

DAVID HOFFMAN MOMA HISTORY INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW WITH: ELIZABETH STRAUS (ES)
INTERVIEWERS: CARL COLBY (CC); RUTH CUMMINGS (RC)
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CC: Monroe [Wheeler] was wonderful because he gave us a nice feeling for those earlier days, and amplified by Edward Warburg and others. What do you think it was that impelled Mrs. John Rockefeller [Blanchette], the one we spoke to this morning, to take on that burden and to—?

ES: Well, I think she'd become very interested in the Museum and she wasn't a trustee yet, I don't believe, and the trustees asked her to—you know, after the hiatus between the first sort of Junior group that became trustees, there was a hiatus, and they felt again, I believe, that they wanted to become in touch with what the group of young people were doing and thinking and could be helpful to the Museum. And so she took it on. Oh, it was the most fun I've ever had in my whole life.

RC: What were those days like, and what period of art were you entering into?

ES: Well, it was just at the beginning of Dorothy Miller's shows, you know, of the 10 Americans, the five Americans, whatever they were. It was in the evangelical stage. [Laughing] And for us, the institution was small and personal, and we knew *all* the staff very well. And we really tried to do things that would be helpful for the Museum.

RC: What were some of the things that you launched?

ES: Well, we launched the Art Lending Service and it was one of the first in the country. It was a model for other museums. And it was very important in those days when people were a little timid about collecting modern art, and they felt if things you can look at had been gathered together by a group of people that knew a little bit about modern art, that it made them feel reassured. It was a

wonderful service for the members. And then we organized lecture series, and we even organized small shows like [Young American Printmakers](#) and a show of American drawing. And then when—there was a great show [[Textiles and Ornamental Arts of India](#)] that Monroe was curator of, of Indian arts and artifacts and design, and we did a lot of very interesting peripheral work [[Living Arts of India](#)] around it. We brought over the first Indian music, not Ravi Shankar but a marvelous group with Chatur Lal and great Indian musicians. And we brought over the first Indian dancers. And, you know, the first Satyajit Ray [film], the first Indian films; you know those great films. And, you know, it was all new, and we showed them in the auditorium. And we all were oh so excited over what we were doing, you know.

RC: Who were your co-members of that?

ES: I think, Walter Bareiss became chairman after Mrs. Rockefeller became a trustee. He became chairman, and a wonderful woman named Ann Jones, Mrs. E. Powis Jones. And later on—well, there were a whole group of people, many of whom are now trustees.

RC: Any young Turks among the group? And were you all pretty much in agreement of the direction of art and what shows to mount and what your interests were? Or were there a lot of disparate views?

ES: Oh, we were all very enthusiastic. I won't say we all saw—some of us were more experienced than others, and some of us were interested in architecture, and some in design, and some in painting. So we had our different interests, but we weren't young Turks in the sense that we were all very enthusiastic about what the Museum was doing. And we all adored Alfred [Barr] and René [d'Harnoncourt].

RC: Could you describe, in your words, who Alfred was and what was so special about him? Everybody has the fondest memories of Alfred. It's a big topic, I know, because he was a big man.

ES: That's hard to do because he was really so many people and such a special person. But I do remember one marvelous time when Alfred and I went out to Mrs. [Joan Whitney] Payson's for lunch. She wanted the Museum to mount a

small show in a gallery in Old Westbury. And since she was a very large supporter and a major trustee, we thought we should do that. And Alfred and I went out for lunch, on Long Island, and sat outside on the terrace with her. And all of a sudden Alfred started talking about baseball. I hadn't a clue that he knew anything about baseball. He knew the score, of every player, he knew everything. And pretty soon the telephone rang, and Mrs. Payson picked up the phone, and she said, "Oh yes? Oh, wonderful!" And she had just bought the Mets. [Laughter] You know, it was just so marvelous! It was a totally different—I never knew whether Alfred had always known about baseball, or whether he just knew about baseball that day. [Laughter] It was just one of those marvelous, marvelous occasions. [Laughing]

RC: So he really had a golden touch with—

ES: Oh yes, he did, and he was such a sensitive, wonderful man. And you know, I'm sure they've told you that at the end of the hall that led to his office, at the end of the corridor there was almost always one, some painting leaning against the wall, that he'd particularly fallen in love with. And, you know, people would come and go, and they'd look at the picture, you know, and it usually ended up in the collection. [Laughter]

RC: It's like a very unsubtle hint, like, this is what I'd like for—

ES: Yes, yes, it was marvelous. And René was an equally marvelous [INAUDIBLE: 0:06:31]. You know, there's that great art nouveau desk in the design collection; that was his desk, a fine, beautiful thing. And he used to just loom up behind it.

CC: When did you begin the International Program?

ES: I didn't begin that. That was a gamble put on by Mrs. Parkinson and Mrs. Rockefeller. And by—

CC: Did you help? You worked on the International—

ES: Oh yes, I was—I succeeded Mrs. Parkinson as chairman.

CC: We met with her a couple of weeks ago; she was wonderful, very charming.

ES: Yes, she's very wonderful. And, when she became—I guess it was [that] she had to stop because she became President of the Museum, and so I succeeded her as head of the International Council.

CC: And now it's quite extraordinary; isn't it?

ES: Yes, it's a marvelous organization.

CC: 23 countries.

RC: A waiting list for people to be able to get in. That's so amazing.

ES: Oh yes. Well, it grew a lot.

CC: We plan to try to have the film travel and be on English, French, German, and Italian television all [INAUDIBLE: 0:07:46] can get—

ES: You should get a lot of material then from Joanne Stern.

RC: We'll be seeing her; right. Now as you're talking about the activities, I'm getting a feeling from you of the closeness or the clubbiness of the organization, even though at the time you were there—well, you did say it was small.

ES: It was small. It's become big almost since René's death, there's been this great enlargement and expansion.

RC: So the feeling that you were all together in this mission doing something wonderful that you all believed in—

ES: It was marvelous, yes.

RC: —was maintained.

ES: And it was all very—I won't say primitive, but informal, you know, because there weren't that many of us. And we, even in the International Council, I can remember the first trip, I took the International Council around South America, and we didn't even have a travel agent; we did it all ourselves. And I only lost one member. [Laughter] But you know, we just—you know we weren't very experienced.

CC: There must have been a lot of curiosity there with these countries for what was going on here with this Museum, wanting to imitate the Museum or wanting to create something of their own.

ES: Yes, well, it's always stood for quality. You know? And it still does, I think.

RC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

CC: Are you quite happy about the expansion and the new building?

ES: Well, I am, although you know, it's bewildering, and you don't know what [or] where it's going to lead. And when an institution goes from a small institution to a big institution, it's bound to gain and bound to lose.

CC: So it might lose some of the intimacy that made it so charming?

ES: That's right.

CC: And it has great loyal—there are great loyal soldiers out there. A lot of critics we've talked to and Paul Goldberger of the *Times*; Robert Hughes, *Time* magazine; Lawrence Alloway, a number of people have—whatever minor criticism they may have, it's like returning home for them.

ES: Well, that's right, and you know, I've been Chairman of Membership for many years, and we've always felt sort of like an extended family, and tried to—well, I remember, as a girl, becoming an out-of-town membership member before the Museum—really, [before] I'd never been to New York. [Phone rings] Would you excuse me? I'd better answer that. [Tape break at 0:10:15]

RC: As a girl, your first contact [with the Museum] was as a non-resident.

ES: Oh, well, yes, you know, I lived in San Francisco, and all the publications you'd get, it was just like an exciting vision into a different—a new world, so to speak. And I think that a lot of members have always felt that way. And we value our members very highly.

CC: As the chairman of the membership, how do you perceive the membership to be? Do you have to increase your membership now that the Museum's expanded, or do you—? You're offering them an awful lot of services now that you didn't use to.

ES: Yes, we do. And we had an all-time high at the time of the Picasso show [[Pablo Picasso: A Retrospective](#)]. But now it's going to be—you have to be very loyal to stick with us while we build, you know. But I think after the new building is open, everybody who's dropped off will come back.

CC: Well, you offer an awful lot that other museums—I don't think it's simple boasting, either. Other people have film programs and other people have photography shows, but that's really only an imitation of MoMA.

ES: Yes.

CC: You have restaurants, you have—I mean, it's a whole ambience that.

ES: Well, it's kind of—yes, it's kind of fun.

CC: And you could literally spend the whole day there.

RC: Mrs. Rockefeller said you could just come and spend the day.

ES: Yes you can, really, and I think the new restaurants are going to be very nice. That's the only new part that I really know about, and I think they're going to be very used. [Laughing]

RC: How did the Trustees work as a group, then, in planning this new wing? Obviously, the financial structure and so forth was helped along by Donald Marron, we understand.

ES: Mm-hm.

RC: But, did you all add into this, once it became a real scheme?

ES: Well, there are all different committees working on different aspects of it, you know, and that the financial aspects of it I certainly—it was the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee who really worked on that.

RC: But even in this—I mean, we came to understand, it's a very creative venture in itself.

ES: It is.

RC: I mean, to have come up with this structure.

ES: I think that Mrs. Rockefeller and Mr. David Rockefeller could probably tell you how that financing idea which was so original came to happen. Because it really was a very original idea; selling the air rights and building the tower, and then working with the city so that it's in a way, a form of city subsidy, although the city isn't out any money.

CC: Well, you're very dependent on the membership though, probably even more so than, like, the Metropolitan and all, because you're a private institution.

ES: Oh yes, we are, because we're a private institution and our members are a *very* important source of revenue for us.

CC: Is it—about what percentage, would you say, out of the total?

ES: I couldn't tell you in today's budget. I'd have to look at—

CC: But it is very, very important.

ES: Yes, it's very important.

CC: So you almost have to—I mean, you're very conscious, obviously, of the membership.

ES: Yes, and also, I think we still are a little bit evangelical, you know. [Laughing] And we feel that if anybody's interested in modern art, we'd like them to be a member.

CC: I think that's really what makes the Museum so special, is that very evangelical factor. From the earliest days, the missionary zeal of Alfred—

ES: Yes.

CC: And other people supporting them.

ES: That's right.

CC: It's as if he was a high priest of some sort.

ES: Well, he rather was, you know. And he had that sort of almost priestly manner, you know. His eyes would glow [laughing] and he was very ascetic and New England, you know, and quiet. And René was very outgoing and aristocratic and Austrian, and they were an amazing counterpoint to each other. And the staff

has really all been personal friends of ours. We have a real feeling, at least I have had a personal feeling of relationship, even today.

CC: Which groups do you particularly—are you particularly interested in any of the departments?

ES: I'm on the committee on drawings and I'm very interested in that, and also in prints.

CC: We spoke to John Elderfield.

RC: And Riva Castleman.

ES: Yes, and Riva, and Bunny [Berenice Rose]—have you talked to Bunny yet? Who is also in the Department there.

CC: No.

ES: Bunny Rose [INAUDIBLE: 0:15:00].

RC: We, of course, were aware in speaking to curators, that, as well as you're doing in other areas to keep the Museum going and growing, it's hard for some of the special shows that they'd like to do, that aren't the big Picasso shows, the blockbuster shows. As a trustee, do you have any feelings about that?

ES: Oh well, I, of course, I would like to not have to make blockbusters, you know. I would love it if we were economically situated so that we didn't have to have blockbusters, because it involves a lot of bally-hoo, in a way, and a lot of promotion and all that, that sometimes you wonder whether the people who go go because they feel they're seeing a hit movie or whether they're really looking quietly at the beautiful things or the interesting.

RC: That really is a kind of a dilemma because we spoke with, on the one hand, Jack Limpert, who said who you compete with is not the Metropolitan, not the Guggenheim, but with Bloomingdales, with hit movies, with—

ES: Yes.

RC: You're a big show in town.

CC: For less of an admission charge than the others. [Laughing]

RC: [Laughing] That's right.

ES: Well, that's the true thing about blockbusters. And they also are the sort of thing that corporations like to support, that you can get funding for, in many ways, much more easily than—

CC: [Projects](#) or—

ES: Projects or a minor, small show that is more scholarly. And that is a dilemma.

RC: But your personal feeling or your opinion—

ES: My personal feeling is, of course, I like the small shows.

RC: And how about the issue of being more contemporary; or are you satisfied with where the Museum is?

ES: No, I'd like to see it be more contemporary.

RC: Do you have other trustee members that agree with you there?

ES: Oh yes. Oh yes. Well, there isn't a tension between those who want to be more academic, modern academic and more progressive. But I would *a/ways* like to see us—I don't feel because we're so big that we have the same relationship with the artists nowadays that we used to when I was young. And maybe that's because they're different artists and they have a different relationship. It may not be our fault, you know, but I feel that there was a closeness there to the actual artists, when people came from Europe and the Museum would always have a little kind of reception for somebody like [René] Magritte or [Joan] Miró, or something like that. That doesn't happen so much. Those old masters, so to speak, are gone, and the new people are different, I'm sure, and have a different relationship. But I miss that.

CC: Yes, and also being contemporary really is the life blood of The Museum of Modern Art. I think people—

ES: Oh yes, it's got to be. But also, it doesn't have to be faddish.

RC: Right.

CC: So it's a tough line, really.

ES: Yes, that's right.

RC: It's a very fine line.

CC: Does a lot of that fall onto Bill Rubin's shoulders, then, and onto Kynaston McShine and Elderfield, I mean, to draw—to be on both sides of the line, really?

ES: I think it's a matter of the curators. I think the Trustees follow the lead of the curators.

RC: Some people have said—well, certain critics, Robert Hughes and Lawrence Alloway, have been very content with obviously the fabulous collection that the Modern has, and in one sense say, that's fine. The first 50 years of the century, there's nothing better anywhere; they did it; it's there; they should just keep, as Rubin I guess is trying to do, always fill in holes and get the best pieces to represent those first 50 years.

ES: Yes.

RC: But then there are other people like Kynaston who, I guess, his job is to push out there.

ES: I think it's—this is purely personal. I think one of the most frightening things is to be a success, you know, and it makes you very careful about moving forward.

CC: I think that's a very apt thing to say.

RC: That's a good quote.

CC: It's a very apt thing for the film to say, too, because I was telling, well, like, Mrs. Rockefeller today, I had to mention to her that to the general public, the people who go to the Museum on a daily basis but don't think much of it might think, well, here's my three dollars but I guess the Rockefellers are paying for the rest, that it's all supported. Well, that's not true.

ES: That's not true.

RC: We must bring that point out.

CC: And you have to redress it and tell people the truth of it all.

ES: Yes.

CC: And I think for the Museum in a sense, speaking to itself through the film or whatever, for it to say that's not the way it is any more, we have to depend on others, we have become a much more public institution. Even though we're privately supported we're a public group.

ES: Yes.

CC: I think that also holds true with what you just said, that you have to be—

ES: Well, when you have done things successfully like that, it makes you very cautious, you know, and sometimes, I feel, unduly cautious. But I know it's only natural. [Laughing]

RC: Because people really do look to you as—

CC: We almost feel that the battle's been won and now you're rest[ing] on the laurels.

ES: Well you know—well, there are certain things as I can remember, years and years ago, once a year we'd have a design show called Useful Objects Under \$5 [[*Useful Household Objects under \\$5.00*](#)]. Can you imagine!

CC: Ash trays and—

ES: Yes, but no, beautiful things, you know, and everybody would go, and it was very interesting. Well now the Merchandise Mart, all of that, it became outdated.

CC: Mm-hm; sure. And good design is really everywhere now.

ES: And good design is everywhere. Therefore, you have to keep finding a new good design and a new way, and it isn't always the old way that works any more.

CC: True; that's true. It's a tough—one of the critics, Lawrence Alloway, said that in the beginning, modernism, in its evangelical role, it really was like a brave new world—

ES: Yes.

CC: Saying, this is the way we shall live, just as you particularly have, even the way you live here, I mean, the design of it is very modern; it's very interesting. It's a new way of presenting things. But as you go along, as you go through the years, you run the danger of it becoming elitist or very narrow focused—

ES: Yes, that's right.

CC: That only this is what—and then you lose—

ES: And then of course, artists are not always, you know, they represent—really, they say that they're a generation ahead in their perception of what the world is, what's happening to the world. And sometimes that isn't altogether pleasant; you know?

CC: [Laughing] No.

ES: And it's difficult to show.

RC: And the other thing that seems to have happened with the Museum's help is that now people may have lost some of their criticisms or their judgments because everything is—it's so vogue to accept modern art that you're afraid to—

CC: It's like a sacred cow a little bit.

ES: Yes, just like the emperor's new clothes. [Laughing] You know. And you've got to continue to be critical if you don't think it's good.

CC: We spoke to the film scholar Jay Leyda a few days ago.

ES: Yes.

CC: And he said he remembers the earliest days when he was in the Film Department, people would actually, they'd buy their ticket at the front door and they'd feel that that entitled them to see everything. Well, it did, and they would go into the galleries and hoot about the paintings, then they'd go in to see the films that he was presenting and hoot about those.

ES: Yes.

CC: And it's hard to believe that people—

ES: They were *horrified*, absolutely horrified.

CC: Shouting at the screen. Do you remember any of that?

RC: Do you have recollections of the—? Do you have any anecdotes?

ES: No, I don't have any anecdotes, but I can remember.

CC: You remember the general feeling?

ES: Well, I remember the general—you know, the people that you'd invite for dinner, if you had something on your walls, like a Morris Louis, for instance, and they'd say "Not for me," you know; you're a little crazy. [Laughter] You know. And of course, it's become classic.

CC: Sure. So you and well certainly Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and Mrs. John Rockefeller—

RC: And Eddie Warburg and all of you were brave, brave—

CC: And lots of them—it must have been almost constant. Eddie Warburg said that—

ES: Oh he's so wonderful. [Laughter] Isn't he funny? Aaah.

RC: He did a great impersonation, backed up by your description, of Alfred Barr. He actually did the face, with the glasses on the bridge of his nose.

ES: Well I hope you're going to talk to Lincoln Kirstein, too.

CC: We did speak to him. He was very much, you know, the emperor's clothes, and he was very angry, in a way. But he's quite brilliant though.

ES: He's brilliant, and of course he was very—he's outgrown that particular period in his life. But he was very influential, he and Eddie Warburg. And we were all—they were all involved; that was before my time, but they were all involved in the ballet. You know, it was all of a piece, you know. They were trying to present new ballet, new music, new art.

CC: I remember when all of that was supposed to be part of The Museum of Modern Art, the ballet or the dance collection [[Dance Archives](#)] and certain things.

ES: Yes, all of that, yes.

CC: It's really extraordinary, if you think about it.

ES: Yes, and yet it was so small. [Laughing]

RC: Yes, it is amazing.

CC: And some of them have become such runaway successes, the Photography Department, for instance.

ES: Yes, that's marvelous. Then, of course, it was just really—just in its infancy.

RC: So that has come of age, as has the architecture now.

ES: Yes.

CC: We spoke to Beaumont Newhall. He was wonderful. I spoke to him in New Mexico and we're going to bring him to New York to interview him.

ES: Oh, he's marvelous.

CC: He's terrific. He really.

ES: I bought my first picture, my first picture from [Alfred] Stieglitz.

RC: Oh my.

CC: Really?

RC: At 291?

ES: At the American Place, yes. Before I'd even got on the Junior Council. Yes, and I'll never forget it; it was just wonderful.

RC: So how did you become hooked up with all the people?

ES: I don't know how Mrs. Rockefeller—

RC: I think she said that Lincoln suggested that you would be wonderful to kick off the Junior Advisory.

ES: Lincoln, yes. And so I just joined the Council and we all worked together.

RC: But you had been living—did you consider yourself part of the art community then? You had been living—

ES: Well I'd only—it was right after the War. I was just busy having a baby. [Laughing] You know. And I didn't really think of what community I belonged to. I was very much surprised. And of course I was delighted because it was wonderful.

CC: It must have been terrific.

ES: Yes, it was just wonderful.

CC: And that was just when the Museum was starting to expand a little bit, but I mean, it was just going into the new building. Well, it wasn't so big yet.

ES: Oh no, it was small. I remember they had in the Garden, they had a sort of a little pavilion where they'd serve lunch in the summer, you know, run by a marvelous Greek. [Laughing] And we'd go out there and have food. And then the [Members Lounge](#) was—you may have seen a picture. You should look at the pictures that Jim Snyder has in his office. There are some wonderful ones of the early Members Lounge, you know. And it was—people would go and have tea, you know, with maids serving tea [laughing] and sit around and talk. It was all very, very different and small and delightful.

RC: And when the artists—and you were around, when the émigré artists began to arrive from the War—

ES: Oh yes.

RC: And the Museum just—there was a committee to bring over artists.

ES: I wasn't involved.

RC: You weren't involved in that. But you do remember the Museum in a way hosting to the—?

CC: We—remember, the receptions—

ES: Oh.

RC: Magritte, and you mentioned artists.

ES: Oh yes, I'll never forget the reception for Magritte, because I went up and said to him in halting French, you know, how much I admired his painting. And he said, "Madame, je ne suis pas peintre; je suis philosophe." And I will never forget it. [Laughing] And wonderful [Alberto] Giacometti; I remember a marvelous reception for him in the Garden. And Miró; Miró came to my house for dinner; I'll never forget. What a lovely man.

RC: At this time, was the public at all involved in these things? Or was it still the extended family of the Museum, the staff and trustees and—?

ES: Oh, and collectors.

RC: And collectors. What about the relationship between the Museum and collectors at that stage of the game, and what it is now? Would you be able to comment on if it's changed, or—?

ES: Well, there are just more of everything now. [Laughing] In that day, if somebody was interested in collecting, we mostly knew about them, you know. It wasn't such a general thing.

CC: We spoke to Sidney Janis, for instance, and he was very interesting. What about his commitment to the Museum?

ES: Yes. Well, they have tried to set the quality.

CC: Mm-hm, I would say.

ES: Yes. And I don't know; I think in all of the departments, Architecture and Design—

CC: It's been very helpful to speak to you about it, because particularly, for the present day, it gives—I mean, you have enough sense, really, to say that we know we're a success up until this point. I have your cautious—you're a bit cautious about projecting for the future as to whether that success would continue. So, you know that you have to serve the membership, and you know you have to keep agile.

ES: Yes. I think it's hard on the curators because in some ways, being presented or shown by the Museum is sort of like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval, and that's what makes you all the more cautious in exploring new things.

CC: Sure.

ES: Because you don't—you're trapped if you give—you have to be thoughtful, very thoughtful, and you can't be quite as casual.

CC: Do you think it'll be—? it's one thing to remember that Alfred Barr said, well, if one in 10 things ends up pretty good, then we've done well. Well, nobody—those aren't the averages most people use, you know.

RC: Not today; it's so expensive.

CC: And you can't really very well do that now.

ES: No, you can't do that.

CC: You can't buy pictures for \$10.

ES: Well, think of what the Print—think of what Riva has done. Think of the Print Department.

CC: That's extraordinary.

ES: You know, they've got that *explosion* in prints because it's a less expensive medium and it's become bigger and stronger and better, you know, so that now print collecting, which was very rare, has now become—

RC: It's having its time.

ES: Yes. I know my children who can't afford to buy oils—

CC: Exactly.

ES: —buy wonderful prints.

RC: Sure.

ES: You know.

CC: It's a very good way to get started—

ES: Yes.

CC: Because, it used to be—

ES: And of course, in the Art Lending Service, in those days—you know, I used to buy things from the Art Lending Service all the time for, you know, a few hundred dollars.

RC: It's wonderful. I got a great deal on a Rosemarie Castoro from there.

ES: Yes, that's right.

CC: And John Szarkowski told us that when he was at the University of Wisconsin as a student, the traveling shows, for instance, would come through. And the crates would just arrive at the student union. They'd open them up, and there'd be these Giacometti's and things. [Laughing]

ES: Yes.

RC: [Laughing] No insurance, no guards, no nothing.

CC: Well, I mean, it was taken care of, but it was all very clubby and very—

ES: Yes, very simple. Yes. Well, uh, I don't know what else I can say. I wish I could say something about the International Council, except that it's the most wonderful network that I've ever known.

CC: Yes, no, it sounds that way.

ES: I mean, wherever you go in the world, there is a member who is a real collector.

RC: It's really the most international organization that exists.

CC: I think that keeps the interest up also, internationally, for the Museum and for modern art.

ES: Yes, and it keeps us—

CC: In touch with—

ES: Now, when we have our meetings in the fall, and we have different committees: one on Europe, and one on Asia, and one on Latin America, our members most often are asked to report what's going on in their countries. And this is something relatively new that's just happened in the last couple of years. And, they take this very seriously, and they will prepare a written report and get up and say, 'This artist, and this artist, is exciting,' and 'We've had this show and this show,' and 'Everybody's upset about this and this that's happening.' And it's just fascinating.

CC: You're getting cultural reports from around the world.

ES: Yes, we are, you know. For a long time, it was going the other direction. But now it's really very interesting for the other members and the curators to hear them describe what the scene is in Switzerland or Italy or Japan or wherever.

CC: People like Leo Castelli told us that it used to be—he originally came here wanting to sell European pictures to Americans. And then, he suddenly was caught up with selling American pictures to Americans, and then American pictures to Europeans.

ES: Yes.

CC: And then he said, finally, now, it's coming around, 25 years later, to a bit of what he came here originally for, but unexpectedly, obviously.

ES: Well, there was a huge—I mean, there are huge collections of modern American art in Germany and in many places in Europe. And yes, and it's very interesting.

CC: When—you'll be going [away] in the last part of, the last two weeks of April, or—?

ES: But I'm going Monday.

CC: Oh, you're going Monday; for two months? Three months?

ES: For three months.

CC: You'll be here in the end of June?

ES: Yes, I'll be back the sixth of June.

RC: We'll take note of that because that's when we'll get to you.

CC: Okay, well, maybe we'll mark you down for something in June, possibly. What we were thinking of doing is, we're going to compile a list of, or we already are, of who we would be filming, if it's acceptable, and when. And we spoke to Mrs. Rockefeller, and we'll probably try to get her before she goes on, before she meets with you in late April. But what we plan to do is to stagger it so that we interview a number of people, and then take a week off and look at what we have, and then go—because we're going to concentrate initially on those first 10 years.

ES: Yes, you should, while the people to talk about it are still around.

CC: Right. Well, someone like Monroe, who is just wonderful—

RC: It's a really wonderful evocation of those times.

ES: Oh, he's just so marvelous. And some of the things he printed when he was head of Publications, were just so beautiful.

CC: I think he'll be quite—he'll be very good. He also is a very good raconteur who can tell—

ES: Yes, he has wonderful stories.

CC: He really can express—

ES: And he knew everybody.

CC: It sounds that way; he really did.

ES: I think he's kept a diary all his life and he doesn't forget anything.

RC: No, he really doesn't. He'd make a side remark and then come right back to the very point where he had left off. It's great. I wish I had that recall.

ES: Yes, yes.

CC: We hope that he'll be—because even with a cast of 20 or 30 people talking, there'll be certain characters who will reappear.

RC: Will reappear, as he said.

ES: Well, he should. He's [INAUDIBLE: 0:34:39] through the whole thing. Because, I guess he's the last of the great ones. You know? I mean, Alfred and René are gone, and Monroe was the third.

CC: Philip Johnson, we're going to speak to him.

ES: Oh yes, well he'll be great fun.

CC: Yes, he's a lot of fun. Can you think of anyone in particular who might amplify the Rockefeller side of the story, but more Abby Rockefeller? Who would still be—

ES: Oh, I think you should ask David Rockefeller.

CC: I'll ask him, then.

ES: Because you know, he was very close to his mother. Although he was a young boy when all of this happened, it was a very—I think he could probably give you a very intimate point of view on her, you know.

RC: Yes, that's great, because wow, what a special lady she was.

CC: And also, Monroe spoke very well of her and talked about when they would have dinners together and—

ES: Oh she must have been a lovely, lovely person. Everyone loved her. And I wonder about tracking down the other founding ladies.

CC: Well, we talked to Eliza Parkinson.

RC: We talked to Mrs. Cobb about her aunt [Lillie P. Bliss].

CC: We haven't talked to anybody who was very close to Mrs. [Mary Quinn] Sullivan. I don't know much of—

ES: No, no. I don't know.

CC: We're going to be talking to John Parkinson. That'll be very nice. I hear very good things about him.

ES: Oh, well, that'll be fun. He's a very nice young man, and he's the third generation, you know.

CC: Yes, it's quite extraordinary.

ES: He's very interesting, you know, and he's—well, I like him a lot, and respect him. Well, if—

CC: Thank you.

RC: Thank you; this is good.

END OF INTERVIEW at 0:36:22