It's kind of a bit of a silly question. It's a serious question but asked in a silly way—pardon me—.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: [Laughs]. A hundred years, a hundred years. I hope that the art that I was—that I loved all my life and that I tried to support and promote would have become household words, so to speak. And be even better known than they are today. And that these artists, whose, to whose reputation we devoted our time would grow, that they would become better known. In places like China—we are working on a Kollwitz exhibition that's going to China. And that was the result of our work in Basel, an artist there discovered—

JAMES McELHINNEY: Of this year?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, over a number of years.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: He bought a Kollwitz one year and a few more the following year. And this year he bought some very significant ones. And then he invited us to come to China and to curate a Kollwitz show. And so that would be a nice monument, for these artists to be—you know the world is shrinking more and more. And so I hope that not only Kollwitz but Schiele and Klimt and all these artists become better known all over the world. And that they would help also to understand. For Eastern culture to understand Western culture and to contribute a little bit to world peace and to world decency. And I don't know. If I think of something to be said about me in a hundred years, I would hope that it would be something to help for the world in a tiny, tiny little place to be a better place than it was before I came. That's about what I would like.

JAMES McELHINNEY: And that art can achieve that.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And that art can achieve that. And also that the people that work with me had a better feeling about that art and about also not just about art but about life itself. You know art is just an aspect of it. I want life to be a decent place. I want life to be honest and helpful and all that kind of stuff. It's not just art per se. That's why we have so much art that is socially and politically important: George Gross and Sue Coe and Kollwitz and Otto Dix and all these people who stood for principles of human achievement and human decency and human progress, such, if there is such a thing.

JAMES McELHINNEY: So you believe art can elevate humanity.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: God bless you.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And it certainly has, too.

JAMES McELHINNEY: That's a wonderful thought, and one we should all hold to as strongly as you have. I think you—I have much admiration for you having spoken with you over a few hours. I think that hopefully—Well, you have succeeded, I think.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Thank you.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Gotten the message across. Any final thoughts?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: I guess that was the final thought. I don't know. I just hope to—that Jane Kallir, who is my partner, and whom I've known all her life, will continue, and I know she will continue in this vein. And she is highly intelligent and highly capable and I trust her implicitly and completely, and we've worked well together all these many years. With glitches here and there.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Mm-hmm [Affirmative].

HILDEGARD BACHERT: That's necessary and so on.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's a growing process.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: But I hope that this gallery will thrive and it was something that I devoted my life to, and that's why I'm still here. Because I wanted to continue. And as long as I can contribute something, I will do that. And Jane will continue to do it, and I know she'll do a fantastic job. And I just hope this gallery will grow and continue. And when and, if and when it ever closes, as many things do end somehow, that it will have—I know that it has contributed an awful lot to the history of art and to the growth of—to the knowledge of this, the particular art that we have championed.

JAMES McELHINNEY: I think I have the answer to the question, but I still have to ask it. I would then assume that your library, your holdings—You've operated also over the years as a resource to scholars and—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We always do.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —other people who are interested in the art for its own sake.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: We constantly operate as such. We always have—I, both Jane and I give talks in the gallery to students. Elizabeth Marcus, who has been here for way over 20 years, is also teaching.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Right.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And she brings her classes here. And we talk to them. I usually talk to them about Kollwitz—what else? [Laughs.] And also we get, especially now with the Internet, constantly inquiries and requests for help with term papers—from high school term papers to master's and Ph.D. theses.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Oh, wonderful!

HILDEGARD BACHERT: And we open our files. Today we got a request for someone who does a thesis on Schiele and his early years here. And they wanted to—she wants to see our files on the 1941, which was the first Schiele show, and the 1948 Schiele show. And so, we pull out files, and we show them what we have and the press clippings and everything like that.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, you, you meaning you the gallery: Dr. Kallir and Jane Kallir and yourself—have established quite a record as aggressive publishers as well.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, absolutely.

JAMES McELHINNEY: There are some wonderful books and absolutely definitive works on a number of artists. Has the Internet changed any of your plans or the idea of the digital media, has that impacted the idea of books in print versus, you know, the material being—made available in other ways?

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Well, right now, none of our books in print, to my knowledge, are also—perhaps some of them are already visible on the Internet. But just look at our website. We put every checklist essay on the website. So, yes, the Internet is constantly changing plans. [Laughs.] It's never static.

JAMES McELHINNEY: You're reaching a lot more people probably.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Oh, many more people. And that's one reason why we have more employees. It's just horrible sometimes how much comes in here in the way of communications that have to be answered. And we do answer most of them.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, that's evidence that people are aware and coming to you for information—

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: —about these artists and this aesthetic and this whole point of view. I'm sure we could have a whole other conversation about publishing.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Perhaps we will. [They laugh.]

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes. And that should really be with Jane who's written numerous books.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Well, thank you so much.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: You're welcome.

JAMES McELHINNEY: It's been really inspiring talking to you.

HILDEGARD BACHERT: Yes, well, it was my pleasure.

JAMES McELHINNEY: Thank you.

[END OF DISC 3.]

[END OF INTERVIEW.]