

## DAVID HOFFMAN MOMA HISTORY INTERVIEWS

**INTERVIEW WITH:** JOHN PARKINSON III (JP)  
**INTERVIEWERS:** CARL COLBY (CC); RUTH CUMMINGS (RC)  
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JP: Okay, maybe I could tell you how I got involved with the Museum.

CC: In the most personal way, really.

JP: Yes, because obviously, I've had close family ties. My mother's [Elizabeth Bliss Parkinson] been so involved over the years that I've grown up with the Museum a part of my life, although not necessarily having had any kind of a direct role. I've worked for Citibank all my career, and I started with the bank in their overseas division, as they used to call it. And I went almost immediately to Latin America with five years in Venezuela and two years in Colombia. And during that period, I was involved and interested in what was going on in Latin America in the art world, particularly in Colombia, since there's quite an active group of Colombian artists such as [Fernando] Botero, which is a name you probably—

CC: [Édgar] Negret.

JP: Negret. Obregón. Omar Rayo. So that was sort of an interesting time. When I came back from those assignments, which I guess was 1967, I had been a member of the Museum but I joined the International Council. And I don't know; have you had any—?

RC: Yes, we're seeing Joanne Stern soon. We spoke to Waldo Rasmussen.

JP: Okay, so you know what it is and so on. And I shortly thereafter became Treasurer of The International Council and did that job for a number of years. And that was really my initial entre into the Museum. I have a sort of a modest collection of Latin [American] art, and once I got back here, I couldn't afford to collect paintings any more, [laughing] so I started collecting photography, which

was also an interest and something that I had personally been involved in doing. And [I] became a member of the Photography Committee, and have over the years collected photography, so probably have more of a photography collection than most anything, I guess, at this point. I went with the bank to Paris for a couple of years, from '74 to '76, and when I came back from that assignment, I was asked to join the Board of the Museum. And given—I guess it all started with the family background and my own personal interest in art. I don't have the same resources as many of the members of the Museum, so my contribution really has been a working contribution, and particularly in the financial side. And after I had been on the Board for a year or so, I became Chairman of the Finance Committee, and I'm Treasurer now, still Chairman of the Finance Committee and am on a bunch of the committees that are sort of financially related and management related. So I guess those would be the two areas that I've been most involved with.

CC: When you first came in '76, did it look like the Museum really needed an overhaul in terms of its financial structure or getting itself in line? In those seven years, from '76 to '83, have things changed very much?

JP: Things have changed in—yes and no. Obviously, [for] the Museum and museums, art and cultural institutions of all kinds, this has been a very difficult period. And very few of them have ever been in a very flush financial situation, ex. the Gettys and so on. Most museums have a cash flow problem, and The Museum of Modern Art has been no exception to that. I think that in terms of—if you want to look at the management side of things, and I'm now thinking in terms of financial management or the business side of running the organization, I think there have been some tremendous strides taken over the course of the time that I've been involved. And [I'm] not patting myself on the back, I mean, it's Dick Oldenburg and others, and basically, the reason for it [is] because we've upgraded the quality of the people who are involved in the management side quite significantly.

RC: We were quite amazed, I was at least, when we spoke with Riva Castleman, and she said, you know, these days the financial administrative staff far outweighs the curatorial staff, and that's obviously, I guess, what it takes these days.

JP: Yes. You go back seven years and it did then, too. But there's a better quality, I think, and it is. You look at the numbers and you have to be concerned that, is the tail wagging the dog. But it's getting to be a pretty big institution, and there is a management job that needs doing. And I think that's something that I think the staff and the curatorial staff is more sensitive to, more aware of.

CC: Well it's very much an established institution now, and obviously as opposed to a club or—

RC: A family even earlier.

JP: That's right, and you've got that sense from having spoken to them. It really was a—

CC: We've been to a couple of art galleries or little museums, even in the last few weeks, where everybody's all jammed into one room and somebody's typing here and somebody's typing there—

RC: 15 people.

CC: And that's the way it started but now it has obviously a great—you know, it has a role to play. And starting with *that* collection, actually; starting with your great aunt's [Lillie P. Bliss] collection.

RC: That really did change it from a place of a lot of activity in bringing in shows to establish themselves as, now they have something.

JP: Sure. It gave them an established collection. It also gave them the wherewithal to trade and—

RC: And also of course she set it up with the responsibility for them to raise enough money to take care of it.

JP: That's right; yes.

CC: That's an interesting episode, actually, how it wouldn't be given to them unless they could raise the additional money. And they really didn't raise the full million; [they raised \\$600,000](#) or whatever, but it was enough to—

JP: Right.

CC: I guess there was never any doubt though that it was going to serve a serious function, knowing the city and—

RC: Your aunt certainly believed, everybody believed so firmly in this.

JP: The whole concept of this type of public art; yes.

RC: Yes, that's really fabulous. And the unfortunate thing is, some people at the Museum, staff people, don't know who Alfred Barr is or who the founding women were.

JP: That's right.

RC: And that's one of the purposes of this film is to try to capture—

JP: To bring them here.

RC: Exactly, when they visit the Museum and then say, 'Gee, this is really quite an achievement.' And it's so much a part of our culture, and not only of New York City.

CC: We talked to Mrs. Rockefeller and we wanted to impress on her that one of the things we wanted to dispel is the notion that it's the Rockefeller museum, that it's all supported by two or three big families. That's just not the situation any more.

JP: No, and it can't be. I mean, number one, it's too big now, and number two, times have changed. And this of course—I think it was both an asset and a liability if you look back and have the perspective of time to see what happened. But you did have a few families providing all the support that it needed for a long time, and it got the reputation of having no problems because it was Rockefeller supported or whatever. And suddenly you wake up one morning and that support can't be there at the same relative level that it had been, and where do you go? And I think that's been part of what has been going on the last several years to try and break down those concepts. And it's one of the things that we have to do as we go forward is to broaden the base of the people who are involved in supporting the Museum, through a number of ways. It's not easy to do because you want to maintain the character of the Museum and you want to have the people with the right motives involved. At the same time, we have to

develop a broader constituency of patrons. And we're not alone in doing this. Obviously, everybody is.

RC: Right. Some people have said, regarding that, that the new set-up of the Museum will achieve that, certainly with each department fully being able to exhibit what they have.

JP: It's certainly going to help a great deal. You know, we open the doors and we're twice the size, and we can show—and so much of what—you're still showing a relatively small percentage of the total collections, but then, so much of the collection isn't really for show anyway. I mean, the Museum collects an awful lot of stuff that is intellectually fascinating but it's not necessarily—you think of all the prints and drawings and stuff that you have and you can't show and you don't need to show all of it all the time.

RC: Then other people bemoaned the fact that with the expansion, it's losing some of the intimacy or that character of the Museum; you could really go through it all in a day.

JP: Yes, that's probably not going to be possible any more.

RC: And somebody even said it, maybe it was Ivan Chermayeff, though he supports the idea that you have to grow, he said it's kind of becoming like a shopping mall, with the huge restaurants and the big two-story bookstore.

CC: I think he's just concerned that it becomes something like what's going on at the bottom of this building, that kind of—not that that's bad for—

RC: It's hard to say. Beaubourg was so successful in that way.

JP: Well sure, and when you compare it to that, it's not going to be anywhere near the same size, and it's not going to be the same size as the Met. But I think really, if you think about it, the Museum has grown. That was a fact. The Museum had grown before any decisions were made to go ahead and increase space. Just—you had the collection; you had a collection that was many times bigger than it had been originally. So that's a fact; it's just a question of how do you show it; how do you make it available.

CC: Bill Rubin says that a lot of the attention is paid to the thirties as a time of great acquisition, et cetera, but actually, he said, in the late forties and fifties, especially the fifties is when the collection of the Museum really started filling out. All these other people started coming in, getting involved, and he said, at that time it really became a job. And he also freely says he doesn't call it simply a repository, but he said that's really what we have to concentrate on. And that also came out that day that we talked to him, that article that came out a couple of days ago, so he was a little in the hot seat. But he said he knows what his function is. And he said that if he was to compete on an even level with every other museum in town to be contemporary, to compete with the alternative spaces and all that, he'd be just another head popping up out of the sand and trying to attract attention. And he said, the very fact that when he first came to New York there were maybe eight or 10 galleries, and now there are what, 200 or 600 galleries, at least a few hundred that are serious.

JP: 345, if I remember, galleries and museums in the city.

CC: It's just unbelievable. So it's not as if anyone's ignoring the art movements, and artists don't have a place to show. And so he said his mission is really one of excellence.

RC: And he really felt that in doing that, he's keeping up with the original purpose and mission of the Museum, and not trying to really be contemporary in the sense of keeping the pace with the galleries.

JP: People, I think—

CC: It's a false argument, really.

JP: Yes, there's this concept that the Museum at one point was doing nothing but serving as sort of an avant-garde gallery, when really, that's not the case.

CC: No.

JP: It never did that.

RC: That's really true because the art that Alfred Barr was showing was already 30 or 40 years out.

JP: Sure.

RC: It was just that the American public hadn't come to terms with it yet.

JP: That's right.

CC: Are you pretty happy with the expansion then? Do you think this is a very good sign in the right direction?

JP: I think it's—I think when we were analyzing whether we should do it or not and what the tradeoffs were, what we really seemed to be faced with was taking this step and assuming all the risks that go with it in order to continue to be able to have the Museum provide the full program that it now has available and to grow that program and to move ahead. Or to go forward on some kind of a really cut-back basis where you would have had to cut parts of the program out and really hunker down and become a Frick in the sense of just showing your collection and that's it. And we all felt, or certainly the strong consensus was, that we didn't want to do that. So I completely support it in the sense that it was a calculated risk to continue to be the kind of a place that it's always been, which is a dynamic, living kind of a place. Obviously, the whole thing is not without its risks. The expenses are going to go up. Expenses would have gone up anyway. What the relative performance will be based on [is] do you have a bigger place, therefore do you bring in proportionately more revenue in order to support it; it's a little hard to say. The projections say we will, and I think we probably will.

RC: Nobody's actually put it in those terms, though obviously, there always is a down side to these things. But nobody's really said that, and it's important for the public to also understand that you took a big risk again, and it's not just a fait accompli.

JP: Sure.

RC: Oh, you built the Tower, absolutely solid institutional—it's not a given. So you continued to take another risk and put yourselves out there, and that's good to hear, because it's all sewn up—

JP: Well there's no question it was a risk, but it was a—

RC: It's good to hear businessmen say [that]. People have this impression really that it's all sewn up and it's going to absolutely work, and there's no chance involved. But it's good for people to know that in the same spirit of "let's try this" because

we didn't want to back down on our original purpose, but nobody's really said it like that. How about in terms of your being a trustee in the direction of—? You kind of touched on it, being contemporary. You did say that you supported the expansion so that the Museum could continue to grow.

JP: Mm-hm.

RC: But grow in the sense of tapping into the current scene, or where do you think that all—? Because I know there's a discussion, there are lines slightly drawn, in terms of the Trustees' feelings about this. Being contemporary.

JP: This is a very broad one. This is a big topic. And I don't think it's easily handled in the sense of this kind of an interview. It really gets into—like you said, you couldn't do modern art in an hour.

CC: Yes.

JP: I think that maybe the best way to answer it from my point of view, given the choice of really becoming nothing more than a—cutting off your growth where it is and sticking with the collection as it existed and living with that, or trying to open things, taking a step that will give you certainly the opportunity to continue to grow and to show more of what you have already, I was very much in support of that approach. What it means in terms of the specifics of, are we contemporary or are we modern and what's the difference and what do you mean by that, and should we be a gallery showing—? I think there's a middle ground there. I'm probably not terribly in one camp or the other on a doctrine sort of way.

CC: I think there are also ways that you can split the question, because someone like Ivan Chermayeff, he mentioned that he doesn't want the place obviously to become a mausoleum, and he doesn't feel that's the case. He also is extremely concerned that it not be like a Bloomingdale's where it's all just a lot of fashionable stuff, and then it's down the next day; that kind of thing. And he said that his great emphasis is that he likes the idea that now that the expansion has occurred, there will be these large study centers where, for the first time, you'll actually be able to go and see photography, and see photography the day you go, and not in April or in whatever.



- JP: Yes, well I was going to go on to say that same sort of thing, I think that part of this expansion is just that. It isn't just showing more pictures. And it's enabling us to do more fully what's already being done. And I think there has to be a balance. We're certainly not saying we're not interested in contemporary art, but it will be an ongoing process of filling in the collection at the appropriate times.
- CC: That was one of the great missions from the earliest days was to not only—I mean, really, why establish these different divisions: photography, film, prints, et cetera, if you're not going to study them and exhibit them and use them.
- RC: And represent them fully.
- CC: Because I think that is something that most galleries—when you go to the Corcoran, or you go to the Whitney, they may have a film program, but nobody is studying it; it's not tied in with what's showing of the painting. And Bill Rubin was telling us that one of his ideas is fin-de-siècle Vienna, and that it's almost all in place except for a few Gustav Klimts. Well, if you think about what that could mean for the Museum, boy, you're not talking just a few pictures that are borrowed plus a few that are in the collection. You're talking about photographs and then a terrific film collection, and obviously architectural drawings and things like that. So it all sort of ties in.
- JP: This may become a sort of a structural issue, too, I mean, the question in terms of how do you structure your curatorial staff in order to cover all the bases? And so that, in a sense, becomes a management problem, which is something that, you know, is obviously, as time goes on, it's going to be dealt with.
- CC: Has the Museum totally changed from '73, '74 to now '83 in terms of its size and the dimension? When it opens next year, is it going to be a substantially different place in terms of its requirements for revenue and its amount of employees? Or is it really a reshaping that didn't totally—? What we're trying to get a fix on, I guess, is the amount of the risk or the amount of the gamble, or, how different is it going to be? If you were talking, even, to a member, let's say, because the PBS people who watch the thing, most of them have probably been to the Museum or if they haven't, they're about to go or they certainly know people who are members.

- JP: If you live in a house and you double the square footage of your house, you'll assume new expenses. It costs more to heat it. In the case of the Museum, you have a security problem, and so that's the area where the biggest people growth will take place.
- RC: In Security?
- JP: In terms of guards and that sort of thing. In terms of the curatorial growth, I don't think that will happen immediately. Over time, there will probably be some natural growth. But I think that immediately, the difference between the day you close the old one and the day you open the new one, where you immediately just to stay in business you have to incur additional expenses is the plant-related people, both security and maintenance. And then the plant-related expenses.
- CC: So it's a doubling in physical size, and then perhaps a quarter or a third more?
- JP: Yes, it's not necessarily a doubling because you have—not only do you get some economies of scale, but you also, we've built in much more advanced systems, such as [INAUDIBLE: 0:22:44] systems, security systems, and so on. So that you don't just double everything across the board.
- CC: I heard Bill Rubin saying to someone the other day, he was talking on the phone and he said, "Yes, we really could use a word processor down here." He said, "Well, Membership's got one and Development's got theirs and you'll be getting yours next," or whatever. [Laughing] So these things are all being worked on.
- JP: Sure.
- CC: I really only asked the question to get an idea of—and we've heard, I've heard, that that's about the case, but it is important, I think, for the audience to know or for us to know.
- JP: Yes, a much more sophisticated energy controls system and a tighter, more modern building. That old building had single-pane glass and some of the panes were broken and it wasn't built—it was built when [INAUDIBLE: 0:23:35] was cheap.
- CC: So it looks like an exciting—I mean, you enjoy your role there and you're pretty optimistic, then, for the future.

JP: Yes, I am, guardedly optimistic.

RC: I was going to say, you're kind of the voice of reason from being somebody who understands the implications.

JP: Sure. I think that we, as all institutions of our type, have a very tough fundraising job that's going to just go on and on and on. It looks as if we're headed in a direction where there's not going to be the kind of support there may have been. Tax laws have changed. The government doesn't provide the same kind of support as most European governments do, for example, to their art institutions. And that's not all bad, too, because you have a certain economy that way which you don't have if you become a government subsidized operation. But that's going to be a headache. I did want to mention somewhere along the line that I think one of the things about the Museum that is one of its strengths is a very active and hard-working board. There is more board involvement in the day-to-day activities of the Museum in this organization than you'll find in most.

CC: Well, we've talked to a number of people; it's really extraordinary. We spoke to Tom Carroll the other day who, in his plainspoken way, he was very good because he said he runs across people all the time who think modern means a little wacky and out there. And he said, those people, it divides a little bit. If you're modern and you're going to be different, and it's high quality, it's a quality of design, he said it's like the doorknob, you know. [As a] big business man, he knows that somebody designed that or designed this table and the whole environment we live in, so it's a great connection to it. And he sees that as great promise, and he likes the expansion very much, and he says, as far as he's concerned, internationally and with the people he knows, corporate people and all, that it makes a difference. And he said, the very fact that the Museum pulled itself up by its own bootstraps with this expansion program, he said that's incalculably invaluable because in the business community, like anybody, who respects anybody else who solves their own problems—

JP: Yes.

CC: Rather than coming in, hat in hand once again and saying, 'Do you want to help us out?' Here's somebody who said, well, what can we do ourselves, did it, and

now comes back maybe for exhibition help and other things that need support. But it makes a difference.

JP: And that, of course, is a trend. I think that the support from the corporate community, particularly through underwriting exhibitions, seems to be certainly a wave that's going on. And that's good.

CC: We're going to be seeing Frank Cary also and ask him about [INAUDIBLE: 0:26:36] and other people. And it'll be interesting to get people—see, we want the audience to know that—to break some of the myths about it and to see that actually these people exist and what the commitment really is, and why they feel this way.

RC: One thing that's important is that for instance, corporations do gladly come to support big exhibitions where they get some mileage out of their dollars. Then there are [other] shows [where] museums still need other, individual support, the membership support—

JP: That's right.

RC: —to cover the maybe not-so-popular, even as far as shows go, areas where, for instance, Riva Castleman was saying, there's lots of money for [Pablo] Picasso; people would line up to be able to support that. But if we want to do some new prints show, she said, we're still in a bind.

JP: Sure. And some of the more, lesser-known intellectually kind of oriented show—

RC: Esoteric, which the Museum really—

JP: Which has been our heritage.

RC: That's right. And even Marcia Tucker who runs the New Museum said that is their heritage, the Museum, and they still remain a scholarly, academic institution. A lot of museums have not maintained that profile.

CC: She really divided out between the two. She said, there's the aesthetic, and then there's the show business or the very corporate ones.

JP: One of the things that this expanded museum will hopefully permit us to do is to combine those a little bit. In other words, you can put on a blockbuster and at the

same time have two or three other things going on that appeal in the other direction.

RC: And that's the best way to get a public response.

JP: And one supports the other. Whereas, the way we were before, when you put on—well, the Picasso show [[Pablo Picasso: A Retrospective](#)] is maybe not a good example because it was so big, but any one of the major shows that we've had, really it takes over the whole museum. You have to end up taking down half of your permanent collection.

CC: Everything is swamped for six months.

JP: You don't see any photography. You don't see any design. You know? And so that changes. Plus the fact that we'll have such a much bigger—we'll be showing so much more of our permanent collection.

CC: We talked to John Szarkowski.

JP: He's great.

CC: And he's a very Will Rogers type. [Laughing] And he said it'll be nice because in a way, he says, not to take away from the other departments, but often times people come, they want to see photography, or they want to see film, and they go through all the other halls. Well now, if they want to come for this, they come for that and they get to see an actual show and get to see a few other things. And he's happy about that because it'll provide a whole—well, it's like a little museum within the Museum.

JP: That's right.

CC: And going right to that interest of the individual, rather than someone who goes to a museum, especially an Italian or a Frenchman [who] gets off the plane, comes to New York, one of the first places they go is the Modern. They step in and let's say they don't know what's on. And they go, "Oh, [Louise Bourgeois](#)," or "Oh, *Three Skyscrapers* [[Three New Skyscrapers](#)]." They might like that but it's a chance they take. Whereas now they'll be able to come in and—

JP: And there's the draw of the permanent collection which is so—let's face it, that's the crown jewel and it's going to continue to be.

- RC: Sure. And that's fine. Nobody has argued with that. [Laughter] Hands down, we've got the most.
- CC: Really what we're trying to do is to—I mean, it'll be, obviously, talking about the early days on, predominantly, I mean, a very affectionate portrait of the Museum. That's really the whole intention of it. But we also wanted to get a few people, just to get a little ideological debate, because even as someone like Beth Straus said, it's always good to be—you think you're a success or you know you're a success, but to be a little cautious and to be the first one to have a little doubt or the first one to be a little guarded about your success, and then call up those little things that you think you could better yourself on. Because if you do that and admit it yourself, then you've covered all the territory and nobody's going to turn it off and go, "Oh, well, but they didn't say..."
- RC: She almost voiced that with great success is also a big responsibility, that before you have to move, since everybody's looking at you—
- JP: Yes, well suddenly, you're a real live institution; you're not just a fledgling.
- RC: Yes, that's right. Then Mrs. [Blanchette] Rockefeller was saying, she looks around and obviously, the success of the Museum is seen in all the museums that follow. Formats now—everybody has a photography department and a film department. And she said, 'Every time, I'm glad about that, *but* we were first. That's us.'
- CC: Wants a little credit.
- RC: A mixed feeling which was a nice way to put it because it's really an important place.
- CC: Are there some people you could think of recommending that we might speak to? We've spoken to 40, 50 people, different trustees, et cetera.
- JP: Do you have Don Marron on your list?
- CC: Yes, we saw him.
- RC: Yes, we spoke to him.

CC: And he was very good, particularly for a very quick description of what happened with the Tower and the expansion. He explained very simply in layman's language as to what happened and why, and he gave a nice little chat on the necessity of doing something like that for the survivability and pulling up the bootstraps. And I think we want to have a little section in the film towards the end about that; two or three people talking, maybe yourself and maybe someone like Tom Carroll telling us what he told us, and one or two others, to amplify that. He was good. We talked to Walter Thayer also, who was kind of surprising because he seemed to be more conservative but then he is very interested in the latest art and he's a very curious person. He was also very supportive of the fact that the Museum did this on its own. And that was good.

JP: Aggie [Gund] Saalfeld; have you spoken to her?

CC: No.

RC: The name's come up but no, we haven't.

JP: She'll have some strong opinions on the modern versus contemporary.

RC: Have you ever seen Barbara Jakobson?

JP: Yes.

RC: Which camp does she—is she in support of?

CC: Barbara's still pretty contemporary, I think.

RC: Not Barbara but I meant Aggie.

JP: Aggie probably leans that way, too. [INAUDIBLE: 0:32:35] As I say, that may be a structural problem. Maybe you need a curator that focuses just on that in some way.

CC: It's a tough question.

RC: It is. Bill Rubin's response was a winning one, in my book, but then we saw Marcia Tucker who didn't really contradict that. In fact, she said, 'Fine. 20 years ago is really when the Museum stopped being contemporary, and that's fine and great.'

CC: In her mind.

RC: Look at all of the alternative spaces. Look at her museum.

JP: Yes.

CC: And I think what she means by that is, people who take every little chance, faddish—you don't even have to call it faddish, but any very, very late thing, the latest thing that comes in, and, is that the role of the Museum? In a vacuum, maybe.

JP: That's right. And look at the way the gallery world has developed.

RC: Oh, certainly.

JP: When the Museum was originally founded, there weren't any galleries. And so now you've got the galleries playing a role, and so the Museum has to evolve into playing a—there's got to be a balance between the two.

RC: Right.

CC: The Museum almost used to pick trends, whereas now, it's impossible for the Museum to do that. The galleries are doing it, and then even someone like a Leo Castelli or Sidney Janis, my god, by the time they get to that, they're already pretty well established. They've already worked themselves through various movements. We spoke to Leo Castelli, Sidney Janis, Pierre Matisse. They were all very good.

JP: Good; yes.

CC: Janis was very funny, too.

JP: Yes, he's—

CC: He pulled stuff out of his ashcan. We were talking about certain paintings, and he reached in and he pulled out one of those *Time/Life* History of Great Paintings, whatever, and he says, "Talking about paintings, now this picture, Alfred and I," did this or that, and it was [Henri] Matisse's "The Dance" [[Dance \(I\)](#)]. [Laughing] They were all these pictures that are in the Modern's collection, and he just pulled it out of the can and talked. [Laughing] These are all the sort of great pictures that everybody knows. It was wonderful that way.



JP: He's been terribly involved and supportive, obviously, with the Museum over the years.

CC: Yes.

RC: He just gave his collection to—

CC: He was very affectionate, very warm. We're going to be speaking to a couple of artists, not too many though, because we didn't want it to appear to be that someone was tooting their horn or whatever.

JP: Yes. Who are you going to [speak to]?

CC: Well, we tried to get through to Sol LeWitt, but—

RC: He's out of the country for a year, and also he's having a baby.

JP: What about Bob Motherwell?

RC: Bob Motherwell we will speak to. We're trying to reach [Robert] Rauschenberg, [Frank] Stella, Robert Ryman.

CC: Ansel Adams—

JP: Ansel Adams would be—

CC: —we're going to be calling. We're going to bring a few people in who aren't in New York. Beaumont Newhall—

JP: Right.

CC: —we're bringing in. I had a great conversation with him in New Mexico. He is terrific. And I think Ansel Adams might be good.

JP: He'd be terrific.

CC: We want to get, really, a lot of people who, you know, the place means an awful lot to them, and to have them say that. And someone like Ansel Adams would appear to be that kind of—

JP: Yes, very much so.

CC: In the Film Department, we're talking to Martin Scorsese, who was very interested in film preservation. We're even going to try to get through to Clint

Eastwood and Lillian Gish because—in a way, you know, you'd think, what's he doing in a movie like this? But that's all the better, really, because Mary Lea Bandy—we had a great chat with her, and Eileen Bowser. I think what they're doing, in terms of what you were saying, in terms of scholarship plus corporate, those two concerns, is terrific because they got Warner's and other companies coming in to contribute and to help with the contemporary studio pictures. And then of course they've got the scholarly group. Jay Leyda, we spoke to. And I think that's a great mix.

RC: Who was that first film—?

JP: And of course, you know, the Museum is so many museums within museums. If you look at what John Szarkowski is doing on the photography side, he clearly is very much involved in the contemporary scene, very much picking trends and so on.

CC: Some people would almost say that he created it.

JP: Yes. And I mean, there's a lot of criticism of him, which there has to be; he takes such a position. Everybody tends to look at the painting and sculpture side, but there's an awful lot else going on.

CC: Riva's group is—

RC: Just for somebody to say that—

JP: Arthur Drexler; have you spoken to Arthur?

CC: We're going to speak to him.

RC: We will be seeing him.

CC: But I'd say even, you know, Riva and John Szarkowski and Mary Lea Bandy, in their areas, they are like growth industries that people should want to invest in.

JP: Sure. And if you were to analyze the different sides of the Museum the way you analyze markets, painting and sculpture is a mature market at this point whereas some of these others, [like] photography, is in a growth phase. And it's been only very recently that you had a gallery showing photographs. This is sort of—painting has fallen off some, there's not as much going on and so there's still

very much of a role probably to be played by the Museum, and a role that's affordable. This is the other side.

CC: Riva mentioned that also. And Richard Oldenburg said, if you face facts, we've got five or six divisions like this, [where] if there's a fallow period in painting and sculpture for a while, look at photography and it'll take off. Let's say prints, not very exciting for a while, and then there's always going to be something very contemporary going on. And Mary Lea Bandy, it was like looking at a little movie studio of its own right in there; it's like MGM, UA, or something. The whole thing was so exciting. She was very, very hot. It was very nice. And then we've spoken to a number of critics, Robert Hughes of the *Times*; he was great, a lot of fun. He was a real dyed-in-the-wool modernist—he wants to be on—and he was really very rah-rah; it was terrific. And he was interesting. He said that his opinion is, a lot of the contemporary scene has almost gotten out of hand in terms of the attention paid and the one-man show when you're 21, and all of that. He said it's just getting to be much too much on the surface. He called West Broadway a street of shame. [Laughter]

JP: Well, you know, the other side is, on the gallery scene there's a heck of a—you know, the dollar is driving a lot of what's going on and there's a strong marketing aspect to it all and giving people what you think they want. And the Museum isn't going to do that.

CC: And Lawrence Alloway was very interesting. He evoked a little bit [of the] earlier times; he's very keen on the Museum. It'll be a nice mix of people, really. What we try to get is—we're going to try to get a whole sampling like that, and then try to get a couple of Europeans or some foreigners, particularly [Dominique] Bozo from the Beaubourg, someone like that.

RC: He did the Picasso show [*Pablo Picasso: A Retrospective*]. Pontus Hultén it would be interesting to talk to.

CC: Maybe Pontus Hultén or Sir Roland Penrose, maybe we could get hold of a couple of people like that.

JP: That's good.

CC: We just want to get a little international because, in the end—

RC: Well, because it is international. That whole aspect needs to be—

CC: It is international and the film will hopefully be playing in England and France and Italy. You want to get a sense that everybody's involved. But I think everyone will feel the affection for the Museum from the early days, so we're counting on that. I think one would have to be a real stiff not to react to that; it's really pretty extraordinary.

JP: You're going to see Joanne Stern, you say?

CC: Yes.

RC: Tomorrow.

JP: She may have some suggestions on your international side, too.

CC: Okay.

RC: Right. We're seeing Mr. [Gianluigi] Gabetti [INAUDIBLE: 0:40:09].

JP: Okay.

RC: They're part of the International Council.

JP: There are a number of distinguished people on the International Council—

RC: Right.

JP: Some of whom—

RC: There's even a waiting list to get on that; it's just amazing.

JP: Right. And that's something that, some of those people you might want to consider.

RC: Good.

CC: We also were speaking to a couple of younger—David Rockefeller, Jr., David Rockefeller himself, a few others that we—William Paley.

JP: Yes, okay; I'd assumed that you'd be seeing Bill.

RC: We're pretty well covered, I think, with the representation of trustees.

CC: What we wanted to do was meet a lot of people initially, just to see what they had to say, what they wanted to emphasize, and what questions they would answer and how they would answer them. Then come back. And we plan to be filming most of the interviews in late April, May, and part of June, and then spend—

JP: Ron Lauder; have you got him on your list?

CC: No.

RC: No.

JP: He might be somebody. He's another one of the younger group who has, I think, a very sincere interest in [INAUDIBLE: 0:41:27].

RC: Okay. His name has come up.

CC: It's as if, when we hear a name three or four times, then we say—

JP: It doesn't hurt to, in this phase, in the discovery phase, if you will, of touching as many bases. Then you've got to weave people together so that you get the right mix.

RC: Exactly; yes.

CC: We also wanted to cover each of the Departments to some extent. Obviously, Philip Johnson and Arthur Drexler, and one or two others can speak to that. And photography.

JP: Well, your problem isn't going to be finding enough people. [Laughter]

RC: That's true.

CC: It's nice, too, because some we'll be able to repeat very well. Someone like Philip could come in and he could maybe be the first person to say anything in the film from the early stages talking about what the atmosphere was like, whatever; then also come back very later on saying why he thinks the Museum—and that's going to be very nice. You'll develop affection for the actual spokespeople as you go along, too, which will be very nice. And then we'll interweave photographs and paintings when appropriate, but not just to show them because obviously, that would be—

JP: You can't.

RC: Oh no; it's a crime to do that. And also, they should be as a lure to come to the Museum.

JP: Right.

CC: We'll really use them as a story. If Sidney Janis tells a particular story about an acquisition, fine. Or if Bill Rubin talks about Picasso or a particular thing he might be interested in about Picasso, we might show two or three of those. If Szarkowski, like he did, he jumped out of his seat and started comparing two [Eugène] Atgets and how one's the negative image of the other, and look at this and that, and then Atget was ignored by the French but we picked up on him, and that might be interesting just to show two or three.

JP: You ought to put this on videotape and sell it through the Museum store.

CC: Well that's probably one of the things—

RC: The Museum will do.

CC: It would be a good idea.

RC: You probably know, Luisa Kreisberg in Public Information, that's where the idea came from.

JP: Yes.

RC: And that's how we decided to put it on a film, but that's a good marketing idea.

CC: We really want it to be kind of a valentine to the Museum, or at least a little bit of a background so that when that person walks in and pays his three dollars next spring, they know a little bit more about the Museum than they might otherwise, and they've dispelled the Rockefeller myth to some extent; they've dispelled the fact that it's just an institution, that they're not—that they're too [INAUDIBLE: 0:43:50].

JP: It's also potentially a very good fundraising tool.

CC: Oh sure.

RC: Sure. I'm sure that's also another reason—

CC: Also, there'll be an awful lot of interesting people in it. That's what we want to do. You see, rather than—it would be easy enough to interview you and 60 other people then get a narrator to write a story, but how dull to have someone say that. Why not have it from you and Philip Johnson and Mrs. Rockefeller and Sol Lewitt or whatever, or Clint Eastwood. Then you really get a rich tapestry.

RC: What do all of these people have in common? [Laughter]

JP: Yes.

CC: What *do* they all have in common? So, well, thanks for chatting with us.

RC: Thank you for your help with this.

JP: Okay.

**END OF INTERVIEW at 0:44:24**